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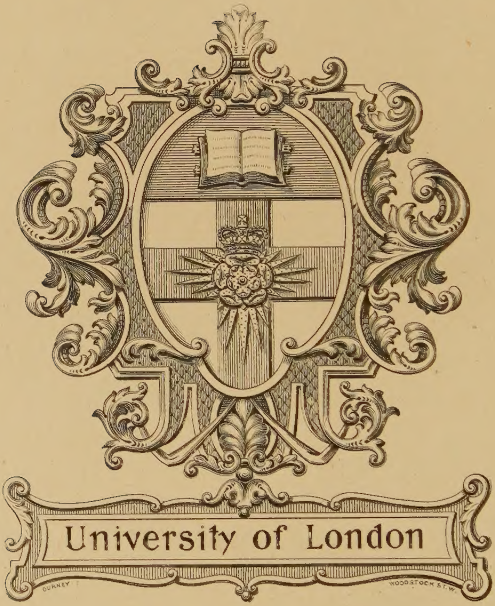
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COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

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TO

THE TENTH DAY OF MAY, 1888.

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HIGH SHERIFFS—

The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be *printed* for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to Members of the Committee, until further order. (No. 72.)

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Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure, have leave to print and circulate with the Votes any amended Clauses of Bills committed to them from time to time,—(*Mr. Osborne Morgan.*)

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Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [20th April :]—Question again proposed :—Debate *resumed* 187

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, That they have power to make provision therein pursuant to the said Resolution.

Seventh Resolution [9th April],—(Excise Duties),—Carriages, Trade Carts, Horses, &c., and Horsedealers, read.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, That they have power to make provision therein pursuant to so much of the said Resolution as relates to Excise Duties on Carriages and Hackney Carriages.

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill [Bill 202]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) 190

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, after Parliament shall have made the appropriations it may deem just in relief of local rates, the Duties accruing upon deaths should be so fixed as to equalize the charge upon real and personal property respectively,"—(*Mr. Gladstone,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question :"—After long debate, Question put :—The House *divided ;* Ayes 310, Noes 217 ; Majority 93.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 289

Main Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time :"—*Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Picton :*)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to :*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday.*

MOTION.

Water Provisional Orders Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*) ; *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 227] 295

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Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances) Bill (No. 43)—

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill,"—(*The Earl of Onslow*) 295

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CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—INCREASE OF SENTENCES ON APPEAL—

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy*) .. 343

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 165, Noes 219; Majority 54.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 388

MOTIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (BRITISH DEPENDENCIES)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That this House, having regard to the disastrous physical and moral effects of the liquor traffic among uncivilized races, as well as the injury it inflicts on legitimate commerce, is of opinion that Her Majesty's Government should take steps to suppress the traffic with Natives in all Native Territories under its influence or control, and that whenever self-governing powers are granted to Crown Colonies, stipulations should be made for the effectual protection of the Natives against the sale of strong drink,"—(*Mr. Alexander M'Arthur*) 391

Liquor Traffic (*British Dependencies*)—continued.

After debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Moved, "That this House, having regard to the disastrous physical and moral effects of the liquor traffic among uncivilized races, as well as the injury it inflicts on legitimate commerce, will cordially support the Imperial and Colonial Governments in their endeavours to suppress the traffic in spirituous liquors with Natives in all Native Territories under their influence and control,"—(*Mr. Alexander M'Arthur*) .. 421

After debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.

WORKMEN (WOOLWICH)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That a Select Committee of Seven Members, Four to be nominated by the House and Three by the Committee of Selection, be appointed to inquire into and report on the circumstances under which workmen entered in the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, and other Government Establishments, between the 17th day of December 1861, and the 4th day of June 1870, have hitherto been refused the benefit of 'The Superannuation Act, 1859,' and 'The Superannuation Amendment Act, 1873,' and subsequent Amendment Acts, and particularly whether it was in the year 1870 or later that they were for the first time informed that a War Office Circular of the 17th day of December 1861, had assumed to suspend 'The Superannuation Act, 1859,' so far as these men were concerned, and as to whether they are or ought to be within the benefits of the said Act of 1873:—That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records;—That Five be a quorum,"—(*Colonel Hughes*) .. 431

After short debate, it being Midnight, the Debate was adjourned:—
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Order *discharged*:—Bill *withdrawn*.

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Amendments made; Bill read the third time, and *passed*.

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Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Jackson*) .. 438

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*. [12.15.]

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—o—

County Government (Ireland) Bill [Bill 6]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Carew*) .. 441

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, while prepared at the proper time to take into consideration any well-matured scheme for the reform of Local Government in Ireland, is of opinion that at present it is not expedient to introduce large constitutional changes in that Country,"—(*Mr. Smith Barry*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. Parnell*:)—Question put accordingly, and *agreed to*.

Question accordingly put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—The House *divided*; Ayes 195, Noes 282; Majority 87.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 514

Words *added*:—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to*.

Resolved, That this House, while prepared at the proper time to take into consideration any well-matured scheme for reform of Local Government in Ireland, is of opinion that at present it is not expedient to introduce large constitutional changes in that Country.

[5.50.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, APRIL 26.

House of Lords (Constitution) Bill (No. 51)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Earl of Dunraven*) .. 518

After debate, Bill (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*. [8.0.]

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Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 228]—

Order for Second Reading read 714

Second Reading *deferred* till *Thursday* next.

Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment Bill [Bill 207]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 715

After short time spent therein, *Moved*, "That the Bill, as amended, be reported,"—(*Mr. T. W. Russell:*)—Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

Fishery Acts Amendment (Ireland) Bill [Bill 32]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress* 19*th April*] 719

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

It being One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House, without Question put.

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[7.0.]

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LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—LENIENT SENTENCES AT SHEFFIELD—Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) .. 755

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACT, 1878—THE "SWEATING DENS" AT MANCHESTER—Question, Sir Henry Roscoe; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) .. 756

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STATIONERY OFFICE—GOVERNMENT PRINTING—CONDENSATION OF BLUE BOOKS—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 761
INDIA—THE STATE OF HYDERABAD—CONCESSION OF MINING RIGHTS—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 762
CRIMINAL CASES (IRELAND)—INCREASE OF SENTENCES ON APPEAL—Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Rowntree; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 762
BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Mr. Lea, Mr. Childers, Mr. J. O'Connor; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 764

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill [Bill 202]—
Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress* 26*th April*] 764

After long time spent therein, it being ten minutes to Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress.

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

QUESTION.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Sinclair; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 812

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read—*continued.*

TECHNICAL EDUCATION—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the interests of technical, commercial, and agricultural instruction, as well as of general education, it is indispensable that the attention of the Government should be no longer limited to primary education and science and art teaching, but should be extended to the secondary education of the Country, which remains without organization or public supervision under a responsible Minister of Education, notwithstanding the repeated recommendations of Royal Commissions and Select Committees of this House on the subject,"—(*Mr. Arthur Acland,*)—instead thereof .. 813

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, it being One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House, without Question put, till *Monday* next.

LORDS, MONDAY, APRIL 30.

IRISH PUBLIC WORKS—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION—Question, Observations, Lord Monteagle of Brandon:—Short Debate thereon .. 863

Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, Amendment Bill (No. 68)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Earl of Cawperdown*) .. 877

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

Land Transfer Bill [H.L.]—

Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 878

[6.30.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, APRIL 30.

QUESTIONS.

WAR OFFICE—MEDICAL OFFICERS IN HOSPITAL SHIPS—MEDALS, &C.—Question, Sir Henry Fletcher; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 879

THE MAGISTRACY—THE CIRENCESTER BENCH—FINE ON A LABOURER—Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 879

POST OFFICE—PRINTED CIRCULARS OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES—POSTAGE—Questions, Mr. Caldwell, Sir Edward Birkbeck; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 880

INDIA — CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS — REPEAL — Question, Mr. James Stuart; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 882

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—FAIR RENTS, CO. WESTMEATH—Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 882

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS—RETIREMENT—Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 882

THE WAR IN BURMAH — THE HOSPITAL SHIP "TENASSERIM" — WAR MEDAL AND GRATUITIES—Question, Sir Henry Fletcher; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 883

BANK ACT, 1844—SCOTCH BANKS OF ISSUE—Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 883

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BANK ACT, 1844—THE GOVERNMENT AND THE BANK OF ENGLAND—Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 884

NORTH PADDINGTON—THE REGENT'S CANAL—SUPERVISION BY THE POLICE—Question, Mr. Aird; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 885

THE TRUCK ACT (BELFAST)—MESSRS. MARCUS WARD AND COMPANY—Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 885

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER BANN—Question, Sir Charles Lewis; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 886

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—NIGHT MAILS TO PLYMOUTH—Question, Viscount Lymington; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 886

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—CHARGE AGAINST MR. P. FERRITER—Questions, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 887

BURMAH—THE RUBY MINES—Questions, Sir Roper Lethbridge, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 888

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE COMPENSATION CLAUSES—Questions, Mr. T. Fry, Mr. Esslemont; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. 889

LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—DEATH OF JOHN MACKAY, OF SOUTH HARRIS—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 890

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—MAT MAKING—Question, Mr. Craig Sellar; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) 891

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE TAX ON CARTS AND WAGGONS—Question, Mr. Jeffreys; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 891

POST OFFICE—DESPATCH OF MAILS, &C. FROM SCOTLAND FOR THE EAST—Question, Mr. M'Lagan; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 892

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT, 1887—THE SPECIAL RULES—SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COLLIERIES—Question, Sir John Swinburne; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. 892

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—HORSE AND WHEEL TAXES—EXTENSION TO SCOTLAND—Questions, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Preston Bruce; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 893

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—BOOKS USED IN BOARD SCHOOLS—Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) 894

ARMY—THE BEDFORDSHIRE REGIMENT—FERMOY BARRACKS—Question, Mr. J. O'Connor; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 894

LIVERPOOL CORPORATION WATERWORKS ACT, 1880—THE AQUEDUCT OF PENY-BONT-FAWR—Question, Mr. Kenyon; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 895

ADMIRALTY—NAVIES (ENGLAND AND OTHER COUNTRIES)—Question, Captain Colomb; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 895

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POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE—DEDUCTION OF PAY FOR SICKNESS—Question, Mr. Carew; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 901
POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT, BELFAST—P. COOPER—Question, Mr. Carew; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 901
WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WHEEL TAX—HEARSES—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 902
METROPOLITAN POLICE—MR. MONTAGU WILLIAMS, POLICE MAGISTRATE—Questions, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Firth; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 903
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IRELAND—INQUEST ON JOHN MADDEN, AN INMATE OF THE CRANNA ORPHANAGE, NEAR NENAGH, CO. TIPPERARY—Question, Mr. P. J. O'Brien; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 905
BRAZIL—ALLEGED INHUMAN POISONING OF INDIANS—Question, Mr. Stephens; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 905
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CRIMINAL CASES (IRELAND)—INCREASE OF SENTENCES ON APPEAL—Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 907
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Limited Liability Companies—Legislation—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. 908

Technical Education—The Debate of Friday Last—Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 908

Church of England in Wales—Question, Mr. Byron Reed; Answer, Mr. Dillwyn 909

Irish Land Court—Delay in Edenderry—Question, Dr. Fox; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 909

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill [Bill 201]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 909

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 226, Noes 177; Majority 49.—(Div. List, No. 84.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill [Bill 202]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 27th April*] 949

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill [Bill 199]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 960

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 228, Noes 139; Majority 89.—(Div. List, No. 86.)

Main Question, put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be committed for Monday next:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *committed* for *Monday* next.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

Ways and Means—Observations, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen); Questions, Mr. Causton, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Buchanan; Answers, Mr. Goschen 1003

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MOTIONS.

—o—

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) CODE OF 1888—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to withhold Her Assent from the alteration in Article 6 (d) of the Code of the Scotch Education Department proposed for this year, which (contrary to the provisions of Section 67 of 'The Education (Scotland) Act, 1872,') will have the effect of lowering the standard of education that now exists in the public schools of Scotland,"—(*Mr. Sinclair*) 1007

After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Registration of Clubs Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Caine, Mr. Byron Reed, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Gent-Davis*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 232] 1014

[1.0.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, MAY 1.

ARMY (INDIA)—THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS—Question, The Bishop of Carlisle; Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Viscount Cross) 1015

Church Discipline Bill (No. 27)—

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill,"—(*The Archbishop of Canterbury*) 1016

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—House in Committee accordingly; Bill *reported*, without Amendment; Amendments made; Bill *re-committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Friday* the 11*th instant.*

Duration of Speeches in Parliament Bill (No. 79)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Denman*) .. 1016

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now,") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months,")—(*The Lord President.*)

On Question, That ("now") shall stand part of the Motion? *Resolved* in the *negative;* and Bill to be read 2ª on *this day six months.*

Westminster Abbey Bill (No. 57)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord President*) .. 1018

Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION—

The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be *printed* for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to the Members of the Committee, until further order. (No. 81.)

Public Libraries Act, 1855, Amendment Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Monkswell*); read 1ª (No. 82) 1018

Suffragans' Act Amendment Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle*); read 1ª (No. 83) 1018

Lloyd's Signal Stations Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Earl of Onslow*); read 1ª (No. 84) 1018

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Dublin Markets) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Privy Seal*); read 1ª (No. 85) 1019

[5.0.]

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COMMONS, TUESDAY, MAY 1.

MOTION.

Preferential Payment of Wages Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Randell, Mr. Abraham, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. D. A. Thomas, Mr. Thomas Ellis*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 234] 1019

QUESTIONS.

THE SALT TRADE—THE RIVER WEAVER NAVIGATION BILL—Question, Mr. Brunner ; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1019

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—ALLOWANCES TO SURVEYORS — Question, Mr. Tuite ; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) .. 1020

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS —LONDON CAB HORSES — Question, Mr. Howard Vincent ; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton 1021

TRUCK ACTS—BREACHES OF THE ACT IN BRISTOL — Question, Mr. Bradlaugh ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1022

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE JURY SYSTEM—WICKLOW ASSIZES—Questions, Mr. W. J. Corbet, Mr. Edward Harrington ; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1022

WAR OFFICE—ARMY MEDICAL OFFICERS—Question, Dr. Tanner ; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1023

LUNATIC ASYLUMS—THE RETURN—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. 1024

ADMIRALTY—DEVONPORT DOCKYARD—FIRE DUTY MEN — Question, Mr. Conybeare ; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1024

INDIA—THE INDIAN TELEGRAPH SERVICE—Question, Mr. Conybeare ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. 1025

INDIA—THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD—CLAIM OF SIR HORACE RUMBOLD, BRITISH MINISTER AT THE HAGUE—Question, Mr. M'Lagan ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. 1026

IRELAND—MEETING OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE AT NEWTOWNARDS — Questions, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. J. E. Ellis ; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1027

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—THE "KILLEENA"—ISSUE OF LIME JUICE—Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen ; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1028

VENEZUELA—APPOINTMENT OF A NEW PRESIDENT—Question, Mr. Watt ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1028

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—DELIVERY OF LETTERS AT PILL, NORTH SOMERSET—Question, Mr. Llewellyn ; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) 1029

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—MAPS OF YORK, AND OTHER COUNTY DISTRICTS—Question, Mr. H. Gardner ; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. 1029

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ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION—RESPONSIBILITY FOR NUMBERS OF FORCE—Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1030

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS ACT—SECTION 13—"AVAILABLE LAND"—Questions, Mr. A. Sutherland, Dr. Clark; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1031

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS ACT—ADVANCES FOR EMIGRATION—Questions, Mr. Kimber, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Hunter; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald), The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1031

FISHING GROUNDS OFF THE ESSEX COAST—REPORT OF THE INQUIRY—Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1034

ADMIRALTY—THE SMACK "VESTA"—COMPENSATION—Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1034

PUBLIC HEALTH—SMALL-POX AT SHEFFIELD—Questions, Mr. Picton, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1034

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—COMPOUND HOUSEHOLDERS—LICENSING CLAUSES—COMPENSATION—Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1035

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—COUNTY POLICE ESTABLISHMENTS—Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. 1036

WAR OFFICE—BURSTING OF A WIRE GUN AT WOOLWICH—Question, Colonel Duncan; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1036

WAR OFFICE—ADDITION TO THE ESTABLISHMENT—Question, Sir Richard Temple; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1036

VACCINATION OF INFANTS—Question, Mr. M'Laren; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1037

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE LICENSING CLAUSES—REFUSAL OF A LICENCE BY THE CUMBERLAND MAGISTRATES—Questions, Mr. Caine, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), The Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) 1038

INLAND REVENUE—LICENSED VICTUALLERS—PAYMENT OF SUCCESSION OR LEGACY DUTY—Question, Mr. Caine; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1039

SOUTH AFRICA (BECHUANALAND)—METHUEN'S SETTLEMENT—Question, Mr. Mallock; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 1040

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE CART TAX—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1040

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL—CLAUSE 21—BUILDING SOCIETIES—Question, Mr. Seale-Hayne; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1041

ADMIRALTY—SUPERSESSION OF CAPTAIN LESTRANGE—Question, Mr. Provand; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1041

THE SLAVE DEALERS IN THE SOUDAN AND ZANZIBAR—Question, Mr. Howorth; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1042

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Gold Discoveries in Wales—Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) 1042

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill—The Licensing Clauses—Compensation—Questions, Mr. Channing, Mr. Conybeare; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1042

Italy and Abyssinia—Question, Mr. Howorth; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) .. 1043

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill—The Licensing Clauses—Compensation—Question, Mr. M'Laren; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. 1043

Common Jurors—Questions, Mr. G. W. Elliot, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) 1044

Official or Public Trustee—Question, Mr. Warmington; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1045

Public Libraries Act, 1885—Marylebone Free Library Election—The Police—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1045

Business of the House—Questions, Mr. Burt, Mr. Heneage; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1046

Coal Mines, &c. Regulation Act—The Rhondda Valley Collieries—Timbering Regulations—Question, Mr. W. Abraham (Glamorgan, Rhondda); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1046

Criminal Cases (Ireland)—Increase of Sentences on Appeal—Imprisonment of Mr. Blane, M.P.—Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. W. E. Gladstone; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1047

The New Rules of Procedure (1882)—Rule 2 (Adjournment of the House)—

Scotland—The Highlands and Islands—Breakdown of the Crofters' Act—

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Dr. Clark*) .. 1048

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 99, Noes 205; Majority 106.—(Div. List, No. 87.)

NOTICE OF MOTION.

New Writ—The St. Stephen's Green Division of the City of Dublin—Notice, Colonel Saunderson; Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Akers-Douglas) .. 1080

MOTION.

Waste and Vacant Lands—Resolution—

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, ownership of land in the United Kingdom should carry with it the duty of cultivation or utilization, and that in all cases where land capable of cultivation or utilization with profit, and not devoted to some purpose of public utility or enjoyment, is held in a vacant, waste, or uncultivated state, the local authorities ought to have the power to compulsorily acquire such land by payment to the owner of a sum representing the capital agricultural value of such lands, in order that such local authorities may, in their discretion, let the said lands to tenant cultivators, with such conditions as to term of tenancy, rent, reclamation,

Waste and Vacant Lands—continued.

drainage, utilization, and cultivation respectively as shall afford reasonable encouragement, opportunities, facilities, and security for the due utilization, cultivation, and development of the said lands,"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh*) 1081

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "whilst recognizing the fact that considerable portions of the lands of the United Kingdom, including those in a so-called vacant, waste, or uncultivated state, cannot be profitably cultivated owing to Agricultural and Industrial Depression, and are, therefore, unable to support their increasing populations, this House is of opinion that conferring powers of compulsory purchase on Local Authorities is not an effectual or desirable remedy for this state of things,"—(*Mr. Seton-Karr.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—

[House counted out] [8.45.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 2.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

Early Closing Bill [Bill 8]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir John Lubbock*) 1098

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Blundell Maple.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 95, Noes 278; Majority 183.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1172

Words *added:*—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to:*—Second Reading *put off* for six months. [5.45.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, MAY 3.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON AND MR. PARNELL—Personal Explanation, The Earl of Carnarvon 1175

Universities (Scotland) Bill (No. 47)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Marquess of Lothian*) .. 1180

After debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* the 14*th instant.*

[7.30.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, MAY 3.

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION—

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to indisposition:—

Whereupon, Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

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QUESTIONS.

LAND COMMISSION COURTS (IRELAND)—JUDICIAL RENTS—ARREARS—Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) 1207

LAND PURCHASE ACT, 1885—PAYMENT OF INSTALMENTS—Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1207

IRISH LAND COMMISSION — JUDICIAL RENTS — RETURNS—Question, Mr. Parnell; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1208

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METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS — HYDE PARK CORNER — Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) 1210

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—GALWAY HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS—Question, Mr. H. Campbell; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1211

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)— —— WRIGHT, A CONVICT AT PORTSMOUTH PRISON—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1211

BOARD OF TRADE—WORKING OF RAILWAYS—Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1212

COMMONS (METROPOLIS)—WANDSWORTH COMMON—THE PATRIOTIC FUND COMMISSIONERS — Questions, Mr. Kimber; Answers, Mr. Tatton Egerton, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) .. 1213

ADMIRALTY—NO. 35 FIRST CLASS TORPEDO BOAT — Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1214

ADMIRALTY (SHIPS)—SPECIAL TESTS OF SPEED — Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1215

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE TYRONE MILITIA—Question, Mr. Leahy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 1215

INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX—EXEMPTION OF CHARITABLE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS—Question, Mr. Lockwood; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1216

ARMY (INDIA)—AGREEMENT AS TO HOME EFFECTIVE CHARGES—Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1216

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ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — THE ARMAGH MILITIA — Question, Mr. Nolan; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1218

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—SECTION 7—NOTICES OF EVICTION BY REGISTERED LETTER—Question, Mr. Nolan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1219

POST OFFICE EMPLOYES MUTUAL GUARANTEE ASSOCIATION (LIMITED)—Question, Mr. Lawson; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1220

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RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL — Question, Sir Matthew White Ridley; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1248

MOTION.

National Defence Bill—

Motion for Leave (*Mr. Secretary Stanhope*) 1249
Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Mr. Brodrick*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 235.]

NATIONAL DEFENCE BILL—Memorandum 1249

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill [Bill 202]—
Bill, as amended, *considered* 1253
After debate, Bill to be read the third time *To-morrow.*

Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill—
Order for Committee read 1285
Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee, that they have power to insert provisions in the Bill with a view to assimilate the qualification of electors of Guardians of the Poor, including the abolition of the plural vote, to the conditions prescribed in the Bill with regard to electors of county authorities,"—(*Mr. Stansfeld.*)
After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 128, Noes 214; Majority 86.
Division List, Ayes and Noes 1306
Moved, "That Mr. Deputy Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. Ritchie*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* in Committee.
After short time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment Bill [Bill 207]—
Order for Consideration, as amended, read 1320
Moved, "That the Bill be re-committed,"—(*Mr. T. M. Healy*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*:—After further short debate, Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

MOTIONS.

Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) Bill—
Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1325

FOREST OF DEAN TURNPIKE TRUST—
Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1326

EAST INDIA (HYDERABAD DECCAN MINING COMPANY)—
Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1326
[12.30.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, MAY 4.

Copyright (Musical Compositions) Bill (No. 61)—
House in Committee (according to order) 1327
Amendments made; the Report thereof to be received on *Friday* next; and Bill to be *printed*, as amended. (No. 92.)

Local Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill—
Bill to provide for the establishment of local courts of bankruptcy in Ireland—*Presented* (*The Lord Ashbourne*) 1332
After short debate, Bill read 1ª. (No. 93.)

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—OUTRAGES ON NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS—Observations, Lord Fitzgerald; Reply, The Lord Chancellor of Ireland (Lord Ashbourne:)—Short Debate thereon 1335

Westminster Abbey Bill (No. 5)—

Bill read 3ª (according to order) 1345

An Amendment made; Bill *passed*, and sent to the Commons; and to be *printed*, as amended. (No. 94.)

LOCAL COURTS OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND)—INQUIRIES BEFORE SELECT COMMITTEES—PROTECTION FOR WITNESSES—Question, The Earl of Dunraven; Reply, The Lord Chancellor (Lord Halsbury) .. 1347

[6.30.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, MAY 4.

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION—

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

QUESTIONS.

COURT OF BANKRUPTCY—THE CHIEF OFFICIAL RECEIVER—Question, Mr. Elton; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1348

POST OFFICE—LICENCE TO THE WRITING TELEGRAPH—Question, Mr. M'Ewan; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1348

SUEZ CANAL—RETURNS OF SHIPPING AND TONNAGE—Question, Captain Colomb; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1350

CHANNEL TUNNEL (EXPERIMENTAL WORKS)—Question, Sir Charles Palmer; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1350

NAVY GUNS—THE RETURN—Question, Lord Charles Beresford; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1351

WAR OFFICE—FIRST AND SECOND ARMY CORPS—HORSE AND FIELD ARTILLERY—Question, Captain Cotton; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1351

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE POST OFFICE AT ABERAMAN—Question, Mr. Richard; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1352

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—RAILWAY COMPANIES—USE OF PRIVATE WIRES—Question, Mr. Fenwick; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1352

CANAL COMPANIES—PROTECTION OF BANKS AND TOW-PATHS—Question, Mr. Aird; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1353

RAILWAYS—OLD RAILWAY STATIONS—IMPROVEMENT—Question, Mr. Aird; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1353

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—CHAPLAINS' SALARIES—Question, Mr. Craig Sellar; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) 1354

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE LICENSING CLAUSES—Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1354

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CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL — UNSTAMPED BEARER SECURITIES—Question, Mr. Montagu; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1355

POST OFFICE—THE PARCEL POST MEN—Questions, Mr. Lawson; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1355

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—CONVEYANCE OF LETTERS BY RAILWAY—SPECIAL STAMP—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1356

LOTTERIES ACTS—EDINBURGH EAST DIVISION CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1356

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — PORT SANITARY AUTHORITY FOR DARTMOUTH—Question, Mr. Mildmay; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. 1357

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INDIA—PORT TRUST FOR ADEN—Question, Sir Richard Temple; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. 1358

CHINA—POLL TAX ON CHINESE SUBJECTS IN THE AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1359

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT—DISTRIBUTION OF VOTING PAPERS BY THE POLICE—Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1360

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WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—COUNTY COUNCILS—TAXES ON CARTS—Question, Mr. Kelly; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1361

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—LICENCE ON TRACTION ENGINES—Question, Viscount Ebrington; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1361

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES — CONVERSION INTO COMPANIES — Question, Mr. Mowbray; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) .. 1362

NAVY GUNS—Question, Mr. E. Hardcastle; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1362

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—RIOT AT CLASHMORE—CASE OF HUGH MATHESON, COTTAR — Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1363

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INDIA—CASE OF MR. TAYLER, LATE COMMISSIONER OF PATNA — Questions, Sir Roper Lethbridge, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 1365

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—CLAUSE 66—BORROWING CLAUSE—Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1366

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS ACT (1861) AMENDMENT ACT — Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1367

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — THE LICENSING CLAUSES—REFUSAL OF RENEWALS — COMPENSATION — Question, Mr. Caleb Wright; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1367

EXCISE DUTIES (LOCAL PURPOSES) BILL—GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS FOR USE OF ROADS—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1368

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — IMPRISONMENT OF MR. JOHN ROCHE, OF WOODFORD—Questions, Mr. Conybeare; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 1368

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE COUNTY COUNCILS —Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1369

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—"STERRY *v.* MASTERS"— Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1369

IMPERIAL DEFENCES—THE ROYAL COMMISSION—Questions, Lord Charles Beresford, Captain Price, Mr. Lawson; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1370

HOUSE OF COMMONS — ADMISSION OF STRANGERS — Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1373

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Childers; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1373

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MESSRS. WARBURTON AND CADDELL, R.M.— Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1374

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Deputy Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF RAILWAYS—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, the time has arrived when the Government should appoint a Committee or Royal Commission to take into consideration the question of acquiring the Railways of the United Kingdom, in accordance with the provisions contained in the General Railway Act of 1844,"—(*Mr. Watt,*)—instead thereof 1374

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Deputy Speaker do now leave the Chair," again proposed:—

SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT, SOUTH KENSINGTON—CIRCULATION OF WORKS OF ART—Observations, Mr. Bartley; Reply, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke); Observations, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck 1404

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*:—SUPPLY—Committee upon *Monday* next.

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill [Bill 202]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) 1420

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

MOTIONS.

Mines (Limitation of Hours) Bill — *Ordered* (*Mr. Cunninghame Graham, Mr. Abraham, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Cremer*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 241] 1426

Merchant Seamen (Widows' and Orphans' Pensions) Bill—*Ordered* (*Colonel Hill, Sir James Corry, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Royden, Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Donkin*): *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 237] 1426

Footpaths and Roadside Wastes Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Hastings, Mr. Story-Maskelyne*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 238] .. 1426

Colliery Tenants' Relief Bill—*Ordered* (*Colonel Blundell, Mr. Frank Hardcastle*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 239] 1427

Factory Acts Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Burt, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Cunninghame Graham*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 240] .. 1427

[House counted out] [9.10.]

LORDS, MONDAY, MAY 7.

Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances) Bill (No. 43)—
House in Committee (according to Order) 1427
Amendments made; the Report thereof to be received on *Friday* next; and Bill to be *printed*, as amended. (No. 96.)

Timber Acts (Ireland) Amendment Bill (No. 69)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a},"—(*The Lord Privy Seal*) .. 1437
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^{a} accordingly.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Ballymoney, &c.) Bill [H.L.] —*Presented* (*The Lord Privy Seal*); read 1^{a}; and *referred* to the Examiners (No 97) 1441

[7.0.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, MAY 7.

QUESTIONS.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1886—CLAUSE 6—SECTION 2—FAIR RENTS—Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1442

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1886—CLAUSE 1—SECTION 4—SUB-DIVISION AND SUB-LETTING—Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1443

ROYAL COMMISSION ON WARLIKE STORES—THE REPORT ON THE "COLLINGWOOD" GUN—Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1444

FRANCE—CASE OF JAMES WILLIAMS, OF HACKNEY—Question, Sir Charles Russell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1444

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ALLEGED ASSAULT AT LETTERKENNY—Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1445

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VALUATION ROLL — WORKMEN OCCUPANTS (SCOTLAND) — Question, Mr. Preston Bruce; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1445
WAR OFFICE (AUXILIARY FORCES)—WARRANT AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ON MILITIA SERVICE — SERGEANTS' MESSES — Question, Captain M'Calmont; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. Brodrick) 1446
CEYLON—RAILWAY TO HAPUTALE—Question, Captain M'Calmont; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) 1447
CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—CLASS III. — COMPULSORY RETIREMENT OF WRITERS—Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1448
CHARITY COMMISSIONERS — SUDBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL — Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Mr. J. W. Lowther 1448
LIMERICK LUNATIC ASYLUM—APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNORS—Questions, Mr. O'Keeffe, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1449
THE CROFTER COMMISSIONERS—THE ISLAND OF SKYE — Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1450
MERCHANT SHIPPING—SERVICE OF LIME JUICE—Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1451
EXCISE DUTIES (LOCAL PURPOSES) BILL—STEAM PLOUGHS AND THRESHING MACHINES—Questions, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, Mr. Townsend, Mr. F. S. Stevenson; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1451
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Waste Lands—The Debate of Thursday, May 1—Observations, Mr. Brookfield, Mr. Deputy Speaker 1488

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

———o———

Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 3rd May*] 1489

After long time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Thursday,* and to be *printed.* [Bill 253.]

Glebe Lands Bill [Bill 180]—

Order for Third Reading read (Queen's *Consent* and Prince of Wales's *Consent,* as Duke of Cornwall), signified.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Secretary Stanhope*) 1543

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "now read the third time" and add the words "re-committed in respect of Three New Clauses," —(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'now read the third time' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 100, Noes 57; Majority 43.—(Div. List, No. 95.)

Main Question, "That the Bill be now read the third time," again proposed:—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 116, Noes 74; Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 96.)

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

Criminal Evidence Bill [Bill 132]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" 1564

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* in Committee:—After some time spent therein, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress; Committee to sit again upon *Thursday.*

MOTIONS.

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 242] 1592

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 243] 1592

Gas Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 244] 1592

Gas Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 245] 1592

Water Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 246] 1592

Gas and Water Provisional Orders Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 247] 159

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 248] 1593

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 249] 1593

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 250] 1593

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 251] 1593

Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 252] 1593

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (SPECIAL REPORT)—
Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report:—Names added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure in respect of the Bail (Scotland) Bill and the Mortmain and Charitable Uses Bill 1593
Report to lie upon the Table. [12.30.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, MAY 8.

Tithe Rentcharge Recovery and Variation Bill (No. 54)—
House in Committee (according to Order) 1594
Amendments made; the Report thereof to be received on *Monday* next; and Bill to be *printed,* as amended. (No. 99.)

Suffragans' Acts Amendment Bill (No. 83)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a},"—(*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle*) .. 1598
Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^{a} accordingly.

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, Amendment Bill (No. 91)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a},"—(*The Lord Fitzgerald*) .. 1599
Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^{a} accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Friday* next.

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill (No. 95)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a},"—(*The Marquess of Salisbury*) .. 1599
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^{a} accordingly: Committee *negatived;* and Bill to be read 3^{a} on *Friday* next.

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Lunacy Law Amendment Bill—Question, The Earl of Milltown; Answer, The Lord Chancellor (Lord Halsbury) 1601

Rochester Bishopric Bill [h.l.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Bishop of Rochester*); read 1ª (No. 98) 1602

Land Charges Registration and Searches Bill [h.l.]—
Moved, "That the Bill be referred to the Select Committee to which the Land Transfer Bill stands referred;" *agreed to*,—(*The Lord Hobhouse.*)

[5.45.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MAY 8.

QUESTIONS.

Law and Justice (Ireland)—Sentences at Kilrush Petty Sessions—Questions, Mr. Conybeare, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) 1602

Law and Justice (Ireland)—Kenagh Petty Sessions—Sentence on a Child Nine Years Old—Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1604

Post Office (Telegraph Department)—Senior Telegraphists—Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1604

Army Estimates—Addition to Numbers—Questions, Mr. Hanbury, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1605

Post Office (Telegraph Department)—The Estimate—Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1606

Post Office (Ireland)—Travelling Post Offices—Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1607

Ways and Means — The Financial Resolutions — Stamp Duty on Securities to Bearer—Question, Mr. Montagu; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1607

Post Office — Foreign Telegraph Forms — Question, Mr. Burdett-Coutts; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1607

Fishery Piers and Harbours (Ireland)—Rosscarbery Pier—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) .. 1608

Turkey (European Provinces)—Macedonia—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1608

Merchant Shipping — Hospital Accommodation of Transatlantic Steamers—Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1609

The Currency—Issue of Bronze Coins—Question, Mr. L. Fry; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1610

Fisheries (Scotland)—Loss of Life from Scotch Fishing Boats—Question, Mr. A. Sutherland; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1610

Law and Justice (Ireland)—Alleged Insurance Frauds at Belfast—Questions, Mr. Carew, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) 1611

Metropolitan Drainage — Outfall Sewage Works at Crossness — Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, Mr. Tatton Egerton .. 1612

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Merchandize Marks Act—Custom House Delays—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1614

Trade and Commerce—An American Zollverein or Customs Union—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1614

Metropolitan Board of Works—Expenses of the Royal Commission—Question, Lord Henry Bruce; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1615

Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill — The Cart Tax—Traction Engines—Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1615

Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Suffolk County Courts—Question, Mr. Greene; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1616

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887 — Crimes Act Courts—Resident Magistrates—Questions, Mr. J. E. Ellis, Mr. Edward Harrington, Mr. Flynn; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1616

Army (India)—Contagious Diseases Acts—Alleged Circular of the Quartermaster General — Questions, Mr. M'Laren, Mr. James Stuart; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1617

Law and Justice (Ireland)—Assault on a Policeman at Macroom—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1620

Medical Acts Amendment Act, 1886—Foreign Medical Practitioners—Question, Mr. Caleb Wright; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) 1620

The Franchise Act (Ireland)—Remuneration of Clerks of Unions, &c.—Question, Mr. P. J. O'Brien; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1621

The Parks (Metropolis)—Money Collections—Question, Mr. James Stuart; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1621

India — Authorized Prostitution — Questions, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Childers; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1622

Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill—Exemptions — Question, Mr. Causton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) .. 1623

Admiralty—Increased Pay to Senior Lieutenants—Question, Commander Bethell; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1623

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887 — Sentence on S. P. Kingston and Wife for Forcible Possession—Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1623

Riots, &c. (Ireland) — Disturbances at Castlerea — Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1624

Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill — The Franchise—Question, Mr. Joicey; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) 1625

Naval and Military Defences—The Royal Commission—Question, Admiral Field; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1625

Business of the House—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. John Morley; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1627

MOTIONS.

—o—

Corporation of London (Malversation of Funds)—Resolution—

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary, without delay, to place the expenditure of the Corporation of the City of London under similar statutory restrictions to those to which other corporations in the Kingdom are subject,"—(*Mr. Firth*) 1627

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 133, Noes 156; Majority 23.—(Div. List, No. 99.)

Board of Trade (Working of Railways)—Resolution—

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable to deal more effectually with preventible causes of accidents to Railway servants and the public, and to reduce the excessive hours of labour among several classes of Railway servants; and that it is expedient to further extend, by legislation, the powers of the Board of Trade to insist on the adoption by Railway Companies of more adequate arrangements to secure the safety of their servants and the public, and to obtain from Railway Companies periodical returns of all cases in which their servants have been on duty for more than twelve hours at a time, or have been sent on duty without an interval of nine hours' rest,"—(*Mr. Channing*) 1667

After debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Corrupt Literature—Resolution—

Moved, "That this House deplores the rapid spread of demoralising Literature in this Country, and is of opinion that the Law against obscene publications and indecent pictures and prints should be vigorously enforced and, if necessary, strengthened,"—(*Mr. Samuel Smith*) 1707

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Voluntary Schools—Parliamentary Grants—Resolution—

Moved, "That the principle of the Parliamentary Grant in aid of Voluntary Schools is unjust, and that the Grant should be allocated rather in proportion to the poverty of School Districts than their wealth,"—(*Mr. Kerans*) 1725

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

Office under the Crown (Vacating of Seats) Bill [Bill 98]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. W. F. Lawrence*) 1729

After short debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:—Debate to be resumed upon *Friday* 8th June.

Merchant Seamen (Widows' and Orphans' Pensions) Bill—

Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Merchant Seamen (Widows' and Orphans' Pensions) Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 9.

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION—

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to indisposition :—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

Public Houses (Ireland) (Saturday Closing) Bill [Bill 3]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. T. W. Russell*) 1732

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. John O'Connor.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved*, "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. T. W. Russell*:)—Question put accordingly:—The House *divided;* Ayes 195, Noes 97; Majority 98.—(Div. List, No. 100.)

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 178, Noes 102; Majority 76.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1794

Moved, "That the Main Question be now put,"—(*Mr. T. W. Russell*:)—Main Question put accordingly, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be committed to the Select Committee on the 'Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland):"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to consider the subject matter of the said Bill, and report thereupon.

Suffragans' Nomination Bill [Bill 35]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Tomlinson*) .. 1798

It being half an hour after Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned:—Debate to be resumed upon *Tuesday* next. [5.35.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, MAY 10.

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION—

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition :—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

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QUESTIONS.

TRUCK ACT—ARMAGH SPINNING COMPANY—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1799

SOLWAY FISHERY ACTS—THE EDEN FISHERY DISTRICT—Question, Mr. R. T. Reid; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1800

ADMIRALTY—NAVAL MEDICAL SERVICE—THE "SICK BERTH STAFF"—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1800

METROPOLITAN POLICE—THE SPECIAL VOTE—Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1801

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—LICENSING COMMITTEES IN THE COUNTY OF LONDON—Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. 1801

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—CLAUSE 8—COUNTY COUNCIL FOR LONDON—THE THAMES CONSERVANCY BOARD—Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1802

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE POSTMASTERSHIP AT HAVERFORDWEST—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1802

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—COUNTY COUNCIL FOR LONDON—Question, Mr. Whitmore; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1803

MERCANTILE MARINE—WRECKS AND LOSS OF LIFE AT SEA—WRECK OF THE "OSBORNE"—Question, Sir John Simon; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1803

WAR OFFICE (AUXILIARY FORCES)—LOANS TO VOLUNTEER CORPS—Question, Mr. Finlay; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1804

SOUTH WALES—TURNPIKES ON MAIN ROADS—EXEMPTION FROM THE WHEEL TAX—Question, Admiral Mayne; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1804

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—HORSES OF AUXILIARY CAVALRY—Questions, Mr. Anstruther, Mr. Joicey, Mr. Macdonald Cameron; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1804

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONS—EDENDERRY UNION—Question, Mr. Maurice Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A J. Balfour) 1805

THE THAMES EMBANKMENT GARDENS—STATUARY, &c.—Question, Mr. Coghill; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton 1806

JURIES (IRELAND)—GRAND JURY OF COUNTY CLARE—Question, Mr. O'Keeffe; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1807

LAW AND POLICE—SENTENCE ON TWO GIRLS AT WESTMINSTER POLICE COURT—Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1807

RELIEF OF LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND)—THE GRANT OF £127,000—Questions, Mr. W. A. Macdonald; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1807

COAL MINES, &c. REGULATION ACT, 1887—BAXENDEN COLLIERY, ACCRINGTON—THE WEIGHING CLAUSES—Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. 1808

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Friendly Societies—Conversion into Companies—Question, Mr. Mowbray; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) .. 1809

Local Government Board (Ireland)—Belfast Town Council—The Accounts of 1885-6—The Royal Visit—Questions, Mr. Nolan, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 1809

Thames (Blackwall) Tunnel—Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton .. 1810

Metropolitan Police—Constable Davidson—Charge of Assault—Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews); Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham [No reply] .. 1810

Public Libraries Act, 1885—The Marylebone Free Library—Distribution of Voting Papers by the Police—Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. 1811

Post Office (Ireland)—Telegraph Office at Carrigallen—Question, Mr. Hayden; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1812

Irish Land Commission—Applications Listed at Carrigallen—Question, Mr. Hayden; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 1813

Post Office (Ireland)—The Postmistress at Kinlough, Co. Leitrim—Questions, Mr. Conway; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1813

Army (India)—Licensing of Immorality—Question, Mr. James Stuart; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. 1814

Law and Police (England and Wales)—The Salvation Army—Torquay Harbour and District Act—Question, Mr. James Stuart; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. 1814

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill—Borough Police—Question, Mr. Trotter; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. 1815

Savings Banks—The Sevenoaks Trustee Savings Bank—Questions, Mr. Howell; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) .. 1816

Turkey (Asiatic Provinces)—Armenia—The British Consulate at Van—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) .. 1817

Africa (West Coast)—Trade on the River Gambia—Question, Sir William Houldsworth; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. 1817

Trade Marks and Designs Act, 1883—Amendment—Question, Mr. F. Hardcastle; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) .. 1818

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill—Clause 21 (4)—Allowances in Respect of Indoor Paupers—Question, Mr. Norris; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. 1818

Agricultural Department of the Privy Council—Grant in Aid of Dairy Schools—Question, Mr. Mark Stewart; Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) .. 1819

Southern Pacific—Samoa—The Convention with Germany—Questions, Mr. W. A. M'Arthur, Mr. Conybeare; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) .. 1819

New South Wales—Chinese Immigrants—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. 1820

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Riots, &c. (Ireland)—The Disturbances at Macroom—Questions, Dr. Tanner, Mr. Flynn; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1821

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill—Section 12—American Railway Shares—Stamp on Certificates—Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1823

Evictions (Ireland)—Sentence on S. P. Kingston and Wife, at Skibbereen, for Forcible Possession—Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 1823

Licensing Law — Brewers' Public-Houses — Question, Mr. Handel Cossham; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1824

Sea Fisheries Bill—Legislation—Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) .. 1825

Ways and Means—The Financial Resolutions—The Duty on Bottled Wine—Question, Mr. Childers; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1825

Greenwich Hospital Funds—Seamen Pensioners' Reserve—Question, Captain Price; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1825

The Currency Commission—The Report — Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. 1826

Law of Limited Liability—Amendment—Question, Mr. Hoyle; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1827

Business of the House—Questions, Mr. Childers, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1827

Africa (West Coast)—Opobo—King Ja Ja—Question, Mr. A. E. Pease; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1828

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill—

Bill, as amended, *considered* 1828

After short debate, Bill *reported*, with an Amendment; as amended, *considered:—Moved*, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Ritchie:*)—Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 190]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*) 1831

After long debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to the Standing Committee on Trade and Agriculture.

Criminal Evidence Bill [Bill 132]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 7th May*] 1929

After short time spent therein, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress: — Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

Railway and Canal Companies Charges Bill [Bill 49]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Bernhard Samuelson*) 1932

Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, Amendment Bill—

Moved, "That the Lords' Amendments be considered forthwith,"—(*Mr. J. B. Balfour*) 1933

Question put, and *agreed to:* — Lords' Amendments *considered*, and *agreed to*.

MOTIONS.

Official Secrets Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Lord George Hamilton*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 256] 1934

School Boards (Scotland) Electors Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Preston Bruce, Mr. Donald Crawford*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 257] .. 1934

[12.10.]

COMMONS.

NEW WRIT ISSUED.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2.

For *Dublin City* (*St. Stephen's Green Division*) *v.* Edward Dwyer Gray, esquire, deceased.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25.

Limerick City—Francis O'Keeffe, esquire.

MONDAY, APRIL 30.

County of Lanark (*Mid Division*)—John Wynford Philipps, esquire.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*,
APPOINTED TO MEET 5 AUGUST, 1886, IN THE FIFTIETH
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1888.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 20*th April*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Metropolitan Board of Works Commission * (62).

Report—Cathedral Churches * (46-73).

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACT, 1885.

MOTION FOR A RETURN.

LORD FITZGERALD, in rising to move for a Return of the disposition of the sum of £5,000,000 sterling granted under the Land Purchase Act of 1885 up to the 31st of March, 1888, asked whether it was intended by Her Majesty's Government during the present Session to seek for any further grants? The noble Lord said, that the number of Returns which he asked for might be thought very numerous and complicated; but, in consideration of the singular interest and great importance of the question, he trusted that such Returns might be given. Their Lordships would recollect that not 12 months ago a very remarkable measure, now known as the Land Act of 1887, was introduced into their Lordships' House by the Lord Privy Seal in a very remarkable speech, in which the noble Earl stated that the time had come for the adoption of a large and comprehensive measure of land purchase in addition, and which Her Majesty's Government undertook to introduce, whereby dual ownership would be put an end to, and the occupiers of land in that country should be enabled to become the purchasers of their own holdings. That measure had not been introduced. He did not suggest that there had been any breach of faith on the part of the Government, as circumstances arose over which the Government had no control, and in consequence of the extreme difficulty in "another place" of passing other measures, the Government had no chance last Session of redeeming their promise; in fact, under the circumstances it would have been unwise and impolitic on the part of the Government to propose a great measure such as had been promised. The Government's hands this year also were so full that if they passed the important Bills which they had introduced, this would be a very remarkable Session. Nor, in fact, did he think that a large compulsory measure of sale and purchase was possible or desirable. The matter which he pressed upon Her Majesty's Government, and upon which he hoped now or hereafter to receive a very favourable answer, was of a much more humble but beneficial character. It would be recollected that both in the Act of 1870 and in that of 1881 there were clauses dealing with purchase. But neither the Bright Clauses in the Act of 1870 nor the clauses in the Act of 1881 had been particularly successful. Several intermediate attempts had been made between 1881 and the passing of the Act of 1885, which was introduced by Lord Ashbourne and based on a somewhat different principle. The whole purchase money was advanced, 20 per cent being retained by the Government, instead of being paid to the landlord, by way of security; the landlord receiving 3 per cent for the money so retained. A Purchase Commission was appointed for carrying out the Act, and it could not be denied that the Act had been a success and that great benefits had been derived from it. Their Lordships would observe that two Purchase Commissioners were appointed under the Act. He was bound to assume that the Government appointed the men they considered the best, and their Lordships had not in the least interfered with the discretion of the Government. He offered no criticism on these appointments. The sum to be distributed was £5,000,000, and the Commissioners had practically been two years and a quarter in carrying out the measure. Although the Act was in no sense compulsory, in that two years and a quarter 885 abstracts of title had been examined. In addition to that they had executed or made 6,317 conveyances or orders. They had sanctioned the issue of £2,445,575, and they had before them at present cases which would cover the whole of the £5,000,000 save £406,431. Some time ago he had pressed upon the Government the necessity of supplementing the grant by a further advance. New applications had since been accumulating. He was in a position to state that the new applications in one office of solicitors alone amounted to the sum of £600,000. Not only was the £5,000,000 now likely to be exhausted, but there was nothing to meet any new applications. That was not a very desirable state of things. Out of the £5,000,000 the total amount distributed in Ulster was £1,945,530, and in that province at least 6,767 small farmers had now become the owners of their own holdings. In Munster the gross sum issued was £1,426,159, or £767,000 less than in Ulster. But there was another peculiar feature about Munster. Only 2,072 applications were made. In Munster the large owners came in, and with the assent of the tenants procured the money to enable them to buy. But in Ulster it was the small men who came in, and in Munster there would have been a great deal more applications if it were not for external agencies which prevented the people from purchasing their holdings. In Connaught, where the external agencies were most powerful, there were but 1,180 applications, and the amount granted £323,949. He would mention no names, but he believed that there was not the least doubt that in Connaught parties were prevented from coming in and claiming the benefits of this most beneficial Act. The people were willing to purchase their holdings; but the external agencies did not want to settle the Land Question. There was no doubt of this singular fact, that where the tenants had in any substantial number become the owners of their own farms, those districts were remarkable during the past year for peace and law and order, and in many instances the occupiers who purchased their own farms were the agents by whom what was called the adoption of the Plan of Campaign was prevented. Under these circumstances very great advantages had been conferred upon the country by this Act, and it was desirable that a further sum should be applied for in order to continue this beneficial work. He should like to say a word with reference to the Land Bill, recently introduced into the House of Commons by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, with the view of facilitating the work of fixing fair rents. In his (Lord Fitzgerald's) opinion, if the second part of that Bill passed it would put an end to the Land Purchase Scheme. The land tribunals at present existing were anomalous, and it was to be regretted that the Landed Estates Court, which was presided over by an able and experienced Judge, and supplied with competent officers, had not been utilized in carrying out the Purchase Act. Since 1878-9 there had been practically no sales in that Court. He lamented to say that there were about 1,400 receivers in operation there, and the income with which it dealt he believed was somewhere about £600,000 a-year. The object of his present Motion for Returns was to show how the Land Act could be made to work more rapidly and efficiently. That portion of the Chief Secretary's Bill which proposed to extend the jurisdiction of the County Court Judges with reference to land cases was a valuable one, but it fell short of the necessary requirements. He regarded the notion that the County Courts were landlords' courts as absurd, and he might instance the liberal reductions of rent recently made on certain estates in the County of Limerick by the County Court Judge of that county (Mr. Purcell), as showing that the tenants might trust to their decisions with confidence. He hoped the country would not be deprived of the enormous advantages which it had been receiving from the Purchase Act from the want of funds. In conclusion, he would ask whether it was intended by Her Majesty's Government during the present Session to seek for any further grant for the purposes of the Land Purchase Act of 1885?

Moved, "That there be laid before this House Return of the disposition of the sum of five millions sterling granted under the Land Purchase Act of 1885 up to the 31st March 1888, specifying in such Return—

1. The total number of applications, with the gross amount of the whole;
2. Gross amounts of those accepted, and of those rejected;
3. Amount of advances actually issued;
4. And of advances sanctioned and in course of issue;
5. And of applications now under consideration by the Purchase Commissioners, but not yet sanctioned;
6. What part of the five millions will remain at the disposal of the Purchase Commissioners if the applications in Number 5 should be sanctioned;
7. The gross amount of instalments which became repayable on the 1st of November last, and the amount, if any, of such instalments remaining unpaid.

Landed Estates Court. Land Judges Branch of the Court of Chancery (Ireland).

8. The number of estates which on the 1st of November 1886, were under administration, with the amount of their gross rental;
9. The number of receivers acting under the court in the receipt of the rents of those estates, with the total sum brought in by such receivers for the rents of the year ending the 1st of November 1887;
10. The number of effective sales made during the five years ending on the 31st of December 1887, with the gross amount realised by such sales;
11. Return of the number of officers employed in that branch of the Court of Chancery, with the total amount of their salaries for the year 1887."—(*The Lord FitzGerald.*)

The Earl of BELMORE said, that in supporting the Motion of the noble and learned Lord, he would express a hope that the Government would give a favourable answer to it, and also grant the Return asked for. He quite agreed that it would have been very undesirable if a compulsory Purchase Bill had been brought in this year, and, speaking for himself, he thought it undesirable that such a Bill should ever be brought in. And he would go further, and say he did not think that, owing to the circumstances which now existed, there was any very great hurry for a large and general purchase scheme. A great deal had happened since the speech of the noble Earl last year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had carried through the Conversion Scheme with great success, with the result that the value of different Securities had been very much altered, and there was no temptation to any unencumbered landlord who expected to be paid his rents, whether judicial or not judicial, to sell his property at the present time, because the loss on reinvestment would, he estimated, even under the most favourable conditions, amount to over 30 per cent. In his opinion, it was most desirable that the machinery of the Landed Estates Court should be brought in to aid the Land Purchase Commissioners. For the last 15 months he had had a case going through the Land Purchase Court, and though the progress was greater than that which had been the rule in the old Encumbered Estates Court, still it was very slow. He could not help thinking that the Court was overworked, and that they might get assistance from the Land Court. He had also given Notice of a slight addition to the Returns moved for by the noble and learned Lord, and which he now begged to move,—namely, the number of estates which, on the 1st of November, 1881, were under administration, with the amount of their gross rentals.

Moved, to add to the Lord FitzGerald's Motion the following words; viz.—

12. "The number of estates which, on the 1st of November 1881, were under administration, with the amount of their gross rental."—(*The Earl of Belmore.*)

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN) said, that he had not been prepared for the course which the noble and learned Lord had adopted in going into detail upon the questions put down on the Paper, and also in dealing with the question of a Bill introduced in "another place" by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He had listened with great interest to the remarks of the noble and learned Lord on a question of which he spoke with so much knowledge and authority, and he could assure him that he would be glad to grant the Return asked for, and also that moved for by the noble Earl. With regard to the Question of the noble and learned Lord, whether it was intended by Her Majesty's Government during the present Session to seek for any further grant for the purposes of the Land Purchase Act of 1885, his answer had been to some extent anticipated by the noble and learned Lord. This important subject was under the serious consideration of Her Majesty's Government, and he trusted that the noble and learned Lord would forgive him if he was unable to give him any positive answer at the present moment.

Motion, as amended, *agreed to.*

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT.

The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be *printed* for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to the Members of the Committee, until further order. (No. 71.)

HIGH SHERIFFS.

The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be *printed* for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to Members of the Committee, until further order. (No. 72.)

House adjourned at half-past Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 20*th April*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered — First Reading*—Factors Acts Consolidation* [223]; Friendly Societies Consolidation* [224]; East India Officers* [226].

Second Reading—Local Government (England and Wales) [182] [*Sixth Night*]; Local Government (England and Wales) (Electors) [181].

Considered as amended—Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment [154], *debate adjourned.*

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS — *Ordered — First Reading*—Tramways (No. 1)* [222].

First Reading—Local Government (Ireland) (Bangor and Warrenpoint)* [225].

QUESTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — SUBVENTIONS TO NORTHUMBERLAND.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick) asked the President of the Local Government Board, What was the total amount of the subventions, now proposed to be withdrawn, given last year to the County of Northumberland, exclusive of Newcastle-on-Tyne?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am not in a position at present to give the information asked for. The Return which I have promised to lay before the House as soon as the particulars have been ascertained will furnish the desired information.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—DOVER PRISON.

MAJOR DICKSON (Dover) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will inform the House how many convicts the Dover Prison can accommodate; and, how many are quartered there at present, and how they are employed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The prison will accommodate 612 convicts when the buildings now in progress are complete. There are 187 prisoners there now. They are employed principally in the prison buildings and works.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—COWES POST OFFICE—PARTY ADVERTISEMENTS.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Postmaster General, Whether political notices and advertisements of a Party character are affixed on the walls and exhibited in the windows of the Cowes Post Office; and, whether this is in accordance with the Post Office Regulations?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): It can hardly, I think, be said that notices of a strictly political Party character have appeared at the Post Office at Cowes. But I conceive that the hon. Member refers to an advertisement of a Primrose League concert, which, I am informed, has lately appeared there. I have directed the Postmaster to be informed that I think such notices should not appear in the post office windows.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—ALLEGED MISCONDUCT OF THE RELIEVING OFFICER AT NORTHAMPTON.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to alleged cases of inhumanity and neglect by the relieving officer at Northampton; and, whether he will order an official inquiry?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Previous to the Notice of this Question, my attention had not been drawn to the alleged case of neglect by one of the relieving officers at Northampton. The Guardians have investigated the matter, and have arrived at the conclusion that the conduct of the officer was open to blame, and at the request of the Guardians he has been cautioned by the Chairman. It may be desirable, however, that the facts of the case should be investigated on oath; and I have directed an official inquiry accordingly.

ARMY—THE SUTHERLAND AND ARGYLL REGIMENT.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he can state the stations that the various detachments of the Sutherland and Argyll Regiment were collected from, and the strength of the respective detachments on the occasion of the recent transfer of the regiment from the Cork District to the Curragh; if the regiment, in being transferred a distance by rail of about 150 miles, was sent to Queenstown by rail, thence to Kingstown in H.M.S. *Assistance* by sea, a distance of over 200 miles, thence by rail to Dublin, and then re-transferred to another line of railway to the Curragh (back towards Cork) a distance of about 40 miles; what would have been the approximate expense of transport direct of the regiment from Cork to Newbridge by rail, and what was the actual expense incurred in this transfer by rail to Queenstown, by ship to Kingstown (including coal and free rations to the regiment for the day's voyage), by rail between Kingstown and Dublin, and Dublin and Newbridge; and, whether he can state why the direct railway route was not made use of on this occasion?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle), in reply said, he was informed that, this battalion came from Cork and Youghal. The expense of sending the troops in question direct by rail from Cork to the Curragh would have been £459 8*s*. 6*d*.; whereas the expense of transferring them by the route adopted was £162 10*s*. 8*d*., showing a balance in favour of the route selected of £296 17s. 10*d*. In this estimate nothing is allowed for the expense of H.M.S. *Assistance*, inasmuch as it would have had to proceed from Kingstown to Dublin in any case.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE WICKLOW ASSIZES — CATHOLIC JURORS.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) (for Mr. W. J. Corbet) (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a large number of Catholic jurors were compelled to attend the recent Assizes at Wicklow, many of them from distant parts of the county, at great inconvenience and cost to themselves, and that, for the trial of prisoners charged with capital offences, the Crown Prosecutor directed all Catholic jurors to stand aside, and so obtained exclusively Protestant juries; whether he is aware that a meeting of Catholic juries was held in the Town Hall of Wicklow on the 9th instant, at which a protest was signed by certain of the jurors ordered to stand aside against the insult to which they considered they had been subjected, repudiating any sympathy with moonlighting, and protesting against the transfer of cases from distant counties; and whether he will take this protest into his consideration?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Sir, I have not seen the protest referred to. I am informed that the Crown Solicitor set aside no one on account of his religion, nor does he nor the Crown Counsel know that the jury was exclusively Protestant or otherwise. The trial was transferred to Wicklow in accordance with the provisions of the 4th section of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, which empowers the Attorney General to transfer the trial to whatever county he thinks a fair and impartial trial can be had.

DR. TANNER: Would the right hon. Gentleman say whether it is not a fact that large numbers of Roman Catholic jurors were ordered by the Crown Solicitor to stand aside; and, whether this practice has not been persisted in, not merely in Wicklow, but also in Cork?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot give any further information.

DR. TANNER: Then I shall put a further Question.

IRELAND—MARKET RIGHTS AND TOLLS COMMISSION.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls has applied to the Treasury to sanction the appointment of Assistant Commissioners to inquire into the working of the markets in Ireland; and whether the vacancy created by the resignation of the hon. Member for Londonderry has yet been filled up?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Royal Commission have informed the Treasury that sanction will shortly be required for the appointment of two Assistant Commissioners to inquire into the working of the markets in Ireland. Her Majesty has approved the proposed appointment of the successor to the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Justin McCarthy), and the warrant of appointment is expected to be received within a few days.

INLAND REVENUE—PAYMENTS TO COLLECTORS.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Board of Inland Revenue, in a recent Circular to their collectors, have directed that the payment of 1*s.* per day to cover the cost of actual travelling expenses incurred in country stations, is not to be made to those Assistants of Excise who have elected to be paid the fixed salary of £95 per annum; whether, in some cases, the Board of Inland Revenue have called upon Assistants of Excise to refund payments made them of the allowance of 1*s.* per day since the 1st of September, 1887; whether such payments were made in accordance with the Regulations of the Department then in force; and, whether, if such sums were expended in the service of the Department, and did not form any part of income, the amounts so refunded will be repaid the Assistants concerned?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The cases referred to are those of certain Assistants of Excise who voluntarily accepted a fixed inclusive salary of £95 rather than the alternative of a smaller salary *plus* allowances for each day actively employed. The arrangement took effect from the 1st of September last; and the transactions to which the hon. Member refers are adjustments necessary to carry this into effect.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—ASSIZES AND COURTS OF QUARTER SESSION—UNCERTAINTY OF SITTINGS.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience occasioned to suitors and others having business at the Assizes and at the Courts of Quarter Sessions by the uncertainty as to the time when Assizes are held, and by the insufficient notice given beforehand as to their dates; and, whether he is prepared to bring in a Bill to appoint a fixed time for commencing the Assizes throughout the country, without regard to the movable feasts of Easter and Whitsuntide?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, he had received a communication from the Lord Chancellor that he was not aware of any inconvenience. The Government was not prepared to bring in a Bill appointing fixed times for Assizes.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—MR. MILNE, INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS, ABERDEEN.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, If Mr. C. J. B. Milne, B.A., of Pembroke College, Cambridge, has been nominated Inspector of Schools for the Aberdeen District; what is Mr. Milne's age, and the length of time, if any, during which he has served as an Inspector in State-aided Schools; if Mr. Milne has ever acted as Sub-Inspector or Inspector's Assistant; and, if so, for what length of time in either capacity; and, whether it is the case that he has been promoted over the heads of two Sub-Inspectors and 20 Inspectors' Assistants?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Mr. Milne, who is 24 years of age, has been nominated an Inspector of Schools, and neither did nor could act in that capacity before his nomination, nor was he previously a Sub-Inspector nor an Inspector's Assistant. He was nominated solely on the ground of his fitness for the post, from high qualifications and attainments, and success as a teacher in posts of much responsibility. Their Lordships' aim has been to secure the best candidate for the post, and they cannot admit that Mr. Milne was nominated "over the heads" of those who held posts of a different grade under the Department.

BURIALS—REMOVAL FOR CREMATION.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has yet considered the application of Mrs. Eichbaum for a permit to remove for the purpose of cremation the remains of her daughter from the churchyard in which they were recently interred; and, whether he proposes to treat the application in any way differently from one for permission to exhume a body for the purpose of re-interment?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The application of Mrs. Eichbaum has been under my consideration. I am advised that cremation is not necessarily illegal; and I should not, therefore, take upon myself to refuse leave to exhume a body merely because the relations intended to cremate instead of re-interring it. In Mrs. Eichbaum's case I have referred the matter back to the Inspector; because so long a time has elapsed since her daughter's death that I think it requires consideration whether the body can properly be exhumed for any purpose, or whether special conditions will have to be prescribed.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—ACCOMMODATION AT BALLINASLOE.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether complaints have reached him that the Post Office in Ballinasloe does not afford sufficient accommodation to the public, or to the officials who have to work there; whether the amount of business which has to be gone through in the Post Office in Ballinasloe is not equal to, or greater than, that of other towns where new Post Offices have been erected; and, whether he is aware that a promise has been given by the late Postmaster General (Lord Wolverton) to provide increased Post Office accommodation in Ballinasloe; and, if so, would he get a new Post Office erected?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): There is no pressing need for a better Post Office at Ballinasloe, either on account of the public or the officials; but the Postmaster would be ready to avail himself of any opportunity of obtaining larger premises on reasonable terms. As the hon. Member has already been informed, my Predecessor came to the conclusion that there were not sufficient grounds for incurring the expense of specially providing a new Post Office building at Ballinasloe.

THE RIVER THAMES — THE NEW HOTEL NEAR WEYBRIDGE.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the President of the Local Government Board, What plans were submitted to him before leave was given to build the hotel on the Island near Shepperton Lock, and, if the plans and correspondence can be shown; who are the proper authorities to re-open the question in case those plans or the statements about them are seriously incorrect as to size, Island, or other particulars; whether it is a fact that the clerk to the Chertsey Rural Sanitary Authorities, who have granted the permission, was also solicitor to the gentleman who has obtained leave to erect the hotel; and, if so, whether such Authority has been properly represented; and, what steps can now be taken to stop the erection of the hotel, which must cause pollution to the river?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Tracings of the plans of the hotel on the Island near Shepperton Lock were forwarded to the Local Government Board by the Rural Sanitary Authority of the Chertsey Union in connection with a communication which they addressed to the Board on the subject. Those tracings are not now in the possession of the Board, as they were returned to the Sanitary Authority in January last. If my hon. Friend wishes to see the correspondence which has passed on the subject I shall have no objection. If the consent of the Sanitary Authority has been obtained to plans which are seriously inaccurate, it may be that liability to a penalty may be incurred in the erection of the building; but this is a question on which I am not in possession of the facts. As regards the clerk to the Chertsey Sanitary Authority, I am informed by him that neither he nor his partner acted as solicitor for the gentleman who submitted plans for the erection of the hotel. His partner, however, acted as agent for the solicitors of that gentleman in serving notices of an intended application to the Justices for a licence; but this was subsequent to the approval of the plans by the Sanitary Authority. As regards the question of the erection of the hotel and possible pollution of the river, I am afraid I cannot add anything to the reply which was given to the Question of my hon. Friend on the 6th of March last.

IRISH LAND COURT—CAUSES LISTED FROM CO. KERRY.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many cases listed in the Land Court from the County of Kerry are still unheard; how many were listed for the last December sitting of the Sub-Commission in Tralee, and how many remained over; and, considering that tenants having their cases listed must pay into Court gales of the questioned rent (which may be two and a-half times the fair rent) in order to preserve their right to have that fair rent fixed, he will ascertain from the Land Commission whether there is any prospect of the near hearing of the cases listed in the County of Kerry?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The number of cases remaining unheard on the 1st of April was 1,225. The number listed for last December sitting was 151, of which 99 were unheard. A Sub-Commission has been sitting in the county since the 4th of April.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—MR. T. C. HARRINGTON—POLICE SUPERVISION.

MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that after the arrival of the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington) in Ennis, as counsel for Mr. Dunleavy, editor of *The Clare Independent*, in his trial at that place on the 13th and 14th instant, three police constables were placed on duty outside the hotel at which the hon. Member was staying; that on Friday evening, on his leaving the door, one of them remarked, "There he is, follow him, and see where he is going;" that one of the constables followed the hon. Member, stopping when he stopped, and exercising personal supervision over him in the public thoroughfares; to whose instructions this conduct on the part of the constable was due; and, what was its object?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Constabulary Authorities inform me that it is the case that the police did, in the discharge of their duty, observe the movements of the hon. Member referred to while in Ennis, County Clare. He is Secretary of an Association which is suppressed in that county as being dangerous and criminal; and, in view of the late attempts to revive the Association there, the Constabulary felt called upon to act as they did. The instructions emanated from the local police.

THE NEW LAW COURTS—DEFECTIVE CONSTRUCTION.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether it is true that a Judge and jury in the new Law Courts were recently placed in danger by reason of the defective material and workmanship of the principal part of the roof of the Chamber in which they were sitting; and, if so, whether he will cause an examination to be made to ascertain whether similar danger exists in other parts of the building?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): On April 11th a communication was made to the Office of Works to the effect that the roof of one of the Law Courts appeared to be in a dangerous condition, and an inspection was immediately made, with the result that it was found that there had been a shrinkage of one of the beams which was used in building the roof. Iron supports were at once fixed, and business was resumed in the Court on the 13th instant. The examination has since been proceeded with in the other Courts; but up to the present no cause for further apprehension has been discovered. There will, however, be undertaken during the Long Vacation a more complete and minute investigation of the building than would be possible while the Courts are sitting.

WALES—THE TITHE AGITATION—MILITARY ASSISTANCE IN ANGLESEY.

Mr. LEWIS (Anglesey) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether application has been made for the assistance of the military at proposed tithe distraints in Anglesey; and, if so, by whom, and on what grounds; and, whether, since the Report made by the Chief Constable to him, that there was no occasion for military, and that there was no disturbance to prevent Mr. Peterson completing his distraints, anything has occurred in Anglesey to necessitate the assistance of the military; and, if not, whether the application will be granted?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I understand from the Chief Constable of Anglesey that application for the assistance of the military has been sanctioned by the Quarter Sessions after a full inquiry on the representation of Mr. Peterson, on the grounds that a more determined resistance to the officers of the law appeared to be likely; that the police force in the county is very small; and that it was difficult to obtain police assistance from the neighbouring counties. I regret that military assistance should have become necessary; but since the magistrates of the county have come to the conclusion that it has, I have no doubt that the Military Authorities will give the assistance asked for.

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—REFUSAL TO TRY A CASE OF TRESPASS AFTER HOUNDS.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a Report inserted in *The Daily News* of 13th April, by which it appears that Mr. Robert Gosling, J.P., of Hassbury, insisted on riding over fences and across land in the occupation of Mr. Sworder with his hounds, after having received repeated notices not to do so; whether, on being summoned before the magistrates of Hadham for this offence, they refused to try the case, or to give Mr. Sworder any redress; and, whether he will call the attention of the Lord Chancellor to the matter?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a Report from the Justices in this case. They did not refuse to try the case, but gave it a most careful hearing. The summons was under the Malicious Injuries to Property Act; but it appeared from Mr. Sworder's own evidence that there was no malicious intent, and that the actual damage done did not exceed one farthing. I see no reason to interfere in the matter. The case was reduced on the facts proved to one of mere trespass, over which the magistrates have no jurisdiction.

PUBLIC HEALTH—OUTBREAK OF SMALL POX AT NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he is aware how many cases of small pox have broken out amongst the members of *The Pointsman* Theatrical Company at present playing at Newcastle-on-Tyne, but who were playing at Sheffield three weeks ago; and, if any precautions were taken in regard to the theatre in Sheffield remaining open during the epidemic?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am informed that one only of the members of *The Pointsman* Company at Newcastle has been attacked with illness. He is now recovering, and the disease is believed not to have been small pox. As to the second part of the Question, precautions were taken with regard to the theatres in Sheffield during the epidemic; but neither the Sanitary Authority nor the Local Government Board have any power as regards the closing of the theatres.

ARMY—(AUXILIARY FORCES)—CAMP ALLOWANCES TO VOLUNTEERS.

MR. WIGGIN (Staffordshire, Handsworth) asked the Secretary of State for War, What number of Volunteers have applied to go into camp as compared with last year; whether the camp allowance for regimental camps has been reduced to 75 per cent. of the number of men applied for; whether the deficiency will have to be provided for out of the private funds of the battalions concerned; what number of Volunteers have been authorized to encamp with Regular troops this year compared with last; what is the difference in the cost to the country for Volunteers attending a camp with Regular troops as compared with an ordinary regimental camp; and, whether he can see his way to give the full camp allowance for regimental camps, as in previous years?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Applications to go into camp have been received this year for 107,199 Volunteers. Last year the number was 104,428. The amount authorized has been 75 per cent. of the allowance at 2*s.* a day on the whole number for whom application has been received for the whole periods asked for. The deficiency, when it is not met, as it can be, by a reduction in the number going into camp or in the time passed there, will have to be met from private sources. Fifteen thousand Volunteers have this year been authorized to encamp with Regular troops, as compared with 7,555 last year. With the Regular Forces a Volunteer receives a sum of 10*s.*, rations, and extra travelling allowances, with, if an officer, field allowances, and, if a mounted officer, forage. In a regimental camp the grant is 2*s.* a day for not more than six days, with 2*s.* 6*d.* for travelling allowance, or in some circumstances 5*s.* Probably the total cost per head with Regular troops exceeds, on the average, twice that incurred in a regimental camp; but the comparison is difficult.

Mr. Flynn

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—REMOVAL OF DR. C. RONAYNE, J.P.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Dr. Charles Ronayne, of Youghal, has been removed from the Commission of the Peace, on the ground that he issued a counter proclamation to a proclamation issued by Mr. Redmond, R.M., forbidding a recent meeting at Youghal, in which he (Mr. Ronayne) enjoined the preservation of the public peace on the occasion referred to, and was founded not only on personal knowledge, but on the sworn information of the Chairman of the Town Commissioners, while the proclamation of Mr. Redmond, R.M., was issued by a stranger to the locality, and was based on information which has not been disclosed to the public; and, whether Mr. Redmond, R.M., had any more legal authority than Dr. Ronayne for issuing a proclamation of any sort; and, if not, on what ground is it sought to justify the preference shown by the Government for the act of Mr. Redmond, R.M.?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Lord Chancellor informs me that the Resident Magistrate in charge of the district, acting on a sworn information, had proclaimed a meeting as calculated to lead to animosity among different classes, to interfere with the administration of the law, and to lead to a breach of the peace and public disorder. Dr. Ronayne published a counter proclamation, which, in the opinion of the Lord Chancellor, encouraged and supported the meeting, notwithstanding, and in the face of, the proclamation of the Resident Magistrate.

The Lord Chancellor considered that Dr. Ronayne's action was calculated to increase the danger of a breach of the peace and the peril of collision, and at the same time to lower the character of the magisterial office. He accordingly superseded him.

Mr. CLANCY: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the Question whether Mr. Redmond has any more legal authority than Dr. Ronayne for issuing a proclamation of any sort?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The question of legal authority does not arise in the matter. The point considered by the Lord Chancellor was the probable effect on the peace of the district arising out of the action of Dr. Ronayne.

Mr. CLANCY: I beg to give Notice that when the Estimates come on I shall call attention to this and other instances of glaring and gross partizanship on the part of the Government.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Would the right hon. Gentleman tell us what authority he has for stating that Mr. Redmond is the Resident Magistrate in charge of the district as he says, considering the fact that Mr. Redmond has adjudicated all over the county and in every county, whereas Dr. Ronayne is resident in the town of Youghal?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe I am right in stating that Mr. Redmond is the Resident Magistrate. The hon. Gentleman is perfectly aware that, under existing arrangements, magistrates do move from one district to another.

Mr. FLYNN: Can the right hon. Gentleman explain to the House why Mr. Redmond is called a Resident Magistrate?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That happens to be his legal title.

CHURCH AND DISSENT—THE WESLEYANS AT HAREWOOD.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Earl of Harewood has hitherto refused to sell or grant a site in the parish of Dunkeswick for the erection of a Wesleyan chapel, and whether, as a consequence, they are obliged to conduct their worship in various houses in the parish; and, whether the Government will be prepared to support a Bill compelling landowners to grant sites on reasonable terms for the erection of places of worship?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am not aware whether the Earl of Harewood has refused to sell a site at Dunkeswick. On the 18th of March he informed me that the arrangements made for Wesleyan worship in that parish were amply sufficient; and I understand, from a telegram received this morning from the Earl of Harewood, that the arrangements lately made at Harewood will supply the wants of both parishes. There is a Bill now before the House by which sites for places of public worship may be compulsorily obtained. The Government will be prepared to give an opinion on the question raised by the hon. Member when that Bill comes up for discussion.

ARMY—THE DERBYSHIRE REGIMENT—DISORDERS AT LIMERICK.

Mr. FINUCANE (Limerick, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been directed to the following report, which appeared in *The Cork Herald* of Tuesday, 16th instant:—

> "On Saturday night about 20 or 30 men of the Derbyshire Regiment, at the Windmill, Limerick, attacked the house of a Mr. Cullivit, and endeavoured to burst in the door of a room in which a wake was being held at the time on the remains of Mr. Cullivit's mother-in-law, who died the day before. Having failed to force the door, they forcibly entered the room by the window, having smashed the glass, knocked the lighted candles off the table, and thrust also at the corpse;"

and, whether he will order an investigation into the accuracy of this report?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The officer commanding the troops at Limerick has reported by telegraph as follows:—

> "The statement is not true. No attack was made by either the men of the Derbyshire Regiment or 3rd Hussars on Mr. Cullivit's house, which was not entered by the men, who were attacked by civilians when leaving the Windmill public-house."

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) asked whether the Secretary of State for War had seen a report in the papers, in which it was stated that some men of this same regiment on Tuesday last had an altercation with some civilians, which terminated with stones being freely used on both sides; but that the military, not content with the result of the engagement, attacked a house in the vicinity of the barracks and——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! This is a Question of which Notice should be given in the usual way.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: I will give Notice of a Question on the subject.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION — REGISTRARS OF LAND SUB-COMMISSION COURTS.

Mr. FINUCANE (Limerick, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Registrars of the Land Sub-Commission Courts communicate with the land agents, announcing the day on which the Commissioners will go to value the farms; and, whether complaints have reached him that they have refused to give similar information to the tenant, and that, as a result, farms have been often valued in the absence of the occupier; and, if so, will he communicate with the Land Commission, and request that equal facilities be given to both occupier and owner, so that both may be present at valuations of land?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am afraid, Sir, that I must ask the hon. Member to defer his Question for a day or two, until I obtain information on the subject.

Mr. FINUCANE: I will ask the Question on Monday.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE DISTURBANCE AT ENNIS—THE 3rd HUSSARS.

Mr. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to an extract of a letter from Corporal Christian, of the H Troop of the 3rd Hussars, to his brother, of the 18th instant, in which he states, referring to the charge of the Hussars into the yard at Ennis, on Sunday week:—

> "We had a fair go in. We got about 200 in a large mill holding a meeting. We had orders to cut anyone down if they attempted to escape. You may guess we were in our glory. We made 75 arrests. Nearly all of them had their heads cut open. One man had his ear cut off, and several had their fingers cut off. There was a reporter had three of his ribs and his arm broken. My mare kicked him unfortunately. As we went through the streets we sang *God Save the Queen* and *Rule Britannia.* Some of the people went down on their knees to us, but we showed them no mercy. This is the first time we had a chance to get at them, so that we gave them a good thrashing;"

and, whether he will cause any inquiry to be held as to the accuracy of these statements?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): My attention has only been called to the alleged extract through this Question. A very cursory perusal of it, taken with the known facts of the case, shows it to be a foolish tissue of absurdities.

HORSE BREEDING, &c. (IRELAND)—THE GRANT OF £5,000.

Mr. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Royal Dublin Society has applied for the continuance of the grant of £5,000 towards improving the breed of horses and cattle in Ireland; and, if so, whether the Government accede to the request?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am of opinion that it would be highly desirable to continue the grant of £5,000 which was given last year, and which, I believe, has produced very excellent results. Of course, any such grant of £5,000 must be out of the sum allocated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in relief of local burdens in Ireland; or else it must be taken in part out of the sum at present allocated to Queen's Plates. But I think the sum ought to be continued.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—HARBOUR OF KILLYBEGS, &c., DONEGAL RAILWAY.

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What steps the Government propose to take in order to carry out the recommendations in the Second Report of the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works, and particularly with regard to the harbour of Killybegs, and the railway through the County Donegal, for the purpose of connecting said harbour with the main lines of railway to Londonderry, Belfast, and Dublin; and, what proportion of the sum of £1,300,000, which remains of £2,000,000 contemplated by the Act of 1883, the Government are prepared to spend in railway extension in Ireland?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): In answer to my hon. Friend, I have to say that the Government propose to deal first with the First Report of the Commission. The Royal Commission themselves regarded the drainage question as the most important; and, as my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) has already stated, we have a Bill prepared to deal with that question at the present moment. With regard to the £2,000,000 of which my hon. Friend speaks, he is probably aware the Government have no right to spend that, except under the provisions laid down in the Tramways Act, without further statutory authority; and the question of further statutory authority could be dealt with at the same time as the Second Report of the Royal Commission.

HALIFAX AND BERMUDA—TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Postmaster General, What decision Her Majesty's Government have arrived at in regard to establishing telegraphic connection between Halifax and Bermuda, in view of the great value and necessity of such connection for strategic as well as for other purposes?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that Her Majesty's Government have invited tenders for laying, maintaining, and working a telegraph cable between Halifax and Bermuda, and that the last day for the reception of the tenders is the 30th instant.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—DUTY ON BOTTLED WINES, &c.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) (for Mr. W. E. Gladstone) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can lay upon the Table a Return showing the rates of duty upon bottled wine chargeable since 1860; the quantities of bottled wine imported from France, Germany, and the Colonies, and the total quantities in 1882 and each subsequent year; and the estimated quantities of low and high-priced wines respectively?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Such a Return could be furnished; but the whole of the information on the subject is contained in a Parliamentary Paper, No. 278, of the Session of 1879, and practically there is no later information than that, for, as my right hon. Friend is aware, there has been no special duty upon bottled wines since 1866. With regard to the further Question as to statistics of bottled wines imported from France, Germany, and the Colonies, no separate account has been kept at the Custom House of the wines imported in casks and in bottles; therefore these statistics are not available without a search, which would take some considerable time. In the same way there are no statistics as to the estimated quantities of high and low priced wines, and to obtain them would necessitate a search over a period of eight or nine years.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (who had now taken his seat)—I quite understand the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that a distinct answer to the question cannot be given; and, consequently, we must consider the matter without the advantage of any definite information.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—COUNTY GOVERNMENT.

Mr. HOYLE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing what amount, including one-half of the Probate Duty, would be paid by each city and borough in Lancashire if the financial proposals necessitated by the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill should be carried; also the amount each city and borough in Lancashire would receive in accordance with the provisions of the Bill.

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I stated last evening that I was prepared to present to the House a statement containing certain particulars with respect to the distribution of the Licence Duty and Probate Duty; but I cannot undertake to attempt to give such estimates as those to which the hon. Member refers.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—COUNTY COUNCILLORS.

Mr. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether women who have the right of voting at the election of County Councillors will themselves be eligible to be elected members of the County Councils?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Women, as regards their eligibility to be elected as members of the County Council, will be in the same position as they are with respect to elections as Councillors under the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882. Although they may vote at municipal elections, they are not qualified for election as Councillors.

WAR OFFICE—MILITIA MEN—EXTRA PAY.

Viscount BARING (Bedfordshire, Biggleswade) asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is the intention of the War Office to sanction the extra duty pay of 2*d.* a-day to the men of the Militia employed as military police during preliminary drill and training?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Yes; at stations where there are no military police of the Regular Forces.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—SENTENCES ON FATHER M'FADDEN AND MR. BLANE.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the sentences on Father M'Fadden and the hon. Member for South Armagh (Mr. Blane) have been increased on appeal from three months and four months respectively to six months; whether any additional evidence was adduced on the appeal to justify an increase of the sentence appealed against; and, who was the County Court Judge before whom the cases were tried.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am not aware whether or not any fresh evidence was produced; but, in any case, the County Court Judge may have thought that the Resident Magistrates took too lenient a view of the offence committed by these persons. As the hon. Gentleman is aware an appeal is not given for the purpose of having the sentences inflicted by the inferior Court diminished, but for having them revised.

Mr. JAMES STUART: Have any sentences been increased on appeal until within the past week?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman must give Notice of that Question.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): Arising out of this Question, Sir, I desire to ask the Chief Secretary, Whether he has seen a report of the proceedings at Ennis yesterday, when the sentences upon William Hynes, Patrick Collins, and Joseph O'Brien were increased from three to six months; and, whether it is by any common plan or instructions from Dublin Castle that such sentences are being increased?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Question is out of Order in itself, and ought to have been given Notice of and put upon the Paper. Then it would have been submitted to me.

Mr. M. HARRIS (Galway, E.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, Whether he is aware that James Kilmartin and T. M. Coffey have also had their sentences increased?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe there have been several cases in which the sentences have been increased.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): By what licence or authority are the Irish Judges permitted or authorized to abuse the political opponents of——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. CONYBEARE: Of the Chief Secretary.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That Question also is very improper. If it had been handed in I should have disallowed its being put upon the Paper.

Mr. JAMES STUART: The right hon. Gentleman did not answer the last part of my Question.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Dr. Webb.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): May I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether in several cases under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland)

Act in which appeals were taken the sentences passed by the Resident Magistrates have been reduced?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): Yes, Sir.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—MR. W. O'BRIEN, M.P.—THE IRISH MAGISTRATES.

Mr. H. J. WILSON (York, W. R., Holmfirth) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that one of the magistrates who was hearing the case against the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) at Loughrea, on Thursday the 19th April, had been at Dublin Castle on Wednesday the 18th April; and what was the object of the visit?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), I have no knowledge respecting the alleged fact, nor is it a subject into which I should think of making inquiries. The obvious insinuation is that the magistrate had been in communication with the Executive respecting questions that were to come before him in his judicial capacity. Of this insinuation I will only say that it is of a piece with the attacks which, from time to time, Members of this House have not thought it beneath them to make on an able, upright, and public spirited body of gentlemen engaged in most arduous and responsible duties.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—ACCOMMODATION AT CARLOW.

Mr. LALOR (Queen's Co., Leix) asked the Postmaster General, If he is aware of the very inadequate Post Office accommodation in the town of Carlow, which consists of one small room in a private house, not capable of holding half-a-dozen persons without overcrowding, making it difficult to transact business, and causing great inconvenience and delay to the public; if he is aware that the people and Town Commissioners of Carlow think that a public office would be the most desirable for so important a place, and that a good and central site, the old Assembly Rooms in Dublin Street, may be easily procured for the purpose; and, if he will take immediate steps to remedy the present most unsatisfactory state of things?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I am aware that the Post Office at Carlow is no longer large enough for the convenient performance of the business; and negotiations have been carried on, not only with the landlord of the present office for an enlargement of it, but also with another person for larger premises altogether, but in both cases without satisfactory result. The Postmaster has, therefore, been instructed to advertise for better premises, and the first announcement appeared in *The Carlow Sentinel* on Saturday last. The amount of Post Office business at Carlow is scarcely sufficient to warrant the Department in incurring the expense of providing a building specially for its accommodation.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDER DEPARTMENT)—CLERKS.

Viscount CURZON (Bucks, Wycombe) asked the Postmaster General, Whether there are at present in the Money Order Department of the Post Office a number of established clerks of from 13 to 15 years' approved service whose maximum salary is £150 per annum, or £50 less than that of all other established clerks in the Civil Service; and, whether most of these clerks are permanently employed upon duties similar to those performed by other clerks receiving salaries nearly twice as high?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): There are still 11 clerks remaining on the old third-class of the Money Order Office, the maximum of whose scale of salary is £150; but they have not all reached it. This class used to number between 40 and 50, and is rapidly being absorbed by promotions. I have no intention of disturbing this arrangement. Some of these officers are engaged on duties of a rather higher character than the others, which is an advantage to them, as enabling them to qualify for promotion to the upper classes.

CIVIL SERVICE (EXCISE DEPARTMENT)—COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION.

Mr. P. STANHOPE (Wednesbury) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, having regard to the postponement of the periodical competitive examination of candidates for admission into the Civil Service (Excise Department) from May until November, and to the serious hardship entailed upon many who have incurred great trouble and expense in preparatory studies, he will give directions that those candidates who may, in consequence of this unusual postponement, be excluded by the official limit of age, shall be allowed to have their names registered and to present themselves for examination in November, or on such subsequent occasion fixed for the next examination?

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is in a position to state when the next examination for Assistants of Excise will be held; whether it is a fact, as stated in *The Civil Service Candidate* of 17th March, that all the candidates selected at the last examination have received appointments; whether he is aware that the uncertainty as to dates of examinations and number of appointments is causing large numbers of young men serious loss of time and of opportunities of obtaining other emyloyment; and, whether more uniformity as to examinations, and fuller information to intending candidates, can be provided?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied): The suggestion contained in the Question of the hon. Member for Wednesbury has already been made and considered. It would be a serious matter to make a change in the prescribed limits of age, merely in order to meet the case of certain persons who would otherwise be excluded from competition; and I do not think the circumstances of the present case would justify such action. In reply to the Question of the hon. Member for East Northampton, it is impossible to say when the next examination will be held. All the selected candidates have received appointments. Examinations can only be held when additional assistants are required; and it is, therefore, impossible to regulate precisely the time for examinations. Due notice, however, will always be given of the intention to hold such examinations.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—OVERTIME OF BOYS.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether a number of boys employed in the Telegraph Department are, after they have done their regular duty, employed in overtime work in the Circulation Department of the General Post Office; and, if he can state the number of boys so employed, their ordinary hours of duty, and the average number of hours overtime they work per week?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member I have to state that in the Circulation Department of the General Post Office the number of telegraph boys employed on overtime is about 214; that their ordinary hours of duty are about nine, out of which, however, two intervals are allowed—one for dinner and another for tea—and that their average overtime is two-and-a-half hours a-week. As I do not approve, however, of lads working overtime, arrangements are being made with a view to its discontinuance.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—DOVER CONVICT PRISON.

MAJOR DICKSON (Dover) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can state the total amount which has been expended on the Dover Convict Prison to the present date, including the purchase of land, and whether this expenditure was sanctioned in order that the works of the Dover Harbour of Refuge might be carried out; whether he can inform the House what circumstances have transpired since this expenditure was sanctioned to cause the Government to alter their views as to the National importance of this harbour; and, if it is intended to retain Dover as a convict station to the permanent injury of the borough?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The total expenditure up to the present on the Dover Convict Prison is £61,575 15*s.* 9*d.*, being £48,400 0*s.* 5*d.* for building, and £13,175 15*s.* 4*d.* for land. The expenditure was sanctioned in order that a harbour of refuge at Dover might be constructed. Recently doubts have arisen whether Dover is the best site for a harbour of refuge; and the Government, pending further consideration of the matter, have thought it best to suspend any further outlay. It would be open to question whether the expenditure of large sums of money in Dover by a convict or other establishment would be looked upon as a permanent injury to the borough.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND)—THE MONEYS VOTED IN SUPPLY.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Scottish Fishery Board is collectively responsible to the Treasury for the whole of the moneys voted to it on the Estimates; whether the two scientific members of the Board claim for themselves the absolute right of the disposal of the £2,000 voted for scientific investigation, and decline to acknowledge the responsibility of the whole Board for its expenditure; and, whether the Government will consider the need of re-organizing the Board, and of revising and better defining its powers?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The Fishery Board through the Chairman, who is the accounting officer, is collectively responsible for the whole of the moneys voted for it on the Estimates. I am informed by the Secretary for Scotland that he is not aware that the scientific members of the Board make any such claim as that indicated by the hon. Member, or decline to acknowledge the responsibility of the whole Board for the money voted for scientific investigation. The Government have the question of the Fishery Board under their consideration, with a view to legislation.

COAL MINES—EXPLOSION AT ST. HELEN'S.

In reply to Mr. Burt (Morpeth),

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr.) Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) said: I received a telegram from the Inspector early this morning, to the effect, I regret to say, that 28 lives had been lost, and that 17 bodies were still in the pit, which is being flooded to extinguish the fire. The Inspector is now on his way to the place, which he expects to reach about 4, when he will telegraph again.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the accident was caused by the firing of shot?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I am not able to say; but I gather not.

MOTION.

ORDERS OF THE DAY (SUPPLY).

RESOLUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Standing Order No. 11, appointing the Committee of Supply to be the first Order of the Day on Friday be read and suspended, and that the Orders of the Day for the second reading of the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill and the Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill have precedence of the Committee of Supply."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, he hoped hon. Members would seriously consider the question whether they were going to allow the Government to take every day. This was not the first time that he had the very unpleasant duty of protesting against this action of the Government during the present Session. About two months ago he urged the Government not to adopt the course they then proposed, but they informed the House that it was absolutely necessary to take private Members' nights for the purpose of dealing with the Rules of Procedure. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) stated that if those Rules were disposed of in the way they expected them to be, the Government would spare no effort in order to secure facilities for the discussion of topics in which private Members were interested. Since that arrangement was made, however, the Government had taken other nights. Last Friday private Members were asked to give up that night, and on Tuesday the Government had a Morning Sitting, which practically meant that they had to give up the whole time of the day and night to the Government. Now they were being asked again to surrender their right to discuss subjects in which many hon. Members were interested. There was a subject set down for that evening of great importance, but the Motion which had been moved would prevent them from discussing it. Then, again, the Metropolitan Members had no chance of speaking on the Local Government Bill. He individually had endeavoured to say something on that Bill—perhaps what he had to say was not worth much—but he was not in a position to say it. He represented a Metropolitan constituency, and out of the large number of Metropolitan Members only two or three had spoken. If they happened to be Irish Nationalist Members the Government would give them every facility. If they had been Scotch Members plenty of time would be given to them, but because they happened to be a loyal Party representing the Metropolis, with enough votes to keep the Government in Office, their wishes met with but little consideration from the Treasury Bench. Week after week they had been asked to surrender those private nights, and it seemed to him to be a most unreasonable thing. It would be more straightforward to the House if the Government were to take the whole time of the House. If the Government said this was absolutely necessary he should support the proposal, because he supposed they were bound to obey the Government. But the Government had distinctly told them through the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury that if they gave up time for the passing of the Rules of Procedure the Government would make every effort to afford to private Members facilities for bringing up the subjects in which they were interested. Therefore he thought he was within his right in demanding that the right hon. Gentleman should redeem the pledge he had given by not asking them to give up this day.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he was always glad to hear Ministerial Members complaining of their Leaders and showing a certain amount of independence, which, he trusted, would ripen among them; but, at the same time, he must point out that if the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley) wished to influence his Leaders he would do well if—instead of complaining he was not a Nationalist or a Scotchman—he would not only speak against such Motions as this, but would also vote against them, instead of submissively following his Leaders into the Lobby, as he did last week. Last Friday, when the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House wished to appropriate the night in the belief that a two days' discussion would suffice for the second reading of the Local Government Bill, the objections of the Opposition were perfectly legitimate; but at this stage of the debate the circumstances were different, and he thought they could not well divide against the Motion. At the same time, as the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury distinctly asked them to vote for the Procedure Rules on the ground that he was obliged to take away nearly all private Members' nights last Session, and said that if the Rules were passed he would leave them their nights this Session, he asked the right hon. Gentleman to tell them fairly and candidly that he would not attempt to take any more private Members' nights unless he could honestly show the absolute necessity for doing so.

Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) said, the hon. Member opposite hardly looked like a crushed worm. He did not think that the complaint of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bartley) was justified, as it was his (Sir Julian Goldsmid's) experience that for years past it was frequently the case that Liberal as well as Conservative Governments, when the second reading of very important Bills had to be considered, took private Members' nights. Moreover, the practice had arisen, in recent years, of Members on the two Front Benches making speeches of inordinate length. He had noticed that on one occasion, last year, more than five hours of one evening were occupied by three speeches from the Front Benches. Private Members would not have so many complaints to make about the lack of opportunity for bringing forward subjects in which they were interested if right hon. Gentlemen on both Front Benches would only condense their speeches. If they could not compress their observations within a shorter space, ordinary Members would scarcely have any chance of speaking at all.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury would be able to reserve next Friday for discussions on secondary and primary education, which were on the Paper for that day.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, he thought that in the circumstances the request now made by the Government could not properly be declined. But he must entirely question the Parliamentary history of the hon. Baronet the Member for South St. Pancras (Sir Julian Goldsmid), who was absolutely and entirely wrong in stating that it had been the practice of Governments to take private Members' nights for the second reading debates of important Bills. His experience, at any rate, was that when Liberal Governments had been in Office nothing had been so rare as to interfere with private Members' nights for continuous debate on Government Bills; and the practice had sprung up only in the latest years under Conservative Governments. If we went further back, say 50 years, when Business was not so heavy, no doubt debates were often continuous, because it was not the practice to appropriate nights to private Members. It was fair enough to raise the question of the length of speeches as between the Front Benches and the Back Benches; but he and his Colleagues had often found—certainly when they were in Office—that they were compelled to speak because private Members would not do so on the questions that were before the House. He was sure that the Whippers-in of the Party would support his evidence on this point. With respect to this debate there was no speech last night from the Front Opposition Bench, and it would be right that there should be one that evening. He should like to learn from the Government what were their intentions as to next week if the debate on the second reading of the Budget Bill were concluded on Monday night, when it would be his duty to move a Resolution in a speech, the moderate dimensions of which would, he hoped, command the approval of the hon. Baronet behind him. Supposing the second reading of the Bill were obtained on Monday, what did the Government intend to do with respect to Thursday?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, the Government hoped that it might be possible to obtain the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill on Monday; and the debate could be prolonged if it were necessary, although he hoped it would not be, beyond 1 o'clock. If the will were read a second time it would be proposed to take the Committee on Thursday, and the remaining stages on Government nights until it was passed. It had always been his object and desire to interfere with private Members' nights as little as possible; but the Government had also to consider the interests of the public in the progress of Business. When there was before the House an important measure—like the Local Government Bill—thought to require much discussion and a large amount of the time of the House, it would be a waste of time if it were not allowed to go on with some continuity. He believed that there was a general desire that the subject should be adequately, but not excessively, discussed; and he did not think private Members had been deprived of the opportunity of speaking in this debate by speeches from the Ministerial Bench. The Government would be glad that all who desired to speak should be heard, but the selection of speakers did not rest with them, and there must be some limit to a debate on the second reading of a Bill. He hoped that limit would be reached that evening, especially as the points at issue had to be dealt with in Committee. Six days' debate, where there was a difference of opinion only on points of detail, was surely sufficient on a second reading. Under the circumstances, he trusted that the House would give the time now asked by the Government.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) asked, if it was intended to take the second reading of the Employers' Liability Bill and the Railway Rates Bill next week?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that it was not intended to take either of these Bills next week. The second reading of the Budget Bill might be expected to occupy Monday, and the Committee stage the whole of Thursday. He hoped Friday would remain free for the discussion of the important educational questions which were on the Paper.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL. [Bill 182.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

SECOND READING.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [SIXTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley) said, when the debate was adjourned last night, he was endeavouring to ascertain what was the precise nature of the objection to the Bill on the part of hon. Members who spoke on the proposed Amendment, and, as far as he could gather, their objection was founded upon the fact that the parish was not the unit on which the County Council was to be built up. That was the argument of the hon. Member for South Glamorganshire (Mr. A. J. Williams), and the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Sussex (Mr. Stevenson) directed nearly the whole of his speech to that point. The hon. Member addressed some language to the present Chancellor of the Exchequer of a rather strong character, on account of his having changed his opinion on that head. He said the right hon. Gentleman wore his consicence on his sleeve, and that it had considerably suffered by the exposure. Were hon. Gentlemen really ready to make the parish council the unit, according to the proposal of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1871? [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Then he ventured to say that they would find no other way; it was the best method which could be adopted, if the parish was to be the unit of county government. The right hon. Gentleman proposed in 1871 that parochial boards should be established and the county divided into petty sessional divisions. The Chairmen of the Local Boards within a petty sessional division were to elect from their own number so many gentlemen to represent the division on the Central County Board, on which there was also to be a number of magistrates, including the Chairman of Quarter Sessions. That was the plan for making parochial governments, and for making the parish the unit of county government; but it involved the very objectionable principle of indirect representation, as any plan with the same object must. When they came to consider that there were upwards of 15,000 parishes in England and Wales, most of them with a population of from 300 to 1,000, and many of them of only 50 with an area of 50 acres, it would be seen to be absolutely impossible to carry out the proposal contained in the Amendment of the hon. Member (Mr. Stevenson). That was his proposal. If it were not so, why did he take the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to task for having changed his mind? It might be said that parishes could be divided or grouped together; but, if that were done, they would lose their sentimental aspect, and the result must be unsatisfactory; for any peasant that you met in the county of Devonshire could tell you his parish, and to say that he was to be put into another parish, so to speak, would be very objectionable from his point of view. Few people would be willing to destroy the names and boundaries of parishes. It might be, however, that all that the hon. Member (Mr. Stevenson) wanted was a simple reform of the vestry; and if that was his object, by all means let the matter be cleared up. But if it was desired that the parish should be the unit, let that be known, and known clearly. The hon. Member for Merionethshire (Mr. T. E. Ellis) had said that some historical sympathy might have been shown by the Party opposite with this time-honoured unit of government. No doubt, the Party opposite would like to show such sympathy, but they could not avoid realizing that things had changed greatly since the parish was the active unit. Parishes formerly were more isolated and not interdependent, and they were concerned with many matters which were now things of the past. They had, for example, to provide for the hue and cry in case of crime; they had to provide cucking stools for scolds, and weapons in case of emergency. Now even the parish pound and parish stocks were becoming obsolete. But what he might term historical sentiment could be preserved under the measure of the Government. If the County Councils would consent to call their District Councils hundreds, a man who lived in the time of Henry I., supposing him to revisit the earth, would find that there had been many changes, but that the area of the Government proposal was the same as the area was in 1100. He had looked into the Provincial newspapers recently, and was surprised to find the character of the speeches that were being delivered with respect to this Bill. It was said that it would do nothing for the agricultural labourers, but would maintain the ascendancy of the parson, the squire, and the publican, and that, as far as the labourer was concerned, the Bill was regarded as utterly worthless; it was also said that the Bill was extremely valueless and invidious, and the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk had characterized it as a wolf in sheep's clothing. He (Mr. Collings) thought there was great responsibility attaching to those hon. Gentlemen who had used that language. He did not understand that Bob Acre's style of procedure. It was surprising that, if the Bill was such an insidious measure as it was now represented to be, hon. Members who entertained that opinion had not the courage to move an Amendment to the Motion for the second reading. He had his own opinion, however, as to the feelings that were actuating certain hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House. There were some hon. Members who were conscious of the huge promises they had given in 1885 with regard to this matter; they remembered perhaps that they had an opportunity of fulfilling those pledges, and that the opportunity was neglected, and the pledges cast aside; and they were also, no doubt, conscious that, if the present Government were to be overthrown, and the Party to which these hon. Gentlemen belonged came into power, this question would have to be again set aside in favour of another question to which he should not allude. The labourers, however, were wise enough to prefer a bird in the hand to two in the bush, preferring an Allotments Bill, though imperfect, and a County Government Bill, though incomplete, as this was acknowledged to be, to mere promises that were never kept. Having regard to the other Business which the Government had expressed their intention of proceeding with, the time available for this most intricate measure was decidedly scant. There was now only about a working month before June was reached, and there would barely be time left to pass the Bill. He hoped the Government would give a pledge that under no circumstances would they refrain from getting the Bill through. The history of the Allotments Bill of last Session should not be overlooked. Compared with this measure, it was simplicity itself; yet it was only saved by two hours. The affection of some of its pretended friends was such that it was almost throttled in their embraces. He hoped that dangers of that kind would be guarded against by the Government. He earnestly trusted that the Bill in Committee would not be handled in any Party spirit, and that hon. Gentlemen in all parts of the House would give the Government a generous assistance in their arduous task. There were some Amendments, no doubt, which would have to be brought forward; but there were others which he thought it the duty of hon. Members not to press, or even to propose, because the Government had told them that it would be unwise to overload the machinery at starting. No doubt, Municipal Councils at present exercised powers which the Bill did not at once confer on the County Councils; but those powers had only been gradually acquired, and he believed that if the Municipal Corporations had, when originally established, been given all the powers which they now possessed, they would have broken down under the weight. But even Municipal Councils had no control over education or the Poor Law. From the speech of the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk, and from other speeches that had been made, he was sorry to gather that it was intended again to raise these points in Committee. So also in regard to the matter of assessment, upon which the Government had now declared their views, they hoped to see the time when the Chairman of County Finance would prepare a budget for the whole county; but they must remember that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that the intricacies of Imperial finance were simplicity itself, as compared with the intricacy of local finance, and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had spoken of it as a question which demanded a measure by itself. It would be most undesirable that time should be occupied in re-opening the question, which could lead to no immediate results. Similarly, with regard to the parish question, they ought to rest satisfied with the admission of the right hon. Gentleman, that the vestries required amendment. As had been pointed out by the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long), the passing of this Bill and the establishment of

County Councils would render the reform of the vestries much easier. All these things would follow naturally in due course, and the Council would gradually get the whole county business into its own hands. The only question was whether all this work should be thrown upon the Councils in such a volume and weight as would stifle and crush them, or whether the work should be put upon them by degrees. The latter was his view of the question. The Bill established a system capable of full and genuine development. In proof of that, they might take the clauses which provided for other work being put upon the County Council simply by Order in Council. Further, they must remember that the County Council would be a great legislative as well as administrative Body; it was to have power of making bye-laws, which, he believed, would be of a very inclusive character as time went on. In fact, the Bill had been accurately described by the Secretary to the Local Government Board as a great democratic measure. For these reasons, he thought they would do well in assisting in passing the Bill and confining their Amendments to what was in the Bill, and not to extend them to other subjects which were not dealt with. Should the Bill be lost, or endangered in any way, by contrary tactics, then he said that a very grave responsibility would rest upon those who introduced them. He was one of those who had always held that no substantial progress could be made in the welfare of the people in the rural districts until they had reform in the direction in which they were now going, and, accordingly, he thanked Her Majesty's Government for this bold and genuine measure. As far as the country squires went, he was sure they had no cause for apprehension. [*Ironical cheers.*] Hon. Members seem to follow the lines of a person called Jack Cade, who, in the 15th century, was an advocate for popular suffrage. They came down to the House and said that this was a bad Bill; that they would have done this and that if they were in power; that there should be seven halfpenny loaves sold for a penny; that a three-hooped pot should have 10 hoops, and that they would make it felony to drink small beer. That was the argument they frequently heard from Members who, when they got into Office, cast their promises aside and said no more about them. He said that one great result would follow the passing of this Bill; not only would there be the creation of political interests and an interest in public life in the rural districts, but, he believed, the Bill would directly lead to the improvement of the social and material condition of the rural population. The power given to the County Councils and the scope of the measure were such as to legitimately invite the most able men to take part in the county business, and one great result of the Bill would be, by improved intercourse, to put an end to those prejudices and antagonisms amongst classes in the counties which sprang mainly from mutual ignorance. It would be found that these would be done away with, and although there might be less room for Jack Cades in future, yet there would be more hope of the achievement of reasonable reforms. There would be on the Councils men to bring such reforms about as could be reasonably asked for, and thus the Bill would effect one of the greatest reinvigorations that had been seen in the present day in the rural districts. It was a measure which some hon. Members on that side of the House had waited for too long when they depended on the promises of their own Party.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) said, he must congratulate his hon. Friend (Mr. Jesse Collings) upon the moderate tone which he had adopted in the second chapter of the speech he had commenced last night. It was true that the hon. Gentleman had called his opponents unfair; that he said those sitting round him had no courage, and were dangerous; that he called them "Bob Acres," and even said they were Jack Cades; but he could assure the majority of the Members now present, who were not in the House on the previous night, that it was only the somewhat limited body of Members who had the felicity of sharing the company of the hon. Member (Mr. Jesse Collings), in his midnight revels at the previous sitting of the House, who could appreciate the moderation of the hon. Member's present utterances. The speech he had just made was, no doubt, owing to the depressing effect of the morning's reflection following upon those revels. Last night the hon. Gentleman repeatedly praised the present Government. [Mr.

Jesse Collings: Hear, hear!] He did not find fault with the hon. Gentleman for that, because no doubt his very political existence depended on the breath of their nostrils. Then the hon. Gentleman denounced in unmeasured terms his own Friends and Party. That was probably only a natural consequence of his present position; but what was perhaps the most, he would not say violent, but most enthusiastic portion of his speech, was his denunciation of the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk. He first found fault with the hon. Member because he moved his Amendment; then he reviled him because he did not move his Amendment. His hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham, seeing on both sides of him such tempting and alluring morsels for a speech, seemed to be placed in the historical attitude of a certain animal between two bundles of hay. Some of his hon. Friends had been found fault with on account of what was called the changed position they had been supposed to adopt with regard to the Local Government Bill now before the House. It would have been strange indeed if, on a closer examination of this great and important measure, they had found nothing to criticize or condemn. It had been said that the measure was received on both sides of the House by many Members with unreserved approval. He (Mr. Gardner) would rather say that it was received with unreserved admiration, and he would use the word "admiration" in the strictly classical sense. They gazed upon the picture which the President of the Local Government Board drew in his able and attractive—if he might venture to say so—most able and attractive speech, as rustics gazed upon a fair, staring open-mouthed at a representation of some giant depicted at a show. Since then they had been inside the right hon. Gentleman's caravan, and they found that this giant, like a good many other giants, had uncommonly ricketty legs, and his thews and sinews were stuffed with straw. Although there was much to criticize in the Bill, there was also much to praise, and he ventured humbly to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon the broad and liberal spirit in which he had approached the subject. He also congratulated the House upon the non-Party spirit in which it had considered and discussed this great reform of the administration of the country. But, unfortunately, there had been two eminent exceptions to this show of non-Party spirit—the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) and the hon. Member who last spoke. It was most unfortunate and regrettable that these two hon. Gentlemen should have shown such a bitter Party spirit, particularly when it was remembered that the particular portion of the Party, over whom they emptied their vials of wrath, were Gentlemen representing agricultural divisions, and trying to do the best they could in their humble way for their constituents. He should have thought that if there were two hon. Gentlemen in the House pledged to assist in measures for the benefit of the agricultural labourers, it was the Member for West Birmingham and the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham. He (Mr. Gardner) had sought in every direction for an explanation of their conduct. With regard to the right hon. Member for West Birmingham he (Mr. Gardner) could only conclude that, having persistently absented himself during this debate, except upon the solitary occasion when he came into the House to make his speech, he was unaware of the conciliatory spirit in which the House had received this measure, and, in rising to speak, thought it necessary to pursue the usual course (which his connections now-a-days prescribe him) of using every weapon he could find to beat his old friends and old party. He thought that the action of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham explained the speech of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham. The action of these two Gentlemen reminded him of Sheridan's play, with the direction, "Enter Tilburnia mad, in white satin, followed by her confidante mad, in white muslin." There was another explanation of the conduct of the hon. Member (Mr. Jesse Collings), and that was that his ideas had changed since 1885. In 1885, the hon. Member was an apostle of the poor. What had been since heard of the measures he then advocated? What had become of his free education? What had become of his graduated Income Tax—and what had become of his measures for reforming the oppressive taxes on the poor? He seemed to have abandoned the championship of the unfortunate Lazarus, and become content to pick up, with gratitude, the crumbs that fell from Lord Salisbury's table. He (Mr. Gardner) referred to the speech of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham because that Gentleman quoted from a speech delivered by himself (Mr. Gardner), and seemed to derive much gratification from the supposed differences which existed amongst Members of the Opposition and their Front Bench — differences which existed only in his own perfervid imagination. The right hon. Member attributed a phrase to him which he (Mr. Gardner) had never used. He could hardly expect that so prominent a politician as the right hon. Gentleman would read the speeches of a humble individual like himself; but if that statesman used his speeches as weapons to beat his own Party with, he ought to verify those statements. Having said that much on that personal matter, he would address himself to the Local Government Bill. It seemed to him that they were not justified in finding fault with the Government for what they had done in the Bill, but rather for what they had left undone. There were many parts of the Bill to criticize, and some to condemn. He was sure many Members would have liked to have seen the Bill deal with simplification of areas, and of local bodies, and the consolidation of rates. The Government said the simplification of areas would come in the future; but this was not their opinion. They first put the Bill forward last year with a great flourish of trumpets, they sent forth a Royal Boundary Commission, upon whose Report they were going to frame this Bill. What had become of this Boundary Commission? The right hon. Gentleman had thrown over the Boundary Commission, and took credit for having done so; because, he said, it was in obedience to the feeling of the county. If the Government had adopted the Report of the Boundary Commission, they must have dealt with the Boards of Guardians, and their not doing so, he (Mr. Gardner) thought was a much better reason for throwing over the Boundary Commissioners than any deference to county feeling. The question whether the parish should be the unit of area was a point upon which people might hold their own opinion; but such a change could not be effected, as the Bill was drawn, without serious risk of losing the measure, and that was a risk, in his opinion, they ought not to run. Had the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jesse Collings) read the Amendment? If he had, he would have found that the parish as a unit of area was not mentioned. The hon. Gentleman seemed to have invented this bogey for himself.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS said, he had simply stated what everyone acquainted with the Procedure of the House knew—that the Amendment, if carried, would kill the Bill, and that those who supported the Amendment would incur a very grave responsibility.

Mr. H. GARDNER said, that an Amendment, to be carried, required at least to be moved; and the Amendment had not been moved. But whatever opinion they might hold about the unit of area, he would say to all—"Reform the parish." The parish could be reformed without in any possible way endangering the passing of the measure. The reform of the parish and Vestry, he held, and many high authorities shared his opinion, could be done by the insertion of a few clauses in the Bill before the House, and unless many hon. Members were false to their pledges it would be done. He and those who thought with him would use every means in their power to get these clauses inserted. This Bill had brought about county enfranchisement, but he wanted to have village enfranchisement. In 1885, the Government made a step in the right direction by enfranchising the labourer politically; but he wanted them, by the Act of 1888, to enfranchise him socially. What the agricultural labourers wanted was to have some interest and some share in village affairs and the immediate surroundings of his own life. It would be a great educational factor in his existence, and so fit him for those more important duties which he might be called upon to undertake hereafter; thus, eventually, benefiting the country at large. These clauses, including the reform of the Board of Guardians, might very easily be included in this measure. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had challenged them to say distinctly what powers they wished to give to the parish. In the first place, he wished to preserve for the parish the ancient privileges of the Vestry, which they had enjoyed for years past, and not for them to be absorbed in the District Councils; then he wanted to make the Vestry a real body, and not the sham one it was at present, by reform on the principle of one man one vote and the ballot. They wanted, also, to reform the Vestry by allowing a certain number of ratepayers to summon a meeting, if necessary, and also that the meeting shall be held at an hour when the working classes could attend, and that the meeting should have the power of electing its own chairman. He thought the meeting should be held in any schoolroom which was in receipt of a Government grant. He wanted also to give to the Vestries limited administrative and executive power as to certain defined subjects and deliberative power as to matters specially affecting the parish; to hand over to the Vestry the election of the Allotments Committee, and not leave them, as now, in the hands of the Board of Guardians — a body whose relations with the agricultural labourers had not always been sympathetic. He, himself, preferred that those who lived in small districts, and knew what was going on in them, should have a word to say on the question. They wanted to give to these Vestries some representative character, also, as to charitable trusts. He believed that the Charity Commissioners, in their last Report, put forward some recommendation, or expressions of desire, that representative bodies should be created in villages, in order that they might have oversight of these trusts. There was a very good reason for the constitution of such bodies, because it was well known that there were a number of trusts of small character which were, however, very beneficial to the villages to which they applied, but which had actually been allowed to lapse for the want of being looked after. They might be sure that if the people who were affected by these trusts had the management of them there would be very little fear indeed of their lapsing. His hon. Friend (Mr. Jesse Collings) had said that he was prepared to leave over this matter of the reform of the parish vestries and the Boards of Guardians for future legislation to deal with. Personally, however, he (Mr. Gardner) entirely refused to leave over this subject until somewhere about the Greek Kalends. These matters would never, as a matter of fact, be dealt with by future legislation, because they would be turned over to the County Councils. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) had pointed out that the matter of the Board of Guardians would be so handed over. The question of the boundaries had certainly been handed over to the County Councils, and it was a remarkable feature of the Bill that the question of the county boundaries was left absolutely permissive, so that if the County Councils chose to leave things *in statu quo* there was nothing to prevent them. It was easy to say that these things should be handed over to the County Councils, but it must be remembered that the County Councils might be composed of practically the same people as the Court of Quarter Sessions, so that the old style of administration would go on. The hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), who always interested the House, made a speech the other night on this Bill, and he listened to him with a great deal of attention, because he recognized that the hon. and gallant Baronet was speaking as the direct representative of what had been called "disestablished squirearchy." The hon. and gallant Baronet did not receive the Bill with open arms or with unqualified approbation, but he did receive it in a spirit of honest resignation. He had thought when the hon. and gallant Baronet commenced, that he was going to sing the song of the dying swan; but he found instead that his effort was more in the nature of the Phœnix rising from his ashes. If that was the feeling of the rest of the squirearchy there was no doubt they would fill the same position on the new Councils that they had at Quarter Sessions. He (Mr. Gardner) did not deprecate that. It might be the best solution of the matter or it might be the worst, but under the probable circumstances he preferred, in the interests of the agricultural labourer and village artisan, that these subjects of the Reform of the parish and the Board of Guardians should be effected in the present Bill. With regard to what had been done in the Bill for the labouring classes, he would point out that the Bill swept away the administrative qualities of the Quarter Sessions, about which as to economy of administration much might be said, and retained their judicial qualities, which were the real cause of the popular outcry against "the great unpaid." It was those latter qualities that agricultural labourers most wished to see reformed. He welcomed the elective principle which the Bill introduced into county government, but if reform of the Vestries and the Guardians was not included in the measure, they on that side of the House could only, if they were true to their pledges and principles, regard it as an instalment of a future measure, which it would be the duty of future Parliaments to perfect and make better.

Mr. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, as a Representative of agricultural labourers as well as the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, he understood that they would have the privilege of voting for the County Council, and that the franchise would be the same as the Parliamentary franchise. He could not, therefore, see why the hon. Gentleman should complain of the franchise which had been proposed in the Bill, seeing that he had been returned to the House to represent the agricultural labourers by the franchise which had been already conferred upon them. He had visited the country districts since the Bill had been brought in; he had consulted with his rural friends, and found there was a point in the Bill which was of very great interest to agricultural labourers, and he believed his right hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie) would give him credit for being very earnest in stating it. He referred to the payment of 4*d.* per head for indoor paupers. He knew that the villagers had the greatest objection to being driven into the workhouse, and that was a spirit which they ought to try to encourage. There were two classes of paupers who found their way into workhouses—the lazy scamp, of no use to himself or his neighbours, and he (Mr. Gray) would be the last to propose that he should be supplied with a feather bed to lie upon—and the deserving, honest, struggling poor, who had done all they could to keep away from the stigma of pauperism. Now, he hoped the House would do nothing to minimize such a feeling as he had indicated amongst the villagers. If the poverty-stricken man, who wished to work as long as he could, was forced to break up his home and sell his goods and chattels, he had scarcely any chance, in case he should come out of the workhouse, of getting on again in life. He wanted the Bill to be a success just as much as his hon. Friend opposite; but if it was to become one its provisions must work out satisfactorily and beneficially to the class he had spoken of; but if one provision in the Bill had the effect of driving honest persons into the workhouse, as far as that provision was concerned, his inclination would be just the opposite. With regard to another point, he believed in the policy which did not go away from firm ground until one knew where he would next place his foot. They all agreed that the magistrates had conducted police affairs in counties in the most admirable manner, and that their administration had been economical. Would it be ill-advised to leave this proposed alteration in the management of the police in abeyance for a short time? Though the Bill was a very long one, there was no reason whatever, as time went on, why there should not hereafter be further legislation of the kind. He, for one, hoped they should have much more important local reform than the Bill contained, and that measures of a similar nature to the present would be added to the Statute Book. The police had acted well under the authority of the magistrates; but if they suddenly handed them over to the Councils before they understood their work, it seemed to him that they were likely to get into an unenviable position. Finally, he had referred to the expense connected with the working of the County Councils, and if they were not very careful he thought they might find themselves let in for a very expensive system of machinery. As far as the rural districts were concerned, he was quite sure that they could not bear an expensive form of machinery. He knew that hon. Members opposite who represented towns, always laughed at the idea of saving expense to purely rural districts, and they seemed to think that it did not matter how rates and taxes were piled upon the rural districts, because they believed the burden would fall only on the shoulders of the landlords. But he wanted hon. Members to understand that in taxing the rural districts they were taxing the raw material of the country which provided food for the people. He wished the Bill every success; but, at the same time, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman in charge of it would give his special attention to the point in connection with the payment on account of indoor paupers.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said, it had been stated that this Bill had met both in and out of the House with cordial approval. It was not the Bill itself which had been rereceived with a chorus of approval; it was the very astute, able, and ingenious speech with which it had been introduced. The Bill differed very widely from the speech. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) said that he approached the question "in no spirit of distrust, but in a spirit of confidence in the sense and judgment of the people." When we came to examine the Bill we found, however, that it was full of distrust of the people from beginning to end. Once you got beyond the wide democratic franchise you found distrust everywhere. That there were to be selected councillors, a thing not contemplated 50 years ago in the original scheme of Town Councils, that casual vacancies were to be filled up by the universally condemned principle of co-option, that a free people were not to have a free choice of the Chairman of the Council, but were to find a man with a property qualification—all that showed a spirit, not of trust, but of distrust. If Town Councils had the administration of the police given to them 50 years ago, why should not the County Councils have it given to them now? There was also in the Licensing Clauses of the Bill an absence of "the spirit of confidence in the sense and judgment of the people." He lived in a district where the landlord forbade the establishment of a public-house in order to make his property more valuable. Why should the Government refuse to give to the people of a district the right which the landlord possessed? He had said outside the House that the Bill was not a democratic measure but a democratic sham, and he had given some reasons for thinking it so. Lord Salisbury at Oxford said he wanted in county government less of Whitehall and more of the counties, but when the Bill was introduced he said that to talk of Radicalism in it was all nonsense. He quite agreed with Lord Salisbury. This Bill, if framed in a truly democratic spirit, ought to contain the means of bringing life and activity into every small village community, that it might be stirred by the spirit which had done so much for the small towns and larger boroughs. This Bill would have very little effect upon the labourers in the villages, except to give them an opportunity of voting for a member for the County Council. The villager came into contact with the magistrates, but the Bill did nothing to reform the existing system of appointment. He would be glad to see this altered. It was not in accordance with the democratic notions of our time that the appointment of magistrates should rest solely in the hands of the Lord Lieutenant of a county. The villager was also interested in the Vestry, but there was no attempt to reform that Body. They wanted the labourer in the vestries not only to take charge of certain matters which came home to the healthiness and efficiency of village life, but also to have control over the charities administered by certain irresponsible trustees in his village. The people had a notion that they were robbed in regard to their charities, and in nearly every instance when the thing came to be investigated that suspicion was found to be based on solid grounds. It was known that the property of the charities had in many cases been misappropriated, and in some had been lost to the district to which it had been left. Again, the villager came in contact with the Poor Law; but that Bill did nothing to reform the Poor Law, either as to its methods of administration or as to its elections. The Government had failed to seize the opportunity presented to them for doing away with the causes of popular discontent with the existing system. Although the Poor Law Guardians endeavoured to do their duty conscientiously, yet the administration of the Poor Law, as it affected the poor, was not a credit to the country, but in some respects a disgrace. It was not always administered with kindly tenderness, but oftentimes with hardness, severity, and unkindness unworthy of the present age. Now, that Bill proposed to give the Guardians another incentive to driving the people into the workhouses, and he belived that that was, in the long run, one of the most expensive and demoralizing methods in which Poor Law relief could be administered. A wise expenditure in outdoor relief saved many a humble household from being broken up, and enabled men to go through their times of difficulty and hardship, without losing their own self-respect or forfeiting the good opinion of their fellows, by having become inmates of the workhouse. It should be remembered that many of those poor people were placed under economic conditions in which they had to work for wages which gave them no means or opportunity of putting by for a rainy day. They had a right to the tenderest regard on the part of the State when they were in misfortune, instead of which they were oftentimes forced into the workhouse, a place which some would rather die than enter. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had once described the existing system of local government as a chaos of conflicting authorities, but this Bill would not mend that chaos very much. He hoped that when that scheme came to work it would prove a more simple machine than it looked on paper. The County Council did not meet the requirements of the labourer, who wanted to get his hand on institutions nearer his home. As regards the villages, the great blot of the Bill was that it did not attempt to reform the vestries. Again, while it did not go deep enough down to reform and revivify village life, it would have a very serious effect on the smaller boroughs of the Kingdom. They had hitherto enjoyed municipal independence, and had used it efficiently and carefully, but they would now be placed in a secondary position in regard to the County Council. He hoped that during its progress through Committee the Bill would be considerably modified in this respect. There was another point in the Bill to which he would like to refer. The future boroughs of this country would be at a disadvantage. If hereafter any rising manufacturing district desired to form itself into a borough, it would have to apply to the County Council, and would be under the control of its own neighbours as to whether it should become a borough or not. That was not an encouragement to municipal life. The County Council was, in fact, made a barrier to the development of municipal life in growing places, and it was also likely to be a check to the vigour and independence of municipal life in existing boroughs. What the Bill would give them would be a *quasi*-Parliament in each county instead of a Town Council in each district. There was only one way of creating a democratic government, and that was by commencing at the bottom and allowing a thorough system of government to grow up. They must commence with the people and deal with small areas, and then the larger Councils should be controlling rather than executive. In the Bill the County Council was the executive. They had, in fact, a small Local Government Board placed in every county far removed from the daily wants and thoughts of the people whom it governed, instead of a number of small bodies, well in touch with the wishes of the people. The hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) had spoken of the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk (Mr. F. S. Stevenson) as an attempt to kill the Bill. The hon. Member for the Bordesley Division seemed to sniff murder in the air; but that was frequently a habit of uneasy consciences, which heard, saw, and feared things which others knew had no real existence. That Amendment was placed on the Paper with no desire to interfere with the second reading of the Bill, but only in order to introduce a discussion that would bring home to the agricultural population the true character and defects of the measure. Although the Bill technically gave the villagers a right to a voice in local affairs by giving them the franchise, yet the right was not one that came home to their very doors, and they would consequently be disappointed because of its inefficiency. Hon. Gentlemen on his side wished it to be known in the country that they had raised their voices in that House to say that they believed the Bill to be defective because it did not go deep down into rural life.

MR. WHARTON (York, W.R., Ripon) said, that the principle of the Bill had been received with unanimity by the country, and he should say nothing with regard to it. The question he wished to deal with was one which, though of vital importance to the measure, he did not hear much about in the able statement of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie)—he meant the working expenses of the Bill. In connection with that was the question of the register. As it stood in the two Bills he apprehended there were to be three registers—one for Parliamentary elections, another for County Council elections, and another for District Council elections.

Mr. RITCHIE said, it was not contemplated there should be more than one register, but different lists.

Mr. WHARTON said, he was glad to have elicited that fact. The cost of the registers was a very serious matter. He had got information on the point from the West Riding of Yorkshire, and he found that the annual cost of the register was over £3,000 a-year. If the ratepayers of the West Riding were asked to pay £9,000 instead of £3,000 they would feel it very much, and he was therefore very glad to hear the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. In another way the working expenses might be very much reduced. He would like to see the period between the elections lengthened, and instead of having a triennial election to have an election once in five years. In the West Riding the cost of the election of the two Councils would be about £10,000, or an annual cost of £3,300. If the period between the elections were lengthened to five years, the annual cost would be reduced to £2,000. Another object of still greater importance would be obtained by lengthening the existence of the Councils—namely, they would get a better class of men on the County Councils. In the County of Durham the squirearchy, as it was called, scarcely existed, and the County Magistrates consisted of men of business possessing influence and property. They now devoted a considerable part of their time to county business, but they would be hardly likely to submit to the worry and loss of time of a triennial election, and the county would thus lose their services. A great deal was said outside the House by Radicals about annual elections, but he would like the ratepayers to consider what they would cost. He quite believed that what was often said was true—that the Radicals did not care a rap about the ratepayers. With respect to the police, he had a suggestion to make which he hoped the Government would consider. He would like to see the direct administration of the police left in the hands of the magistrates. Judicial power was left to Justices, and it was so connected with the administration of the police that he thought it would be an evil day when they were separated. He quite agreed that the ratepayers should have some purview of the costs, and he suggested that the administration of the police should be left in the hands of the magistrates, but that there should be a committee—not a hybrid committee, but one solely taken from the County Council—which should have the whole cost of the police submitted to them and the purview of the accounts on behalf of the ratepayers. In the event of any difference arising between the two it would be easy to submit it to the Home Office Inspectors, whose decision should be final. In that way all difficulty between the magistrates and the County Council would be avoided. Another point to which he wished to draw attention was that of the borrowing powers in the Bill, which he looked upon with considerable apprehension. The borrowing period was no less than 60 years; that he should like to see halved. The borrowing powers of County Councils would be enormous. For instance, the West Riding of Yorkshire would be able to raise no less than £14,000,000. The present indebtedness of the West Riding was £245,000, mainly caused by extraordinary expenditure on a new asylum. When they came to dealing with the question of borrowing powers, he trusted that the period of duration of the loans would be decreased and the amount which the local bodies were empowered to raise would be considerably diminished. Otherwise he was sure that in a few years they would hang a millstone round the necks of the ratepayers, which was far from being contemplated at the present time. He wished to see the Bill pass, and he also desired to diminish the cost of the new system to the lowest possible figure.

Mr. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding) said, that he had been taunted by the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) with having mistrusted the intentions of the Government in regard to the Bill; but the fact was that

that mistrust was shared by the hon. Member himself, and as the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Granby) had told his constituents in asking to be excused from saying anything about it at his recent election, on the ground that the draft of the Bill had been so much altered that he hardly knew it, he thought it extremely probable that in its original form the Bill was even less satisfactory than it was at present. No doubt the Bill was very different from that first submitted to the Cabinet.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): As that statement has been made more than once before, my noble Friend has authorized me to say for him, that he was misunderstood when he was supposed to say what the hon. Member has mentioned, that, as a matter of fact, he knew little or nothing about the contents of the Bill, and that if he was understood to say that the Bill had been considerably altered within his knowledge, then he has been wrongly understood. I can only add for myself that there is no foundation for the assertion.

MR. HALLEY STEWART said, he accepted the explanation that had been given. With respect to the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham, hon. Members on the Opposition side resented the dictatorial remarks of the hon. Member as to what attitude should be taken up by hon. Members on that side of the House towards any Government Bill. If the hon. Member wanted to give his advice, let him give it to the Party with which he was now associated, and not stand upon the Opposition Benches and dictate to the Members who sat there. He (Mr. Stewart) objected to the hon. Member setting himself up as tutor to a Party which was no longer identified with him, and with which he now had no affinity and no relationship. Besides, the hon. Member had contradicted himself, because last night he told them the Bill would remedy the chaos of rates and areas, and now he had said that the chaos would still remain. The Government might very well adopt, with regard to the Bill, the course which was taken on the Allotments Bill—show a conciliatory spirit and accept Amendments in Committee. There was no reasonable ground for derision, in the fact that an Amendment had been placed upon the Paper by his hon. Friend the Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk (Mr. Stevenson) for the purpose of expressing an opinion, and had been withdrawn because the question was to be discussed at a later stage in Committee. The last speaker (Mr. Wharton) seemed to regard a Parliamentary election as a nuisance, and to think that County affairs would be better managed in proportion as they were attended to by men of wealth and of leisure. But the Bill was a popular Bill, and its popular basis ought to find expression in the return of persons of all classes to the Councils. He (Mr. Stewart) did not despair of seeing agricultural labourers even on the County Councils, although the Bill was not framed in such a way as to make it hopeful that they would find a place there. Even the Secretary of State for War was afraid it would be difficult to get elected members to the places of meeting. The way to avert that kind of danger was to decentralize and to take from the County Councils duties which could be discharged by District Councils without the authority and supervision of the County Council. Hon. Members did not seem to appreciate how much the Bill took away from the dignity and honour of the small towns of England. It took away from them powers they possessed, and subjected them to the County Council, even in such a matter as taking the initiative in re-arranging the wards of a borough. Yet the franchise was to be given to the agricultural labourer, and with it ought to be given the power to administer affairs close to his own door. The extension of the political franchise to agricultural labourers had enlarged their lives, and had given them an interest in politics which they never had before; and they would receive an analogous educational benefit from being permitted to manage the affairs of their own localities. Such affairs included the maintenance of free libraries and reading rooms, children's playgrounds, public halls, meetings in schoolrooms out of school hours, the appointment of churchwardens and parish trustees, and the control of local charities. It was also necessary that the vestry, or some similar body, should have control over the Allotments question, as to which he was sorry to say that the Act of last Session had been practically inoperative, and had failed to provide them on anything like the scale necessary. In his own Division, 1,300 applications had been made for allotments, and up to the present hour not one acre of land there was held under the Act. Therefore, if they did not look upon Tory Government measures with the same magnificient expectations as the Liberal Unionists regarded them, they might be forgiven. The labourer had already been fitted for local government by the various organizations, political and otherwise, which were to be found in every parish, but the one thing which he wanted—namely, a voice in the management of the workhouse—the Government were refusing him. He (Mr. Stewart) saw no reason whatever why the agricultural labourer should not be able to send the man he had confidence in to sit upon the Board of Guardians.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, it seemed to him that the fundamental and backbone principle of the Bill was that they were to establish in every county, and in every district of a county, a Body which was to be elected on the broadest and widest basis, a Body which would have at the present time a great deal of power of local government, but which was destined ultimately, as he conceived, to eat up all the other powers which existed in the county, and to become practically the sole authority in all matters of local government. That seemed to him so vast, so important, and so far-reaching, that if the Bill simply consisted of that one provision it would be one of the greatest measures which had been laid before Parliament for many years. The Bill would throw a local life into county districts which there had never been before, and he could not understand hon. Gentlemen opposite objecting to the Bill simply because it did not immediately hand over every duty and function in the districts to the County Councils. He considered that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), in introducing the Bill, proved conclusively that if they were to attempt to put everything upon the County Councils at once, the County Councils would literally be choked by a plethora of food, which it could not digest, and the country would not so soon secure what this measure would ultimately give it- a real Home Rule scheme—in the true and proper sense of the phrase —by which the House would be relieved of a great deal of its present local functions. The Bill contained a great many other principles, and as a Metropolitan Member he desired to dwell upon a few of them. In the first place, he must say a word or two upon the subject of licensing. A great part of this debate had been a licensing debate, and although he should be very sorry to suggest that the subject of licensing was not worthy of a great deal of discussion, he thought, perhaps, it had had an undue importance attached to it. He had been strongly opposed by the Local Optionists because he had ventured to assert that they did not wish the locality to settle licensing; they wished to settle licensing in their own particular way, but they did not wish or intend that the localities should have power not only of closing public-houses, but, if they wished it, to open public-houses. It must be clear that if Parliament was going to hand over the power of licensing to a Local Body, that Body must not only have the power of closing, but also have the power, if it thought proper to exercise it, to open additional houses. He was not a lawyer, and he really cared very little for the legal criticisms that had been advanced as to the vested interest in a public-house. Whether the one side was technically correct or the other seemed to him to be altogether beside the mark. The practical question was whether they could by any possible means reduce the number of public-houses in districts where they ought to be reduced unless they gave proper and reasonable compensation. He maintained that it was impossible to think of it. He had sat on the Bench for a good many years, and many Members of the House had done the same, and they all knew that, as a matter of fact, it was absolutely impossible, however technically correct it might be, to take away a man's licence unless he had committed something against the law, simply because they wished to reduce the number of public-houses. He had had a great deal to do with the working people; he had visited them much, and he was quite convinced that if there was one thing wanted in this country it was a reduction of the number of public-houses in the great cities. He held that this licensing clause afforded a fair and reasonable means of reducing the number of public-houses. He could not be a party under any circumstances to interfering with a man's trade, which had been legally established, because the sentiments of the day had happily changed, and it was thought desirable to abolish it. He maintained, as one who was keenly interested in the reduction of drinking, and in the reduction of the number of public-houses, that the expenditure which might be incurred in effecting this object was a great and most desirable expenditure, and he would willingly pay his share towards any expense incurred in the matter. He could not understand how persons who professed such a keen desire to reduce drinking should hesitate to agree to a plan which would enable them to do this in a reasonable manner, and certainly in an effective manner. But, while he said this, he desired very much to draw attention to another part of the licensing question; and that was the question of the powers of the Licensing Committee. The Bill gave the Licensing Committee great powers. It gave them the power of closing public-houses on Sunday—a power which, in spite of the opinions expressed to the contrary, was a very proper power to give them, because if there was one question which was local more than another, except the one he would refer to in a moment, it was the power of closing public-houses on a Sunday. There were many districts which felt this keenly. He objected altogether to the election of a Body *ad hoc* simply for the purpose of licensing. He thought they would get a much fairer, a more impartial, and a much better Body if it was elected in the way proposed in the Bill. Candidly, he confessed he was rather suspicious of a body of "faddists." The question of licensing was a question of local government, and it should be treated as an item in local government. It should not be treated as a thing in itself, and localities would get much fairer and better adjudication by Bodies formed for local purposes generally. But, whereas the Bill went as far as handing over to the Licensing Committee certain powers as to the closing of public-houses on Sundays and other days, it did not give them power, as he thought it should, to settle the hours at which public-houses were to be open. If Parliament had never interfered with the hours during which public-houses were open, he should say it was a matter which might be left alone. But Parliament had decided to what hours these houses should be kept open, and he maintained that the settling of the hours in which this business should be carried on in the different districts should certainly be left to the Local Authorities. There were many districts in London which he believed, if appealed to, would say that public-houses should not be open until half-past 12 o'clock; while there were other districts in London which would say that such places ought to be open until that hour. If there was any question more local than another it was that of deciding to what hours public-houses should be open; and if any hon. Member moved an Amendment providing that this question should be handed over to the Local Authorities he should be extremely happy to support it. He was convinced that if hon. Members could adjourn, after the meeting of the House, for a few nights to various places within a mile of where they were now assembled, and see what went on in some public-houses which were kept open as late as they were now, for no legitimate need except for the worst purposes of public-houses, there would be no two opinions in the House that public-houses were now kept open to too late an hour. He, therefore, hoped that they would be able to put a clause in their Bill to give the Licensing Committee the arrangement of the hours to which public-houses in each district should be kept open. He was persuaded that this would be a very great step in the promotion of temperance and of thrift. He agreed with the hon. Member for Manchester that it was a question open for discussion whether they should not fix some limit of time for the Compensation Clauses. He was very much struck with that suggestion, because he thought it was a reasonable one, and one which would meet the views of a great number of hon. Members.

But there was another thing of very great importance which was referred to in the Bill, and which had hardly been mentioned, or only very slightly mentioned, in the discussion which had taken place, and that was the very great subject of State emigration by the Local Authorities. He thought that very few hon. Members had really grasped the great power which the Bill gave in this direction. This power was introduced simply by a parenthesis. Sub-section (*f.*) of Clause 66, page 56, provided—

> "For making advances (which they are hereby authorized to make) to any persons or bodies of persons, corporate or unincorporate, in aid of the emigration of inhabitants of the county, where there is reasonable cause to believe that the amount so advanced will be repaid by the emigrants, and that either with or without any guarantee for such repayment from any local authority in the county, the Government of any colony, or any other persons or person."

Now, he considered that that was a very startling and very serious proposal to introduce into the Bill, especially to introduce it in a parenthetical way. He himself did not share the views of many hon. Members in respect to the system of State emigration. The clause itself was worded very oddly, because it enabled Local Authorities to borrow money in order to transport any persons who were agreeable to be emigrated, with or without security for the repayment of the cost. This sort of State emigration could not really be a solution of the surplus population difficulty, though, no doubt, it was a very tempting way to get out of a difficult problem. He was sure that those who had gone into the subject must see that they could not possibly alleviate in any wholesale manner the congested labour market by any such clause as this. It was known that the population increased at the rate of about 1 per cent per annum. That meant that 350,000 additions were made to the population every year. From the emigration tables, however, he found that for the last 35 years the average number of emigrants had been about 250,000 a-year; so that our population at the present time was increasing, notwithstanding all the emigration we had had during the last 35 years. In addition to that, it must be remembered that they had to take into account the immigration of persons into this country. He thought the system of trying to promote in a wholesale manner the State emigration of paupers was a most dangerous thing to put into the Bill. It was an artificial emigration; it was not a real and *bonâ fide* emigration of men who would do good when they went out; but if it did secure that this class left our shores in large quantities, those, he asserted, were the very men whom it was well to keep at home; and if they were to send out paupers they would only get into hot water with the Governments of the foreign countries to which they were sent. He, therefore, thought that the power of promoting emigration, as proposed, was a dangerous power to give to the Local Authorities. It was especially a dangerous power if the Local Authorities were to be enabled to borrow money for the purposes of promoting it, for it then amounted to authority to borrow money in the hope of reducing the population and so raising wages.

Now, there was another matter of very great importance which had been referred to by many hon. Members, and that was the subject of making local contributions dependent upon indoor relief. He yielded to no man in his desire and anxiety to promote the well-being of the poor. He had had a great deal to do with the poor, and he asserted that it was not true to say that the Guardians, as a body, were hard and drastic, as had been asserted by hon. Members opposite. He believed that, especially in our great cities, there had been, during the last 20 years, an immense improvement in the quality of Guardians, and a very great deal done by Guardians to endeavour, on the most scientific, the most humane, and the best possible plan, to alleviate poverty, and to train men and women to become more careful, more thrifty, and better citizens. He believed that the principles that had actuated Guardians to serve as Guardians had been conducive of immense benefit to the people themselves. He was quite sure of this—that nothing was more unkind to the poor themselves than to give them an easy system of Poor Law relief. Those who had studied the Poor Law question, not only in the superficial manner which he ventured to say one hon. Member opposite who had recently spoken upon the subject appeared to have studied it, but those who had really traced the history of pauperism in the country, and gone back to the introduction of the Poor Law, and seen its effect on the poorer classes—those who had a practical knowledge of its working—

were certainly of opinion that the system of wholesale outdoor relief was not kind to the poor, and did not tend to make the poor happier or better, but, on the contrary, tended to demoralize them, to make them worse citizens, less happy in this life, and calculated to lead them to end their lives in great misery. It was no true kindness to hold out outdoor relief as the natural retiring pension for old age. The only true measure of pauperism was that which was in the workhouses. There were many deserving cases of people who, without any fault of their own, without any drinking or the indulgence in other bad habits, had come to grief and sorrow, and he was sure that the spirit of the charitable public would be to hand such persons over not to the Poor Law, but to the charitable organizations which were being established on a proper basis. He maintained that this proposal in the Bill would tend largely to develop the schemes of real, organized charity which were being founded in many parts of the country, and which, although they were often abused by superficial workers in charity, were doing real good in alleviating, and, at the same time, elevating and making more self-dependent, the great mass of the people. He, therefore, entirely differed from some of those who had discussed the subject; and in the real interest of the poor themselves, not because one form of relief was cheaper than the other, he contended that the proposed system of allocating this part of the local contributions was not only right and proper, but would tend largely to alleviate the sufferings, and to train the poor in habits of industry, thrift, and self-reliance.

There was another question that had been touched upon a good deal. He was one of those who had been keenly alive to the importance of reform in London. He believed that this Bill was the first great step of a most important change. The establishment of a County Council for London would do an enormous amount of good. It was perfectly true that it was only a beginning; but he ventured to say that this beginning was broad and solid, like the basis of the pyramid. The Council was to be formed on the broadest suffrage, and all that had to be added to it would be added from time to time with comparatively little difficulty. They would create in London a Body really elected, and having the sympathy and the support, and the confidence of the great mass of the people; they would establish this Body with great powers at present, but eventually invest it with still greater powers. It had been said that the control of the water and gas supplies, and other matters, ought to have been given to the County Council of London. He quite agreed that the Council should have such control; but he was sure his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board would have been most foolish to have put these powers in the present Bill. To have put in these powers would have wrecked the Bill. The Water Companies knew perfectly well that when this Body was established, in course of time all the powers which had been suggested would be handed over to the County Council as a matter of course. What they wanted was to bring out the local statesmanship of the different parts of London. If he might criticize the measure concerning London alone, he must candidly say he was doubtful whether in respect to London—he said nothing about the counties — the system of selected members would work. There were many arguments against it; there were many in favour of it; but his judgment, as a Londoner, was rather opposed to the system. He was very doubtful whether they would get better men by the system of selection. He was afraid that it would become the fashion for the better men not to put up for election, because they would imagine they had a right to be selected. That would tend rather to lower the whole Council than to elevate it. This was not a Party question in any way, and he was sure he rightly interpreted the feelings of the Government, and especially the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, when he said that their first desire was to make the County Council of London the best Council that could possibly be created. If it was generally thought that it would be better for all the members of the Council to be elected, he was sure the right hon. Gentleman would very gladly agree to such a system. Speaking for London only, he thought the principle of selection would be found to be a mistake. By the system of election they would bring out in all the districts that local talent and that local feeling of self-importance which was the real backbone of local government. They had not got sufficient of this feeling at present, and he was sure that this step of promoting local government in London was likely to tend, more, perhaps, than anything else, to make London what it should be—the great central power and leader of local government.

Now, the last matter he should refer to was the great question of borrowing and local finance. This was one of the subjects in which he was keenly interested, and he ventured to say that the borrowing powers of the Bill, and, indeed, the whole subject of finance, was the rock on which—if this Bill ever failed—it would fail. He regarded with great apprehension the powers given by the Bill for borrowing. Looking at the statistics, he found that in 1874 the Local Debt of England and Wales was £93,000,000, while in 1885 it was £173,000,000—that was to say that in 11 years it had increased £81,000,000, or by nearly double. During the same period the National Debt of the country had only decreased £28,000,000. The tendency of the Bill must be to increase expenditure. There was so much work to be done, so much legitimate work; but all that work had to be paid for and looked after very carefully. They would get on the Councils a number of ambitious men, lawyers, architects, surveyors, and engineers, all of whom would be anxious—very properly and earnestly anxious—to promote the well-being of their county, and many of the works they would do would, no doubt, be good works. If the works were to be paid for immediately out of the rates, he should not object to the Councils doing whatever they liked. If people were going to pay everything at once in hard cash he did not think there was much fear of their over-running the constable. If people were returned to the County and District Councils with the idea that they were going to spend money out of the current rates he saw no harm that could accrue, for those who ordered them to spend would pay the bill. It was altogether different, however, when they came to borrowing, because in borrowing they were pledging the future. In borrowing, the present members of a Board had the amusement and the delight and the pleasure of spending money, while they left the burden of repayment to those who were to follow them. This was a special danger at the present time, because money could be borrowed at so low a rate of interest. He did not say that in respect of *bonâ fide* things which were really wanted—such as important draining and gas works and water works, many of which were remunerative —money should not be borrowed; but he maintained that the tendencies to and the dangers of borrowing had developed very much of late. He went further, and said that the tendencies, in spite of the watchful eye of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, had been to meet current expenses out of borrowing. Twenty or 30 years ago the Railway Companies were always adding doubtful items of expenditure to their capital, and it was not until their capital was closed, and their expenses paid out of the current rates, that anything like a prosperous condition of the railways was brought about. Now, if he might be allowed, he would refer for a moment to a Parliamentary Return which was granted upon his Motion last year. He thought he should be able to show that, in spite of the vigilant eye of his right hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie), the tendency of late had been to pay current expenses partially out of borrowing. He found from this Parliamentary Return that a large town like Crewe borrowed in 1885 £500 simply for the purpose of erecting lamp columns. That was an expenditure which ought fairly to have come out of the current rates. The sum was to be repaid in 10 years. The Corporation of Derby borrowed £500 for a steam roller, and the sum was to be repaid in 10 years. That, surely, was a current expense. The town of Eastbourne borrowed £350, to be repaid in 10 years, for public lamps. Surely that, again, ought to have come out of current income. East Grinstead borrowed for 20 years £135 for hydrants. Surely that was a current expense. There were cases without end of this kind which he might quote, but he did not wish to weary the House by referring further to the Return. Anybody, however, who liked to look through the Return would find that this state of things had gone on for some years. Even last year, in spite of attention having been called to this matter, he found that the same state of things occurred, because Bangor borrowed last year £95, to be repaid in 10 years, for carts, and a road roller. Surely he was right in saying that showed that things which ought to be paid for out of current rates were being paid for out of borrowed money. In other places money was borrowed for water carts, for wood paving, and one of the last and worst cases was that of the town of Hartlepool, which had borrowed £4,500, to be repaid in 30 years, a large part of which was for the cost of obtaining Acts and Provisional Orders. That was saddling posterity with the law costs of the present day, and surely that was a most dangerous and wrong principle to go upon. He submitted that they must be very careful as to the borrowing powers included in the Bill. The Bill enabled County Councils to borrow to the extent of two years' rateable value. It enabled the County Council to borrow one year's rateable value without much difficulty, and two years with a little more difficulty. Now, the rateable value of England and Wales at the present time was something like £150,000,000, so that the Bill enabled the County Councils to borrow to the extent of £300,000,000—pretty nearly half the National Debt. He did not think there was any limit as to the amount that could be borrowed by the District Councils. Considering what was going on in the borrowing line, they could not be too vigilant and careful in this matter. He agreed also with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Ripon Division of York (Mr. Wharton) that the number of years for which money could be borrowed ought to be reduced—60 years was too long. Thirty years was one generation, and he did not think they had any right to saddle more than one generation with the borrowing for any purpose. However good the purposes were, 30 years would make a great difference in the estimation in which the work might be regarded. When they looked back 30 years and saw the many improvements in sanitation and other things which had been carried out at great cost, they constantly found that, in consequence of the researches of science and other advantages of knowledge, many things on which they had spent large sums of money had fallen into disuse long before 30 years had passed. Therefore, he hoped the Government would agree to limit the period for which money might be borrowed to 30 years for permanent purposes, and to 15 years for the smaller purposes. Certainly, for steam rollers and things of that kind, which really ought to be paid for out of current rates, the Bill ought to lay it down clearly that five years should be the maximum time within which any sum borrowed for such a purpose should be repaid. He himself should prefer that no such loans were allowed at all. They must remember that in saddling posterity in this way they were running a great risk. In the present state of our trade, and with possibly our coal running short, and in view of other matters, it was a serious matter to hamper posterity with enormous debts. He believed that if there was one danger ahead in the future of England it was that the people were being saddled with such a debt that would cripple them very greatly in the competition with other nations. He hoped that he had not wearied the House. He was anxious to make one or two remarks upon the Bill, because it concerned the people of London so very greatly. He rejoiced very much, indeed, that the Bill was being promoted, and he was extremely glad that the Government now in power had introduced it. Many of them had been agitating for this sort of thing for many years. They believed this was a *bonâ fide* measure, and they trusted the Government would persevere with it. They certainly felt that if a sort of passive resistance prevented the whole measure being passed this Session, which he sincerely trusted would not be the case, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would, by passing simply the clauses creating a Body in every district, elected on the broadest basis—practically by universal suffrage—established a claim to be ranked amongst the greatest social reformers of the present generation.

Mr. SLAGG (Burnley) said, the Bill had already had a somewhat remarkable career, and it had a still further remarkable feature about it with regard to the attitude of the country respecting it. It was introduced by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) in a speech which was universally admitted to possess very great merit. In many respects it was a brilliant effort, and brilliant also were the expectations which it raised in the minds of hon. Members—expectations which, he felt bound to say, had not been altogether realized. It had been stated privately, at all events, if not in public, that the discrepancy between the speech of the right hon. Gentleman in introducing the Bill and the actual measure might be due to the circumstance that the measure was not in a state of completeness when the right hon. Gentleman addressed the House.

Mr. RITCHIE: I cannot allow that statement to pass without contradiction. There is not the slightest foundation for such a statement.

Mr. SLAGG said, he would, of course, accept the explanation and withdraw his statement, which, however, if not founded on the facts, had, at least, some degree of probability. No doubt, a large section of the community were in favour of the Bill, and greatly admired it; it; but, at the same time, there was an extraordinary wish on the part of vast bodies of the population to escape entirely from its operation. A considerable amount of possible opposition had been destroyed by the fact that the right hon. Gentleman had withdrawn large areas of population from the operation of the Bill; but he knew perfectly well that many other communities desired equal good fortune for themselves. Yesterday there waited on the right hon. Gentleman an influential deputation from several important boroughs; and, as one of the Representatives of those communities, he was sure he could say on their behalf that they desired no better luck than to be left out of the provisions of the Bill, and he believed that if the wish of all those urban authorities in Lancashire who desired to escape from the Bill were gratified, the measure would not apply to more than about two-fifths of the people of the county. He desired to enter a word of protest against the principle of selected members. The House had, by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman when introducing the Bill, been led to believe that no such principle as this would be contained in it.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he had distinctly stated that there would be selected members, and he had mentioned the proportion of selected to elected members.

Mr. SLAGG said, the right hon. Gentleman had, as an illustration, stated that there was only one way of getting into the House of Commons, and similarly there ought to be only one method of entering the County Councils. The House was thus led to believe that the County Council was to be based upon the representative principle. That turned out not to be the case; but he (Mr. Slagg) must be allowed to express surprise that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), who once posed as a Radical, had, nevertheless, come forward to support that proposal of selected members, which was in direct conflict with the representative principle. He could only suppose the right hon. Gentleman was preparing his few remaining Radical Friends for his accession to the House of Lords. It was urged by hon. Gentlemen opposite that there was among Members of the Opposition a desire to oppose reasonable compensation being given to the holders of licences who might be deprived of them under the operation of the Bill. But the proposal in this Bill made no reference to "reasonable compensation." What was objected to was the proposal to recognize, by Act of Parliament, an absolute right to a vested interest in the licensee. He would not venture, not being a lawyer, to say whether they had or had not such a right under the present law; but he was quite certain there was considerable doubt and ambiguity about the matter, and what the Bill proposed was to settle the question in favour of the publicans once and for all time, and impose an enormous expenditure on the community. In the name of his constituents he strongly protested against this proposal. He quite agreed with the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries (Mr. Reid) that the licence-holder should be left to his own remedy to get what he could out of the Courts. The hon. Member who had last spoken (Mr. Bartley) said that the speakers on the Opposition side were opposed to "reasonable compensation." What was reasonable compensation? An elector wrote to him (Mr. Slagg), saying—

> "I want compensation for the disaster and destruction caused in my own family by those

men whose trade has inflicted such enormous injury on the community;"

and added—

> "I want compensation for the death and destruction of seven of my own brothers through the influence of this traffic which it is now proposed so richly to endow."

If such right already existed at law, there was no necessity to provide for it by the Bill. He believed that no such right existed, and that its creation would cause an enormous amount of injury to the community. He also objected to the emigration provisions. The subject had nothing to do with the main lines of the Bill, and seemed to be quite unnecessarily lugged into a measure wholly foreign to the subject. On what principle, he asked, did the Government propose to confer on the County Councils the power to grant aid in this matter? He disputed the necessity for any step of the sort. It surely could not be on account of the statement of the Royal Commission on Depression in Trade, which reported only a short time ago that the working classes, as a rule, desired no relief of the kind, and were, on the whole, in a fairly comfortable position. In 1846 there was great distress and lack of employment. But that distress was much relieved through the removal of the taxes on food; and he thought the Government would proceed with greater regard to logic and political economy, and with greater probability of success, by taking in hand the freeing of the land in a larger degree to the use of the people than by stimulating artificially the export of the best labour of the country. This proposal, moreover, appeared to him to conflict with existing emigration societies, many of which were doing their work fairly well, and he saw no reason why they should run a sort of opposition shop at the expense of the ratepayers. It ought always to be borne in mind that the result of such a scheme would inevitably be not to emigrate the really poor and decrepit, but the young and strong members of the labouring population and the skilled artizans. The arguments which applied to towns of over 100,000 inhabitants, and led the right hon. Gentleman to turn them into counties by the Bill, applied with equal force to towns of 50,000, which had hitherto governed themselves by means of their own local institutions, and with perfect satisfaction to the ratepayers. The effect of the Bill would be to submit these towns to the jurisdiction of the County Councils and to cause interference in many matters over which they at present had complete control, such as tramways, electric lighting, market tolls, and main roads. [Mr. RITCHIE expressed dissent.] As regarded the provisions relating to contributions in respect of main roads, these boroughs would be disadvantageously affected by the Bill. Outside the boroughs the counties might make miles of roads to which the urban districts would have to contribute. On what ground were these important communities interfered with? Further, as regarded the financial aspects of the question, he said that, so far as he could see, the balance of the contributions would be against the boroughs. ["No!"] That was what they all thought; and they would be greatly relieved when the right hon. Gentleman produced figures to prove they were mistaken. Many considerable boroughs were not counties, and it was those who might suffer from county extravagance. These boroughs were quite capable of managing their own affairs. He had heard the Town Clerk of York say that he considered that city would be some £6,000 or £7,000 a-year worse off. Those boroughs thought that they should spend their own money in their own areas, and in their own way. His own borough of Burnley was in that unfortunate position; and the power of resistance was immensely weakened by the fact that Blackburn, Bolton, Oldham, and other large towns had been made counties under the Bill. He urged that all boroughs of 50,000 population should be constituted counties. They were quite capable of governing themselves, and they would be greatly relieved to hear that the Government proposed to place them in that position. The right hon. Gentleman had fixed the limit of boroughs which had a population of 100,000 at the last Census. Was there any reason why boroughs which had not 100,000 inhabitants in 1881 who in future attained that population should not enjoy the same privilege? There were many towns of 80,000 or 90,000 inhabitants, and which would soon have 100,000. When they did reach 100,000, would the right hon. Gentleman be prepared to place them in the position of counties? He thought the request was a most reasonable one. So far as the towns he had in his mind were concerned, he believed they would be greatly relieved by such an announcement, and that they would submit with much better grace, provided they knew they would be emancipated when they reached the dimensions the Government had laid down. For his own part, he did not take a Party view of the Bill. He was thankful for good things, from whatever quarter they came. He only wished the Bill was a little more Radical than it was, and more in conformity with the description which in some quarters had been given of it. He trusted that the Government, which was all-powerful just now, would also be merciful and generous, and open wide the door to the improvements that were necessary to make the measure really complete and satisfactory.

MR. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey) said, he hoped the House would extend its indulgence to him on the occasion of his first attempt to address it. His apology for intervening was that he himself had discharged a variety of functions in regard to local affairs. He did not think the country would grudge the time which had been occupied in the second reading of the Bill, especially since they now had it on the authority of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) that the Bill might be correctly described as a revolutionary measure, and as it certainly would affect the welfare of the country more intimately and more permanently than any measure of purely political change could possibly do, and he thought the House ought to assure itself that this would be a revolution favourable to the best description of local administration and vitality. They understood that the main object of the Bill was to reduce the number of Local Authorities, and to simplify them, and to simplify and consolidate the rating and borrowing powers which were exercised in the interests of local administration. But he failed to see, from the Bill itself, in what way that expectation had been met. The number of independent rating and borrowing powers which would exist under this Bill was certainly not favourable to the very great and important consideration of economy, and this was of importance; because, though in the urban districts it had been possible to levy an increasing taxation upon assessment value, he ventured to say that in the counties it would be found impossible to do so. They had on every side the land passing out of cultivation, and the one chance which remained for keeping farming alive in many parts of the country required for its success that there should be an increased expenditure of capital upon the land. No one could venture upon that increased expenditure of capital on the land in the face of a certain increase of local taxation. He submitted that the House was bound to obtain security for economy. No doubt, complaint was made of the extravagance of the existing Urban Authorities; but the House must remember that Urban Authorities had been placed under the control of the Local Government Board, and that was the worst thing ingenuity could have very well devised. The extravagance, the enormous expenditure of many of the present Urban Authorities, really must be said to frighten the country. What he, from his experience, thought was that the restraint which it was possible for the Local Government Board to exercise did not operate in the direction of economy. He knew this—that in his own parish, against the wish of an enormous majority of the inhabitants, they had been forced under the powers of the Public Health Act to become a Local Government district, and also immediately afterwards, again, against the wishes of a very large majority of the inhabitants, they were forced to undertake a large but unwise scheme of resewering, the consequence being that they were now saddled with a debt amounting to £100,000. That disastrous expenditure would have been saved to the parish if the parish had been allowed to have its will, and if it had not been for the direct intervention of the Local Government Board. He would also point out that the limit of two years' rateable value which was fixed in the Bill for loans would be found illusory, because, no doubt, many ambitious authorities, having that power of expenditure before them, might be anxious to enter upon many schemes which they might think of benefit to their district, but when they had exhausted that limit it would not be possible for the Local Government Board to deny them the power of obtaining money for works that might be of the utmost importance for the population of the district; and, therefore, he thought that the regulation could only be said to be a paper regulation, and not one upon which reliance could be placed. There was one other matter upon which he should like to be allowed to say a word. He was aware that the Parties on both sides of the House were seriously anxious to ameliorate the condition of the agricultural poor. But they could not do it; their legislation must inevitably be useless, unless it was administered by men who had sympathy with it and thoroughly understood it. The House must take into consideration the fact that, in the areas of representation in agricultural districts, they would have as representing local feeling practically the same class of men as at present constituted Boards of Guardians. Well, the success of this class with the administration of such provisions of Parliament as the payment of school fees under the Public Elementary Education Act, and the administration of the Allotments Act, had not been such as to encourage the House in entrusting to them legislation which had for its purpose the amelioration of the condition of the agricultural poor. What he thought the House should grasp was that they did not do all that could be done in simply making provision for the election of people to do things which the public in many cases could do for themselves, and he thought that the only useful resource for the agricultural poor would be such meetings of the inhabitants of a district as used to be held in the Vestries. The power of the Vestries had been very greatly reduced, but they would do a very valuable work if those powers were increased. Parish committees could be formed for almost every purpose; the duties falling upon them could be undertaken and discharged by those in direct contact with the local conditions. Parliament could group the parishes as much as they pleased for electoral purposes in connection with the County Councils, but they could not group them for local administration. Parish boundaries were marked out frequently by differences of conditions which had established themselves, and not by the edict of any authority foreign to the local habits of the people, and he must submit that they would have in parish committees, fairly elected in open Vestry, a superior administrative body than they would possess at a parochial board, for instance, because the very best men would be procured. The very best would consent to serve on parish committees for some particular purpose, and that only, and would be available, though they would not consent to be elected on a parochial board for a fixed or long term. He must say that he thought the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), that the parishes were too dead for any successful resuscitation, was not a statement borne out by the facts. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that, having listened very attentively to his speech. He (Mr. Stephens) submitted that every man living in a country district practically was attached to his parish and his county, and if it had been possible to invest the parish with any considerable administrative faculty, he thought that all classes of the community would have been benefited. They would have had that local knowledge which was so desirable before action was taken in matters of local administration. By this means, with, of course, reference on all questions of great importance to the County Council, they would have been able to obtain a far simpler form of administration than that which would exist under the present Bill. It was a matter to which the traditional feelings, and he might say the affections, of the people of the county would attach themselves with much greater force and intensity than they ever would do under the numerous, and to them strange, authorities and areas which would be constituted under this measure.

Mr. T. ROBINSON (Gloucester) said, he did not intend to detain the House very long, because other Members were desirous of speaking, and in the few remarks he should feel it his duty to make it was not his intention to offer opposition to the second reading of the Bill. He approved of its main principles, giving ratepayers in the counties the management of their local affairs; but he did not think the representative principle was carried far enough in the Bill, and he hoped the Government would consent to make it complete in

Committee. There were several other objections he had to the plan and method the Government had adopted to give effect to the principle of the Bill. Some of the matters had been alluded to by previous speakers, and he would, therefore, reserve anything he had to say upon them till the Committee stage of the Bill. There were, however, two subjects he desired to allude to, and the main point to which he would call the attention of the House was the case of boroughs of under 100,000 inhabitants, which he considered were not fairly dealt with under the provisions of the Bill. The public were satisfied with the way the boroughs had managed their affairs, and were looking for a Bill to extend municipal government to the counties; but this far-reaching proposal affected every town and county in England and Wales. The Government were not content with disestablishing boroughs of under 10,000 inhabitants and crushing out their municipal life, but proceeded to interfere with all towns between 10,000 and 100,000 inhabitants, throwing them into the counties for certain purposes. He appealed to the Government on behalf of all those boroughs, and expressed a hope that as far as possible they might be allowed to retain their privileges; but he would make a special appeal on behalf of the City of Gloucester, which he had the honour of representing, and the seven other places which were now cities and counties in themselves. Their claims for consideration were much stronger than those of the other boroughs alluded to. Gloucester was working under a very old Charter which was given her many years ago, for good conduct and the interest then taken in her good government. One might almost say that in these cities Local Government originated, and they could not be surprised that they were not willing to give up their independence—they might call it sentiment if they liked, but the people of Gloucester would not willingly give up the liberties handed down to them by their forefathers. He objected also to the financial arrangements in the Bill. He admitted the distressed state of agriculture, and that some relief in taxation should be given to it; but there was also great depression in towns and much depreciation of property, equal to 50 per cent in some cities, and that, coupled with the higher taxation in boroughs, made their claims equally strong for their fair share of the allowance for relief of taxation given under the Bill. They had had some experience in the allowance Parliament had previously granted for the repair of the main roads of the country, and the largest amount Gloucester—with a population of nearly 40,000, and a rateable value of, say, £150,000—had received in any one year was only £84. He was, therefore, in great doubt as to the share boroughs would receive of the taxes and licences proposed to be allowed for Local Government under the present Bill, so many demands had to be satisfied before they got anything; and he feared that their share would not be anything like equal to the extra tax they would have to pay to the County Councils for the repair of all the main roads of the county, many of which were much inferior to the city roads and footways. It must also be borne in mind that the County Councils would have power to contribute to roads in the county which were not main roads, and, altogether, large demands might be made upon the borough rates which would be far in excess of any contribution they would receive. He admitted it would be a good thing to settle the vexed question of licensing; but he submitted that legislation was undesirable unless the proposal held out the prospect of a fair and final settlement of the question. At the present moment neither the licensed victuallers nor the Temperance Party were satisfied with the Licensing Clauses of the Bill, and he thought the Government would be well advised if they withdrew the clauses altogether, and allowed the matter to stand over until a nearer approach to agreement could be arrived at. He was the more anxious that that should be done in order to avoid the matter being mixed up with the first County Council elections, because it might prevent the best men being chosen in all cases. There would be plenty of work for the County Councils to do without the licensing, and those duties could at any time hereafter be given to them if thought desirable. He thought the President of the Local Government Board was desirous of dealing fairly with all constituencies, and he appealed to him with confidence to allow all cities that were now counties in themselves to be treated in the same way as were the large boroughs alluded to in the Bill.

Mr. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said, it was not his intention to add any very lengthy remarks to the debate, but he thought that no one who had considered the question of county government could have failed to see that they had a multiplicity—an endless multiplicity—of authorities in connection with such government; that the areas were of a complex and complicated character, and that, at the present moment, the local rates were not, as they would like to see them, consolidated. When they read through the clauses of this Bill, and remembered that in the immediate future it would become law, they would see that they would then have the germs of a system by which they could diminish the number of Local Authorities, simplify the areas, and consolidate the rates. He had listened with some attention to the debate, and if there had been any remarks made antagonistic to the scheme as proposed by the Government, they had mainly been to point out that the measure began from the wrong end. Now, he ventured to say that the measure did not do so in any form or shape. Hon. Gentlemen opposite contended that they should have commenced to build up this system from the old parishes throughout the length and breadth of the country; but, as had been said by many other speakers in the course of the debate, the parishes of the country were very numerous. There were, he believed, no less than 15,000. Now, the work of re-arranging all these parishes must be a work of very great length and very great complexity, and he thought the Government had acted with wisdom and discretion in first establishing a grand system of County Councils throughout the length and breadth of the country, giving them ample and sufficient powers, and enabling them to simplify the local districts as might be found most desirable. He would now say one or two words as to the clauses in the Bill dealing with the question of police. Objection had been taken that the police were not, as they had been heretofore, placed under the magistrates. Other hon. Gentlemen had contended that it would be desirable to have jurisdiction placed in the hands of the County Councils. He thought the Government had hit the mean between the two extremes, and had done it in a very satisfactory way. On the one hand, the magistrates were to continue to have legal jurisdiction in the counties, and necessarily, from that fact, they would be brought greatly into contact with the police. On the other hand, the police would have to make some reports to the County Councils, who would have certain administrative duties to discharge, and he thought the Joint Committees of the Magistrates and County Councillors would work satisfactorily. Why did he think so? Because he found that under the Poor Law system the Boards of Guardians were partly composed of magistrates and partly of elected representatives of the people, and they worked very satisfactorily. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, he was speaking on this matter from practical experience. He found also that this system of joint action had worked well in connection with the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act. Joint Committees had been formed partly composed of magistrates and partly of farmers, and those Committees had done very valuable and satisfactory work. He should like to say one or two words in regard to the police in the Metropolis. He held that the Government had acted, if he might say so in all humility, very rightly and wisely in determining that it would be indefensible to take away from the Home Secretary authority over the police in the Metropolis. In London there was a population of 5,000,000, or nearly, and the Home Office had under its jurisdiction a body of about 15,000 police; and when one took into view the advantages and disadvantages of giving the control of the police to a popularly selected assembly, one could not but remember that the force in such a place as the Metropolis would not be able to act with that promptitude and decision which was desirable if controlled in that way. No Government worthy of the name would have given up the power which the Home Office had so well exercised in connection with the police of the Metropolis. He had listened with great interest to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill), who, with great care and trouble, had gone into questions relating to the Poor Law system of this country. The hon. Member had contended that it would have been desirable in the Bill to have dealt also with the Poor Law system. He (Mr. Webster) totally disagreed with the hon. Member on this point. No doubt, in the future, reform of our Poor Law system would be necessary, and, no doubt, also in the future it would be desirable to alter the system known as the Metropolitan Asylums Board; but they must not load their machine too much at first. Everyone who had sat on the Poor Law Boards knew the vast amount of work that the machine had to do from time to time, and he thought that until they had got their new Boards fairly working it would be undesirable to add to their duties work in connection with the Poor Law system of the country. And now a word with regard to the mode of electing these Councils. Hitherto, in the remarks he had had the honour to address to the House, he had used nothing but words of praise in reference to this most important measure which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) had brought in; but as to the mode of electing these new County Councils, he should like to say that he found there were to be two different Bodies. There were to be gentlemen elected directly from the ratepayers, gentlemen who were to be called "elected Councillors," and there was to be another body of selected Councillors, which answered precisely and identically to the present selected Aldermen of borough Corporations. Now, the name was nothing. If he were to be a selected Councillor, it would be nothing to him if he were called an Alderman or a selected Councillor; but it seemed to him very strange that a Conservative Government should do away with a name such as "Alderman," which, he believed, had been in use in this country ever since Saxon times. But with regard to these new Bodies that were to be partly elected and partly selected, let them see what the state of things under the Bill would be in the new County of London. They had not got the number of Councillors that were to be sent from the Metropolis to the Central Council; but he trusted the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would give them that information on the earliest possible occasion. But, presuming that London sent to the new Central Council 60 elected Councillors, and that there were added to that number 20 selected Councillors, supposing —which was not improbable—that the first election was fought upon the question of rates, or of licensing, or—as he hoped might not be the case, for up to now they had had no politics infused into political life in London—on political lines, if 31 members were returned by one party and 29 by the other, the majority might have the whole of the 20 selected Councillors. Now, they must look at facts as they were. What would be the result of this? The majority of 31 would add 20 to their number, which would give them an enormous majority on the Council, not only for three years, but in all probability for six years. So that, instead of having 29 on one side and 31 on the other, they would have 29 and 51. He had heard the valuable remarks made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall (Mr. Courtney), and although he (Mr. Webster) did not go so far as the right hon. Gentleman with regard to proportional representation, he would venture to suggest that it would be inadvisable to allow the majority of elected Councillors to have full power of selecting men of identically the same views as themselves. He would, therefore, venture to suggest that, presuming the number of selected Councillors to be 20, out of every five of them an elected Councillor should only be allowed to vote for three. The result would be that, presuming the majority of elected Councillors to be 31 and the minority 29, the majority would have the right to return 12 selected Councillors and the minority eight. Now, he could not understand why, contrary to the principle pursued in connection with all Municipal Corporations in the country, and to their declaration that they were aiming at unity in their system of local government, they should have done away with the plan by which one-third of the Body retired annually. Of course, the objection would be raised that it was undesirable to have the trouble and fuss of a contested election every year. There might have been something in that objection when they had what was called "open elections;"

but now, under the Ballot Act, he ventured to say that even during a contested Election they could go through Southwark, and, except that they might see a few bills about and notice a few carriages with the names of the candidates on them rattling about the streets, would not know that anything unusual was taking place. Therefore, he could not help thinking that, having gone so far in the direction of the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, the idea of one-third retiring annually might surely be retained. There was another point on which he was, perhaps, more averse to the views of the Government than on those he had mentioned, and that was as to the idea of co-optation in the case of a vacancy. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall had said — and he (Mr. Webster) believed he was quite correct in his statement—that the London School Board had co-optated gentlemen from time to time of the particular views of those whom they succeeded. But that system had been departed from on a very recent occasion. In Marylebone, which included the whole Parliamentary Division of Hampstead—that was to say, in a district which returned no fewer than nine Members to the Imperial Parliament—a member of the School Board either died or retired, and what did the School Board do? They did not go into the district of Marylebone, where they would have found a population of no less than 600,000 individuals to select from, but they went outside and selected someone—some unknown man—whose views were totally contrary to the previous member of the Board. What was the sequel? Why, on the very first occasion that a School Board election occurred this gentleman was sent back to his pristine obscurity, and a gentleman was elected who was known to the ratepayers. That showed that the co-optative system had failed. If this measure had a serious fault in it, it was this. The Government had totally lost sight of the fact that the districts of London had practically very little in common. Take London as a whole, what did the people of Westminster know about the people of Rotherhithe; and what did the people living in St. George's, Hanover Square, know about the people of Whitechapel? In the scheme there was no continuity between the Central Body and the Local Bodies. Under the present system—be that system good, or be it bad—the individuals who represented London on the Central Body had to go down from time to time and report to the Local Bodies, and had to be thoroughly in touch with them. Under the co-optative system they might have a district for four or six years unrepresented. It appeared to him that it was very desirable that they should make the whole include the part, and should say that if a man was elected to the Central Council of London he should *de facto* become a member of the Local Council of the district in which he happened to reside. Otherwise he (Mr. Webster) ventured to say that on many questions where there was to be a certain amount of in-working between the Central Body and the Local Body they would get the members in collision on questions of main drainage, arterial drainage, and minor drainage, of the parochial system, of main or arterial roads, of Building Acts, and many other Acts. Unless they did something to keep the Central and Local Bodies in touch, he ventured to say there would be a great deal of friction in their working. He would not longer intrude upon the time of the House at this stage of the Bill. He would do everything in his power to support the measure as a useful and valuable one; and he sincerely hoped that when the new Council was formed they would get what the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board expected—namely, useful and valuable men serving on that Body. He did not think, as a matter of fact, that at the present time they had altogether an unsatisfactory body of men serving on the Central Governing Body of London; but that was merely a personal expression of opinion. He ventured to say—and this should be one of his concluding remarks—that it was no fault of the members of that Central Body that they were indirectly elected. The Body existed as the House of Commons formed it 33 years ago. The House of Commons had formed it, and had ordered it to carry out gigantic improvements from time to time. It had thrust on the shoulders of the members the carrying out of some 200 Acts of Parliament, and those gentlemen had done their duty to the best of their ability. If in the past one or two officials had failed in their duty, the House should not judge of the working of a great system by a few isolated instances. Those who went to Spring Gardens to their administrative work did so with the consciousness that they had the interests of a population of half as much as the whole of the Municipalities of England and Wales to attend to; and from the mere statement of that fact hon. Members would see how much work the Central Governing Body of London had to perform. Not only would the new Central Body have the duty of carrying out the Building Acts, the Parks Acts, the Fire Brigade, and many other Acts, which had been thrust on the Metropolitan Board of Works by Parliament, and not only would they have to spend 30 or 50 hours a-week at such work, but they would also have to perform a vast number of administrative duties now performed by the magistrates of Middlesex—including licensing and work in connection with tramways and electric lighting—and many duties now discharged by the Government Departments. He hoped that for this work the best men would be found.

MR. A. THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.) said, he regretted that the duties of the new Councils would not include the administration of the Poor Law and the control of board schools. Something, however, was to be said as to the danger of overloading the Bill. Perhaps those duties would be allotted to the Councils at some future time, for certainly, as he understood local government, it included authority over the administration of all local expenditure. In regard to the Licensing Authority, he regretted that the first time the principle of allowing licensed victuallers compensation when the renewal of a licence was refused had been recognized in a Government Bill. The elected Body might, he believed, have been entrusted the same power of renewing or refusing licences as the Justices. Whether the Justices had authority to refuse renewals was a point in conflict between legal authorities on either side of the House; but he had known cases of refusal, and the new Body might well have been entrusted with the power untrammelled by compensation. So far as his experience went, popularly elected Bodies were not prone to rush into extremes, and he did not share the fear that there would be anything like an epidemic of fanaticism in the new Body, or that they would act otherwise than as reasonable men. He approved of the power to close public-houses on Sunday; and as to such an action leading to the establishment of bogus clubs, he referred to the experience of Welsh towns, where the Sunday Act had had a fair trial. No doubt, at first, there had been many bogus clubs. Six months ago there were many such in Cardiff; but the powers of the law were quite sufficient to deal with such irregularities, and the prosecutions by the Inland Revenue had reduced such clubs to a very limited number. To the principle of selected members he was opposed. Having been a member of a Town Council for 10 or 12 years, he believed no worse policy could be pursued than that which was proposed in the Bill. All members should be elected directly by the people. It was their duty to see that those who were to be entrusted with such important duties should have the confidence of the people. If those Councils were to be kept free from jobbery, there was no other way by which it could be done than by public election. He would, however, support a proposal to elect a certain number for six years, believing that there were many men whose presence on the Council would be of great value, but who would not undergo the ordeal of election for a shorter period. He did not like the principle of making doles from the Central Authority for the relief of indoor paupers, and feared it would act as an encouragement to indoor relief. He was glad to hear that the system of tolls in South Wales was to be abolished, otherwise the Bill would act very unjustly. Other minor points he took exception to, but they were such as were to be discussed in Committee, and it might be his duty to support Amendments then; but to the second reading of the Bill he gladly gave his support.

MR. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow) said, that the Bill failed to grapple with the question of Local Government, as it merely proposed to transfer the powers which had hitherto been exercised most effectually by the Local Government Board to the new County Councils. The proper name for the measure would have been "A Bill for transferring to the County Councils the local powers now exercised by the Local Government

Board and the Quarter Sessions." He did not believe that the Bill would effect any real improvement in our system of Local Government. In fact, it did not attempt to do so. He approved of the measure as far as it did not propose to deal with the Poor Law administration and left it under the control of the Poor Law Guardians and the Poor Law Board. What he wished to point out to the Government was, that there was a very effectual system of Local Government already in existence. In the first place, there were the Municipal Corporations, having the control of the Local Government of boroughs, and he had not heard in the course of the discussion any complaint that those Corporations had been remiss in the discharge of their duties, or any assertion that it was necessary to supersede them. Our present system of Local Government was established by the Act of 1875, which was based upon the experience of the Acts of 1848 and 1858. The Local Government in the country districts was under the control of the Rural Sanitary Authorities, checked by the Local Government Board. By means of these Bodies they governed the whole area of England and Wales; there was no part of England and Wales that had not got them. They might talk about popular government, but, in fact, everything they had put into the hands of the new Bodies either was or might be put in the hands of the Local Boards or the Rural Sanitary Authorities, and in that way they might have everything that was required in the form of Local Government transacted by Bodies actually in existence. What was there that could not be done by these Local Boards or Rural Sanitary Authorities if there were a disposition on the part of the Legislature to increase their powers? They had already almost everything that was requisite for the management of the police in the Local Boards of Health or the Rural Sanitary Authorities. Did they want to regulate the line of buildings? The Local Board had power to do that under the Act of 1875. Did they want to supply a district with water? Did they want to sewer, to pave, to flag, or to cleanse a particular district? All the powers ordinarily exercised by Municipal Corporations were already vested in the Local Boards of Health or the Rural Sanitary Authorities; and if there were any deficiency in the execution of those powers, if there were any real call for amendment in the Local Government system, he should have thought the Government would have addressed itself to the grievances which Corporations in towns, Local Boards in urban districts, and Rural Sanitary Authorities in rural districts had failed to recognize. In this respect the Bill was utterly powerless. It did not even attempt to remedy any deficiencies in the administration of those Boards. Those Boards might be efficient or inefficient. If they were inefficient, their inefficiency would remain after this great Bill had been passed, because there was nothing in the Bill which in the slightest degree tended to remove those inefficiencies. If the Boards were efficient, he failed to see what was the object of the Bill; because it really did not touch our local system of government—our proper system of what he called Local Government. If there were any deficiency in the system, he thought it was the general opinion that it had arisen from the fact that the Local Boards did not confer upon their members sufficient distinction to attract the distinguished and the more valuable residents in the districts as members, and the same observation applied to the Rural Sanitary Authorities and the Boards of Guardians. Of course, he knew, and the House knew, that the Guardians of the Poor were, in another capacity, the Rural Sanitary Authority, and the Bill in so far as the Guardians were the Rural Sanitary Authority proposed to operate. But did it meet the objection he had pointed out? It did nothing of the kind. The real objection was the want of status in the members of the Local Board; the want of real dignity in the members of the Rural Sanitary Authority; the want of interest also in the people who elected those members, and sent them as their representatives. He asked the House, and he candidly appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) who introduced the Bill, because he was as anxious as the right hon. Gentleman was that the Bill should be a success, and that it should do real good, instead of doing mischief, which, in his opinion, it was calculated as at present constituted to do—he asked the right hon.

Gentleman if he thought that by subjecting the Local Boards of Health and the Rural Sanitary Authorities to the control of a County Council elected by the same class of constituency, he would perfect the organization of the Local Boards and Rural Sanitary Authorities, which, for convenience, he (Mr. Ambrose) might call the real Home Government? What was the County Council? It would be elected probably upon the question of the liquor traffic. It was impossible to disguise the fact that, when they came to elect County Councils, the question as to whether or not men were fit for the management of county business would be altogether subordinate to the question of the day—namely, whether or not brewers should prevail, or the Temperance Party should prevail. Men would be elected not because they had much experience in the management of county affairs, but because they were willing to pledge themselves to the teetotallers on the one hand, or to the brewers on the other. Now, he asked, what would be the position of local members of the Rural Sanitary Authorities in connection with such an authority as that? Why, on every question material to the interests of the district the Local Boards and Rural Sanitary Authority would be controlled by the votes and opinions and the authority of the County Councils. The hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Slagg), in the observations he made a short time ago, put it to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board that the District Councils would be fettered and degraded by the control of the County Councils, and thereupon the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) said that would not be the case, adding that it was only in case the Local Board wanted to borrow money that there would be any necessity to put themselves under the control of the County Council. But that only confirmed him (Mr. Ambrose) in the view he formed when he read the Bill—namely, that the draftsman had not realized what he intended to confer on the County Council. He (Mr. Ambrose) found that the work intended to be conferred on the County Council was composed of two parts. First of all, they had the jurisdiction of the Justices at Quarter Sessions other than the judicial duties—he thought they were called in the Bill ministerial duties. That formed one part of the duties that were to be performed by the County Council. As a matter of fact, it was an utterly ridiculous jurisdiction, because those duties had hitherto been admirably performed by the Justices. He spoke for Lancashire, of which he had actual knowledge and experience. He believed that there they set apart one day of the year for the discharge of those duties. Of course, there was a Finance Committee to attend to matters of finance; but the whole of the ministerial duties which had to be transferred to the County Council were in Lancashire discharged by the Justices in Quarter Sessions assembled at Preston. The draftsman, no doubt, felt that it would be an idle thing to create a County Council for the mere purpose of discharging such duties as those; so he had gone on to provide for the transference to the County Council of duties hitherto discharged by the Local Government Board in London—duties which he (Mr. Ambrose) would point out, if he were not wearying the House, were expressly of an appellant character, or of a *quasi*-judicial character, requiring the skill and experience of an expert rather than the qualities which were supposed to be incident to any popular assembly. Might he call attention to the duties which were intended to be transferred to the County Council in connection with the government of a district? He would only call attention to three or four, because they were all exactly of the character he had described. He had already pointed out that the originating work in connection with Home Local Government was vested in one or other of the Bodies he had mentioned. It was thought proper by the Legislature that there should be some sort of check upon Local Boards in the exercise of their powers, and, accordingly, certain powers were vested in the Local Government Board, composed, as he believed, of various Ministers of the Crown, presided over by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. He had had considerable experience during the last 25 years with regard to local government business, and during the whole of that time he had never known any real complaint made against the Local Government officials in respect to the exercise of the administrative duties devolving upon them by virtue of the Local Government Acts. Let him call attention to one or two of the duties of the new Council, which he assured the House were, as far as his judgment went, fair samples of all the duties. Of course, his remarks would not affect the second reading, which would be carried as a matter of course; but when they got into Committee he should have some Amendments to propose, in order to raise the questions which he had ventured to ventilate. Under the Bill there were transferred to the County Council certain powers, duties, and liabilities in connection with the Baths and Washhouses Act of 1846—as, for example, the approval of the adoption of that Act in a parish, and the approval of a resolution of the Vestry for adopting the Act. Under the Sanitary Law Amendment Act of 1874, power was conferred on the County Council to declare, as respects the Metropolis, a hospital to be within a convenient distance of the district of any authority, and under the Public Health Act of 1875 the County Council was empowered to sanction the adoption of name for "Local Board." The Local Board, when it adopted a name, was to have the sanction of the Local Government Board for that name, and it was actually proposed that the granting of this sanction should be transferred from the Local Government Board in London to the County Council. Then, again, the 28th section of the Local Government Board Act of 1875 provided for—

> "Sanction to the communication of sewers of one authority with those of another, and settlement of disputes as to terms and conditions of such communication."

He particularly asked the attention of the House to these different Acts; they were a very fair sample of the rest. Suppose a Local Board having control of a certain district proposed to communicate its sewers with those of an adjoining district. It could not very well establish a system of sewers, unless there was some connection with the adjoining district. Of course, that was a matter of terms, generally speaking. If one district had established a system of sewers, it would be very hard on that district that another district should be able to avail itself of the advantages which the sewers afforded, except upon terms of payment which would be really equitable as between the two districts. The Act of Parliament very fairly and properly said that it should be lawful for the Local Board of a particular district to have the right to avail itself of the adjacent sewers, or the adjacent system of sewers, upon terms, which were to be settled by the Local Government Board. Now, could the House conceive the absurdity of transferring a duty of that kind from the Local Government Board, with its staff of proper officials, having experience, having the traditions of office, having the rules of thumb by which they had already acquired certain experience and practice in relation to these matters—could anything be more absurd and ridiculous than that the terms upon which one district should avail itself of the opportunity of communicating with another district's set of sewers should be settled by an appeal to the County Council? A County Council which, he was told, might be composed of something like 60 or 70 members! If he was wrong, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would set him right.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that the number of Councillors would, of course, vary with the size of the county.

Mr. AMBROSE said, that, assuming the county to be of average size, probably the County Council would consist of from 60 to 70 members. But he did not care whether there were 40 or 50 or even more members. What he particularly desired to ask the House was, whether it was reasonable that questions such as he had mentioned should be settled by such an assembly as a County Council? A County Council would be altogether unfit for the purpose. Such questions would be determined, not by justice or fairness, or calculation, or in any judicial manner in which they ought to be, and in which it was intended, when the power was given, they should be settled, but they would be determined by various considerations altogether foreign to the real issue. And so they went on in the list of duties which were to be conferred on the County Council. The very next duty in order was that under Section 42 of the Local Government Act of 1875. That section gave power to require Local Authorities to "undertake or contract for the removal of refuse, cleansing of earth closets, privies, ashpits, and cesspools, and cleansing of streets;" and it further related to the sanctioning of a supply of water by one Local Authority to another, and the determination of the reasonable cost at which the owner of a house could be compelled to obtain a supply of water. Could anything be more ridiculous than the question of what an owner should pay for a water supply in his own district should be determined, not by the Local Authority of his own district, but by the County Council, a body composed very largely of men who were entire strangers to the districts? He asked the House before they parted with the Bill to look through the Schedule of the duties intended to be discharged by the County Council, for they would find that nearly the whole of those duties were of a judicial or a *quasi*-judicial character, utterly unfitted to be discharged by a County Council or by any popular assembly whatsoever, though absolutely proper and right to be discharged by responsible officials such as those now employed by the Local Government Board. There was a further consideration in connection with the matter, and it was that County Councils who were to discharge these duties would be composed of men three-fourths of whom, at least, would be absolute strangers to every locality except their own from which they were sent as representatives. Take, for instance, the great county of Lancashire. What would the people who lived North of Preston know of the affairs of the people who lived South of Manchester or in the neighbourhood of Manchester? If a question arose between a proper local Governing Body of a district and this new-fangled County Council, which was to be created he really knew not why, why should the majority of the county be able to determine the question against the wishes of the representatives of the locality? He could see no reason. In the case of the Lancashire County Council, in all probability the representatives of South Lancashire would outnumber the representatives of North Lancashire. He failed to see why in purely local affairs —on the question of the management of streets, for instance, or on the question of whether a Local Board should purchase land for the making a new street—there should be a right of appeal to the County Council. Suppose that a Local Board at Lancaster, or in some rural district just outside Lancaster, determined that it was expedient to make a new street, and that land should be purchased for the purpose, would anybody say there should be an appeal to the County Council, and that the matter should be settled by representatives from Salford, from Warrington, from Eaton Norris, and from Manchester, who knew as much about a particular district North of Lancaster as he knew about Timbuctoo?

Mr. RITCHIE said, he was sure his hon. and learned Friend did not wish to misinterpret the effect of the Bill. The hon. and learned Gentleman put a case in which a Local Authority wished to acquire land for the purpose of making a new street, and he said that the authority would have to appeal to the County Council. Nothing of the kind. If money had to be borrowed for purposes of that kind, the Local Authority would still have to come to the Local Government Board. If the Authority wanted to purchase compulsorily and required a Provisional Order, they would have to appeal to the County Council.

Mr. AMBROSE adhered to what he had said. He called the right hon. Gentleman's attention to his own Bill, with which he did not seem to be very well acquainted. On page 104 it was shown that one of the powers which was to be transferred from the Local Government Board in London to the County Council was "sanction to purchase by Urban Authority of premises for making a new street." There was nothing there about borrowing. That was wholly irrespective of the question of borrowing. A Local Board or a Rural Sanitary Authority was not authorized to purchase land for any purpose, but only for purposes within the Act of Parliament. When they proposed to purchase land for the purpose of making a new street, the Legislature had said, by virtue of the Act of 1875, there should be some check upon them. That check was vested in the Local Government Board. Before the Local Authorities used the ratepayers' money for the purpose of purchasing land for a new street—whether they borrowed the money, or whether it was the ratepayers' money originally raised by taxation—they must, at present, obtain the sanction of the Local Government Board. Under the new Bill they would require the sanction of the County Council. He was much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for the interruption. He really thought, when he read these clauses, that the right hon. Gentleman had not realized what it was he was putting upon the County Council. He had risen with much pain and a great sense of responsibility to make these remarks, and he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would do him the honour and the House and the country the justice to reconsider the powers which he was transferring from the Local Government Board to the County Council. He could not help feeling that the proposed transference would create considerable mischief. Take his own Division of the county of Middlesex. There were there two Local Boards—one at Willesden and one at Hendon. He did not think those Local Boards, or the inhabitants, would relish the idea of being controlled in any matters affecting local government by the opinion of the people of Uxbridge, of Enfield, of Ealing, or of any of the other outlying districts of Middlesex. So far from improving and developing Local Government, the Bill practically introduced another species of central government—not central in London, it was true, because they were transferring it to the County Council. What was proposed was foreign to real Home Government, foreign to real Local Government, and he hoped that, when the proper time came, the House would put its veto upon anything of the kind. As to the duties which it was proposed to transfer from the local Justices, he should have thought that, so long as the Justices were doing their duty fairly, honestly, and efficiently, that was a sufficient reason for leaving well alone. That question had been discussed, however, and he was anxious, on the present occasion, not to discuss anything which had been discussed before. He merely expressed his opinion with this observation that, as he understood it, it was proposed to have a joint committee of the Justices and the County Councils, and they must take it—just as they knew the great power the House of Commons had acquired by reason of its possessing the power of the purse—however the Government might think they were compromising the matter by appointing a joint committee, within a very short time, whether Parliament liked it or not, it would be found that where the power of the purse was, there all other powers would be drawn after it. The Justices, who were the conservators of the peace according to ancient usage, would find themselves at the mercy of the County Council, and would be required to preserve the peace without having the management of the police necessary for the purpose. They would be liable to indictment if they did not quell riots and exercise their authority as Justices, and so on. Yet they would not have the power of really controlling the police, but that power would be vested in another Body altogether. He was anxious to get to another topic; but he would point out that the great bulk of the duties to be transferred from the Justices of Quarter Sessions were strictly administrative in character, such as passing accounts which were similar to those of the Local Government Board in London, which duties would be better discharged by a committee of two or three members when the County Councils were established. There was another point which he should like to bring before the House which underlay the whole matter. They had, as he had pointed out, their Local Boards, which were to be the new District Councils, and they were based on the old principle of the Constitution—namely, representation according to taxation. It was proposed by the Bill, with great show, that the new scheme should be built upon a popular basis—nay, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had even used the phrase that this was to be an "enfranchising Bill." Well, was this an enfranchising Bill? He challenged the right hon. Gentleman, or any hon. Gentleman, to tell him one single individual who would be admitted to the franchise under the Bill who was not already entitled to a vote in every branch of our municipal life — for our Municipal Corporations, our Local Boards of Health, or our Rural Sanitary Authorities. Everybody who paid rates, whether the amount were small or great, and whether he paid them in fact or constructively in point of law—which was not paying them at all—[*Laughter*]—yes; by paying a weekly rent, where the landlord was called upon to pay the taxes. In every case of that kind, at the present time, every man who paid a weekly rent of a mere room was entitled to vote at all elections, whether for Municipal Corporations, Local Boards, or Rural Sanitary Authorities. Then, he wanted to ask, where was the extension of the franchise and the enlargement of the basis of our local government legislation? He failed to see it. There was nothing of the kind in the Bill; but he would tell them what there was. There was a disfranchisement of those who paid the rates. Under the present system they had the practice of voting according to the rates paid. A man who was assessed to the extent of £50 had one vote; a man who was assessed for a second £50 had a second vote, and for every additional £50 a further vote up to £250. In that way they had taxation and representation going together. They had representation in proportion to taxation. He ventured to submit to the House that that system was perfectly fair, and that no honourable or honest working man could object to it. He had never yet heard the slightest objection on the part of any working man to that principle, because he had not yet discovered that working men were at all anxious to over-reach their neighbours and obtain more power than they possessed at present. He wished to know why, when the principle of our Constitution was that taxation and representation should go together—why, when the principle was a vote for every £50 of rating, a man who got to the second £50 was not to have a second vote? He could see no principle in that. He should like to quote to the House an authority on that point, and it was one which he thought would be recognized by both sides of the House. John Stuart Mill, the venerable and eminent Radical philosopher, had laid it down—

> "That representation should be co-extensive with taxation, not stopping short of it, but also not going beyond it, was in accordance with the theory of British Institutions."

Commenting upon that, he (Mr. Ambrose) would say that when they destroyed, as they proposed to destroy, by this Bill the vote of the man who paid rates on a second or third £50, they took from him a part of his right—they enabled the man who paid rates only in respect of a sum under £50—it might be upon an assessment of £10—to vote with as much power as the man who was assessed at £100. Mr. John Stuart Mill went on to say that there were the same strong reasons for a plurality of votes. But these were not the only points the Bill dealt with. Everybody knew that if there was one class of our community interested in our rural districts more than another, particularly in the rates of those districts, it was the owners of property, because it was possible to have the inhabitants of a district actually driven out of that district by excessive rates. Cases of that kind had occurred within his own experience, and he was sure that they had also occurred within the experience of other hon. Members; yet, would the House believe it, that though the rates would be paid by the owners, and though owners of the present time were entitled to vote at the election of the bodies levying the rates, yet, under this enfranchising Bill, the Government deprived the owners of any vote whatever? He did not call that enfranchisement, but disfranchisement. It was a thing for which the country had not been prepared—namely, to find that this Bill, instead of being an enfranchising Bill, was a disfranchising Bill. And there was another matter still stronger in regard to owners, and it was this. If the Local Authorities took it into their heads that the sewers were not right, they had power to see them put right at the expense of the owners. What was the result? Why, in many instances, they had had Local Boards exercising powers of that kind most arbitrarily, and when questions had been raised about these things before the Courts of Law, the answers had been that the owners were represented on the Local Boards, because they had the power of voting. The Legislature had intended to give owners representation in that way. But, under this Bill, an owner might be subjected to all these expenses, and to a fine of any sum from £50 to £2,000, in respect of paving and sewering the streets, when such works were not required at all, merely by reason of the action of the Local Councils, in the election of which he had no power whatever. He (Mr. Ambrose) ventured to say that that was not the true principle of government. If they were going to reform and improve their Local Government, they ought to have something more fair than that. He knew it was said—"Well, but you have done this in elections for Members of Parliament." Yes, but the question was wholly different in connection with those elections. In Parliamentary elections questions of life and death arose, questions of liberty, and questions of the highest importance affecting the future of the country, and if he was told that the principle had been applied satisfactorily in the case of the boroughs, he would remind the House of the statement in regard to this matter by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), who had pointed out, in regard to the expenses of administration, that in the Municipal Corporations where they had the system of one man one vote, the increase during the past 30 years had been 67 per cent, whilst in other towns it had been 59 per cent, and in the rural districts, where there was a plurality of votes, it was only 12 and 11 per cent. When they came to the Boards of Guardians, they found that the rating had decreased considerably, whilst no one had ventured to assert that the administration of the Poor Law had been in any way defective. He had thought it necessary to make these observations. He apologized to the House if he had spoken at undue length. He had done his best to curtail his observations; but he did feel that it was of the highest importance that our Local Government Boards should be placed upon a sound basis. He warned the House that if they altered the existing system, making the Local Government franchise the same as the Parliamentary franchise, practically they would be introducing politics into our Local Government system, so that when they had a crisis in a Liberal Government there would be at least an interference with the administration of Local Government affairs, and the whole state and condition and satisfactory character of the management which had hitherto been adopted would be altered.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): It is really almost refreshing in the course of this protracted debate to have heard for once a speech which goes root and branch against the Bill, condemning it stock, lock, and barrel. I think we may all of us take credit for the character of this debate. I have never known a debate upon a great public question which has been upon the whole conducted in a manner so free from anything like factious or Party spirit. There have been, as the hon. Member for the Saffron Walden Division of Essex (Mr. Herbert Gardner) has said, only two remarkable exceptions, and they both came from the same locality. They hail from the latitude of Birmingham; and there has been thunder lately in that particular locality which seems to have turned the milk rather sour. We have had every kind of question lugged into this debate. We have had the Irish Question and the Unionists and everything which has nothing whatever to do with the subject under discussion. There was an attempt—I do not know for what reason—to import into this debate the bitterest elements of Party controversy. I think that is to be regretted. I do not complain at all that my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) should have pronounced a panegyric upon the measure of the Government. That is easy to be understood; indeed, it was natural, because he explained to the House that the plan was his own. I have observed that my right hon. Friend is always given to the most unbounded admiration of the plans which he himself has originated, and the most unbounded criticism of the plans of anybody else. He said that three years ago it was his duty to propose a Bill. He said his own draft was, in its main principle, in entire agreement with the Government Bill. Then the Government Bill is a mirror in which he sees his own face, and, seeing his own face, he naturally falls down and worships it. There are some defects, it is true, in the Bill, but then I suppose they are only due to flaws in the mirror. My right hon. Friend did, indeed, criticize the Bill on as many points as it has been criticized by hon. Members on these Benches, but perhaps not on so many points as it has been criticized on the Government Benches. But that, he thinks, is his exclusive privilege. He may say what he likes about the Bill, but we are to say nothing. He condemns everybody who spoke before him, and after he has himself spoken he disappears, but his henchman is left behind to denounce everybody who may speak after him. All is faction that is opposed to a Bill which has been adapted to his own model. We are accustomed to that sort of thing. His relations to the Government are of a conjugal character, and a man very often thinks himself at liberty to find fault with his own wife when he allows nobody else to do so. I leave him to settle that with the Government. I have no right to complain of his attitude towards the Government; they are his plagiarists, but he has forgiven them; but he falls foul of us. He administers his doses in different degrees. It is always treacle for the Government, pepper for the Liberals, but he gives the sourest vinegar to the Radicals. We have heard recently of the diplomacy the right hon. Gentleman has shown on the other side of the Atlantic, but I am sorry he has left those great qualities behind him there. It reminds me of what was said of the witches and the warlocks of old—when they crossed the water their powers of enchantment ceased. If the right hon. Gentleman would only apply to us the qualities which he exhibited elsewhere, I think he would be more successful in carrying out the object he seeks to attain. But what is the head and front of our offending? He says that some years ago we overlaid that promising infant, his draft Bill, and it never came to the birth. Well, as this has something in connection with the Irish Question, I think that that is permissible. But he says that this celebrated draft Bill was never completed or submitted to the House because the Government of the day thought it right to throw it aside with other items in order to take up the new programme on which the country had never been consulted. Now that is our fault. We ruined that embryo measure because we took up the Irish Question, and that is the crime which he lays to our charge. He is never tired of repeating it. I should like to know who was the man of all others who insisted that the settlement of the Irish Question should be advanced before any other question. He was the man who in 1885, when my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was out of Office, proclaimed throughout the country that so bad was the local—aye, the Imperial—Government of Ireland that the first duty of the new Parliament was to undertake the reform of that government. We all remember the speeches about Austria in Italy and Russia in Poland. What was that for? That was not all. He took part in turning out the Government of Lord Salisbury, knowing that it was to make place for a Government which would settle the Irish Question, the first and foremost of all questions. He actually addressed his own constituents, and he told them that he was at the head of the Local Government Board. [An hon. MEMBER: Question!] We have been attacked by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, and now we are not to speak; our mouths are to be shut if we say a word in reply to the right hon. Gentleman. I claim the right to show what our reply is. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham took Office, and he said he was the head of the Local Government Board, and he hoped to introduce a Local Government Bill. He said he was a Member of that Government, and he was more in agreement with his Colleagues in that Government than they had been with the Gentlemen who had been unable to support my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone)—he meant my noble Friend the Member for Rossendale (The Marquess of Hartington) and the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen)—and that the result of the General Election in Ireland had made it imperative that the attention of Parliament should be directed to the state of that country. He spoke of its unsatisfactory condition, and he said—

> "He was convinced that it would be necessary to concede to the Irish people much more extended control of their own domestic business."

And this is the Gentleman who comes forward and charges us with having set aside Local Government in order to take up the Irish Question. But it is not we on this Bench who are the great sinners; it is those Radicals below the Gangway that he falls foul of, the hon. Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) in particular, and he says that these Radicals actually had the audacity to hold a meeting to consider this Bill. That was one of their great offences. Just fancy the Radicals desiring to have an opinion of their own. We have heard before of Liberal Unionists meeting in Devonshire House to tell the Government what to do when Bills were introduced, but for the Radicals to meet in the National Liberal Club, that is a terrible thing indeed; it is a thing which ought not to be permitted; and so he said, in original and elegant language, "The tail wags the dog." Yes; but if it happens to be a high-bred tail from Devonshire House there is no objection at all on the part of the dog; that is all right; but as for the Radical tail—a low Radical tail—that is most deplorable. Yet I do remember that in the days of old, in the golden age of Parliamentary life, there was a tail, a Radical tail, below the Gangway, which used very rudely to wag the dog upon these Benches. That poor dog was my noble Friend the Member for Rossendale. Then he was declared to be deposed; he was told that he was "the late leader"; and yet we are reminded of the tail wagging the dog. What have the poor Radicals done? They have demanded that there should be a full discussion of the Bill. And here I feel bound to say that the Government have been much more reasonable in the matter than their Allies. I have no right to complain of their conduct; they have felt the responsibility of men who are in charge of an important measure; they know perfectly well that a measure of this kind must be and ought to be fully discussed. Something has been said of the Amendments put down to the second reading of this Bill. Why, it is one of the best understood proceedings in Parliament to put down Amendments in this way by Members who desire to call attention to a particular point in order to have the attention of Parliament fixed upon it. That does not involve, and even it is not intended to do, any injury to the Bill or to destroy it. The hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Stevenson) has been attacked most unjustly on that point. He was perfectly entitled to fix attention on a particular part of the Bill to which he attached special importance. But, Sir, according to your ruling, if this Amendment had been pressed, the debate would have been confined and restricted to that particular point, and not desiring so to restrict it and the liberty of Members, it was not pressed. My hon. Friend spoke on the point to which he attached particular importance. Therefore I, for my part, contrast the course which the right hon. Gentleman in charge of this Bill has taken with that of these champions who have infused a Party bitterness into it—a bitterness, however, which has been confined to only two Members. I hope I may say only two Members; I hope I shall not have to add the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I have been told—the paper yesterday contained no less than six important speeches—that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was extremely wrath at the protracted debate on this subject—that he said the debate was a great sham, that nobody attended it, and that nobody said anything worth listening to. I do not share that opinion. He knows a great deal more than I do; he has nothing to learn from any debate in the House of Commons. I well remember an observation of Lord Beaconsfield. He said—"I never understand a great subject which is brought forward until I have heard a long debate upon it in the House of Commons." And I will say a more instructive debate than that which we have listened to on this Bill, I have not heard for many days. I have heard Gentlemen speak who are thoroughly acquainted with the subject, and their speeches have been of the greatest advantage and utility toMembers of this House and persons out of this House. Now, it is said that after a long debate you do not mean to throw out the Bill. On the second reading of a Bill it is the province of Parliament to make itself acquainted and to make the country acquainted with the great subjects which such a Bill as this includes, and to call attention to these points. It is said, Why not wait until you come to the Committee? But then the mind of the House and the country is not prepared for these points when they arrive. Now, this Statute has illustrated that very well. There are a great number in this Bill of very important principles. The attention of the country and the House has been called by various Members to the importance of these points, and I believe when they come on in Committee it will be a great advantage to have had illustrations of these points. Now, take, for instance, the question of the police. I do not wish at this stage of the Bill to express any very decisive opinion upon this subject. We have heard opinions on the one hand that they should be left entirely to the magistrates, and on the other that they should be left entirely to the County Councils. We had an opinion on this subject expressed by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, who said that he was in favour of giving the control entirely to the County Councils; and he added these remarkable words. He said—

> "I am in favour of giving the control—that is, the absolute control—of the police to the popularly elected bodies in Ireland as well as in England. I believe the adoption of such a course would have a good effect, and that the responsibility we should thereby throw upon elected bodies would conduce to good order and peace in Ireland."

Well, it was quite worth while that he should make his speech in order to utter that sentiment. Well, I think I traced something of the earlier manner of the right hon. Gentleman in these sentiments, and I think we may contrast them with the declaration of the First Lord of the Treasury, that Ireland cannot have any form of Local Government at all until a condition prevails very different from that which now exists in Ireland. I call attention to that opinion expressed by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, because I confess I am utterly unable to understand how a statesman who entertains the opinion expressed in that sentence can support and maintain the present system of government in Ireland. Now, as regards this Bill, with the exception of the last speaker, everybody approves of the popular franchise which the Government have given. That is the great and central merit of the Bill. I hope it is not going to be tampered with in Committee. I believe it is important not only in itself, but for the effect upon other franchises. I think if it establishes this popular democratic franchise you will be utterly unable to maintain the limited and indefensible franchise for the Poor Law Guardians and the other parts of Local Government. I would especially call attention to this matter, because there have been requests made that the register of the county should be adopted instead of having a separate register for the County Councils. But I warn Gentlemen of one of the consequences of that, which must be carefully considered. It is not the franchise which is proposed by the Government in the counties. If you are going to introduce the county register with the county franchise you introduce the property vote, which has been excluded from this proposal. Therefore I hope that that demand is not intended to affect the franchise proposed in this Bill. There is another head of this Bill. Of all the matters in the Bill there is hardly one more important than that which has been insisted upon in the very able and convincing speech of the hon. Member for the Maldon Division of Essex (Mr. C. W. Gray)—namely, the effect of this Bill upon outdoor relief. There was also a very able speech on the other side of the House by the hon. Member for the City of Oxford (Mr. A. W. Hall), who pointed out, as I think with great effect, as one of the weak parts of the Bill, that it will have the unintended but, as I believe, the indirect effect of putting pressure in favour of indoor relief as against outdoor relief. Now, I do not join altogether with the hon. Member for the Ilkeston Division of Derby (Sir B. Walter Foster) with regard to the Poor Law of this country. I think, on the whole, it has been fairly and well administered, considering all the difficuties of the case. There has been struck on the whole, as far as I have been able to observe, a fair ratio between the amount of outdoor and indoor relief. In the country parish in which I live there is a small amount of indoor relief and not a large amount of outdoor relief. But the outdoor relief is greater than the indoor, and I believe it is fairly and well bestowed. It is bestowed upon all industrious people who cannot support themselves. It prevents the home being broken up, and has great advantages. I believe it would be a great evil if this grant of indoor relief should have the effect of compelling people to go into the house. That is one great use of a debate of this kind. It calls attention to the operation of the Bill in that respect. I am bringing no charge whatever against the Government in this matter. If the effect—the unexpected effect—of the Bill were to put a severe pressure upon the poor part of the population to go into the house, they would resent the operation of the Bill. If the right hon. Gentleman who has so ably conducted this Bill—and I tender him my acknowment as to the manner in which he has conducted it—if he will allow me to make a criticism, I should say it is drawn with that complete knowledge which he has of the wants of the Metropolis rather than with an experience of the rural districts. In the great towns, especially in London, it is indoor relief that mainly prevails, and in the rural districts the opposite is the case. This will operate harshly against the poor of the country, because the greater amount of the grant will go to the towns where indoor relief prevails, and a much smaller, where it is much wanted, to the rural districts, where outdoor relief prevails. That is a matter of great importance. I will not discuss it at great length; and it is one of the points which this debate has brought out. There is another point—that of the selected councillors, whom the right hon. Member for West Birmingham chooses or wishes to have called aldermen. I do not care very much what they are called. An alderman by any other name might smell as sweet. But I do not think the name of alderman is a Liberal idea, because we are familiar with the way in which the aldermen sometimes defeat the popular vote, so that when the majority of the Town Council exists by a majority of the people, by the machinery of the aldermen the minority often prevails. That is a false principle, and I hope will be abandoned in the Bill. There is another subject, in itself sufficient to have occupied the whole of a measure, and that is the question of London government. That question was very ably dealt with by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dundee (Mr. J. F. B. Firth) in a speech full of valuable suggestions. He dealt with it so fully and so ably, that I will not say much upon London government. It was once a favourite study of my own, and if I were as fond as some people are of their draft plans, I might have some satisfaction in finding that they have been adopted by the Government. There is an irony of fortune which makes it peculiarly appropriate that this plan of London government should be proposed by the President of the Local Government Board. When I proposed a plan for the Government of London, I was met by an Amendment to the second reading. The person who moved the Amendment was the President of the Local Government Board, and the object of that Amendment and of the able speech made upon that occasion was to demonstrate that it was in fact impossible that they could treat London as a whole. He objected, he said, to the creation of a great central municipality. There are people who live and learn, and it is well that people are sometimes wiser as they grow older. He was joined by the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), who advocated the favourite plan of separate civic centres. We hear no more now of London as a whole, and of the plan of separate civic centres having been abandoned by the Government. I am glad of it. I do not reproach them, and I can promise them that I will do all in my power to support them in the adoption of this plan. That, again, is a great topic upon which you cannot say that a few days upon the second reading has been wasted. There is another subject to which I should like to refer, and that is the one which relates to municipal boroughs. The right hon. Gentleman must be aware by this time that the municipal boroughs of England do not desire to be mixed up with the counties in the manner in which this Bill proposes to mix them up. It is not only the Representatives of boroughs sitting on this side of the House who have urged that fact upon him; it has been urged upon him with equal force by the Representatives of boroughs sitting on his own side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman has, however, said—"Oh, but the boroughs must bear their share of the county burdens." But the right hon. Gentleman has cut the ground from under his own feet in this matter, because he has excluded Birmingham, Nottingham, London, and all the largest boroughs from the operation of the Bill in reference to this matter, and he now turns round upon the middle-sized boroughs and says to them—"You must bear your share of the county burdens, which will be greatly increased by my excluding from the operation of the measure the larger boroughs." Such a view of the subject is absolutely indefensible, and I am afraid that he will find himself opposed on this point by a phalanx of borough Members who will compel him to offer them more reasonable terms than those contained in the Bill. I know the difficulty which the right hon. Gentleman has to contend with. The right hon. Gentleman says—"It is necessary for me to pay Paul, and therefore I must rob Peter." I have no doubt that Paul will be satisfied with the right hon. Gentleman's proposal, but we who represent Peter must protest against it;

and we must ask from the Government that these great municipalities, some of whom have for centuries, and all for the greater part of a century, conducted their own municipal government independently of the counties in which they are situated, shall not be forced into contribution with the counties, but that the rates which are collected within their own boundaries shall not be given to other districts. The last subject to which I shall allude, is, perhaps the most important—it is that which relates to licensing. I fully admit the difficulty and the importance of that subject. It has been said that the proposal of the Government embraces the principle of Local Option. For a good many years I have advocated the cause of Local Option, and, therefore, I am perfectly willing to support its principle. From the speech which Lord Salisbury delivered the other day we might fancy that he also had been in favour of Local Option for a long time; but we cannot forget that in the Parliament that was dissolved in 1885, whenever Local Option was proposed to be granted, the Tory Party as a body—I do not say as a whole—were opposed to it, and that it was resisted in every form, especially by the then Sir Richard Cross, who, when Sunday Closing Bills for Cornwall and Durham were before the House, did his best to throw them out, on the ground that we ought to have the same law for the whole country. However, the year 1885 brought about a partial conversion of the Tory Party on this question, and now a great authority, the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) has told us that Local Option is embalmed in this Bill. No doubt that may be so, but there is a preliminary process to embalming. Before a body can be embalmed it must be eviscerated. That is exactly what has been done with Local Option in this Bill. The noble Lord, with a frankness which I may almost call cynicism, says he would have and he would not have Local Option—that he would have it in theory but not in practice; and he pointed out that the compensation clauses would so frighten the ratepayers that they would not dare to withhold the licences, and that they would consequently never exercise the power of Local Option which it is proposed to confer upon them. And the same thing was said by Lord Salisbury, although not quite so frankly. The Local Option contained in this Bill is a sort of Free Trade Protection; it is a declaration in favour of free imports coupled with prohibitory duties. That is the sort of way in which Local Option is dealt with in this Bill. You have conferred upon you the Local Option to close public-houses, but the penalty upon the exercise of the option is so great that you will not be able to exercise your power. Then we are warned by the right hon. Member for Birmingham to accept this solution of the temperance question. I really thought in former days that the right hon. Gentleman was on our side on this question. The right hon. Gentleman who has charge of this Bill says that the Church of England Temperance Society approves of this Bill.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): What I said was, that the hon. Member for Manchester (Sir William Houldsworth), who was a prominent Member of that association, approved of the main principles of the Bill.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Well, I can tell the right hon. Gentleman that I had a telegram yesterday from the conference of the society to the effect that the compensation clauses of the Bill had been rejected by a majority of five to one; and I presume that the hon. Member referred to by the right hon. Gentleman was the "one." I hope that the Church of England Temperance Society has not taken the view held by the hon. Member, or else it is scarcely likely to maintain its influence. In my opinion the proposal of the Government, in spite of the Bill embracing the principle of Local Option, will leave us much worse off than we are at present. I should like to state my reasons for that belief. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham told us that more than one Government had been advised that the publicans had a vested interest in their licences. All I can say is that no Government with which I was connected had ever such advice given to them. Certainly, Mr. Bruce, the first Lord Aberdare, did not hold that opinion when he proposed to give the publicans a vested interest for 10 years in their licences. I undertake to say that the Solicitor General can point to no opinion given to any Government in the sense that he gave it the other night. The present Government have also a Unionist Law Officer, and I should like to hear him on the subject. I should like to know when the Solicitor General arrived at his present opinion on the matter. I am going to tell him when he did not hold that opinion; afterwards he shall tell me when he did. In 1883 the Solicitor General, in demurring to a statement I made, said that the magistrates had no absolute discretion to withhold the licences, because they were bound to take into consideration the wants of the neighbourhood. That was different from saying that there was something personal to the holder of the licence.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CLARKE) (Plymouth) said, the right hon. Gentleman, speaking as Home Secretary in 1883, said that magistrates had absolute discretion to refuse the grant of a licence, and that opinion he (Sir Edward Clarke) then challenged. The opinion as to vested interests now held was given by the Attorney General and himself in the early part of last year.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That is exactly what I said. The hon. and learned Gentleman did not then say anything about the personal conduct of the holder of the licence, and, therefore, the Solicitor General could not then have held the opinion he now holds.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE: I beg your pardon.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: If the hon. and learned Gentleman had then formed such an opinion, he had reserved it for the present Government to suggest. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, who had a Draft Bill on this subject, does not tell us that it contained Compensation Clauses.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I never was challenged on the subject, but if the right hon. Gentleman now challenges me I will tell him that it did contain Compensation Clauses. The Bill is in print, and I can show it to the right hon. Gentleman. The Bill contained a clause for compensating the publican whose licence was removed without fault on his part.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have got an answer. I assure my right hon. Friend that I should be very glad to see the Bill, but neither I nor any of his Colleagues saw that Bill nor any of its clauses.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: The Bill was never shown to the Cabinet.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: We never did see it. Well, then, it must have been very personal to my right hon. Friend, because it was in exact contravention of what he said when challenged on that subject. I have seen it stated in the newspapers that we have changed our views upon the subject of compensation. That is entirely untrue. The Government which was in Office in 1883 had to deal with this question, and they dealt with it as a Cabinet question. It fell to me to make the statement on behalf of the Government, and I then said that there was an unquestionable power in the magistrates—a discretion, no doubt, judicially exercised, but not confined to the personal conduct of the holder of the licence—to refuse the renewal of the licences without any reference to compensation whatever. That was the solemn declaration made upon deliberate consideration of the Government of which my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham and the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) were Members. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian got up in the course of the debate to give to that statement his own authority. That was the position of the question in 1883, and that was the position to which we have ever since adhered. The Solicitor General has undertaken to rest this question of compensation upon vested interest.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE: Not entirely.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It is his strongest ground. Is it true? It is thus clearly stated in Mr. Pattison's book on the Licensing Laws—

> "The joint effect of this section of the Act of 1874, Sec. 26 (the section referred to by the Solicitor General) has not cut down the absolute discretion of the Justices to refuse the renewal of a licence."

The Solicitor General has made a new discovery in law, in which, however, he is entirely at variance with Mr. Justice Lush. I leave the hon. and learned Gentleman to the glory of his discovery;

but for myself—*malo errare cum Lushe.* As the matter is going to be decided by the Court of Queen's Bench, I will not have the presumption to express any opinion upon it. If the Solicitor General is right, he will have all the glory of his discovery; but if he is wrong, I think he will be in a rather unfortunate position. What is the effect of this doctrine of vested interest which the Government desire to hang round the neck of this nation? Why, it means £100,000,000. Hundreds of millions of pounds. There are, I believe, 180,000 licensed houses. Will anybody say that the average public-house would not be worth £1,000? If you once pass these Compensation Clauses, you never can do anything in the future in the direction of temperance. You are much better off as you are now. You have only got to convert the Justices of England with their present jurisdiction. They have the power if they will only exercise it, and I am happy to think that day by day they are doing their duty in this respect more than they have done it in the past, for it is in consequence of the *laches* of the Justices in giving licences in excess, and in refusing to take them away when there were more than enough, that we have found ourselves in our present position. But if you give these Compensation Clauses you will, it is true, place this power nominally in the hands of the County Council, but you will place it under conditions in which it will be impossible that it will ever be effectually administered, and I do hope that the Liberal Party will adhere to the course which the Liberal Government of 1883, upon careful consideration, adopted, and support Local Option without the Compensation Clauses. Apart from the question of law with regard to the vested interests of the publican which the Solicitor General has raised, is the doctrine of what is called the equity of the case. It may be that these people have not a strict legal claim, but it is said that they have an equity which you cannot refuse to recognize. It is very curious that within the last few months a very important pronouncement has been made on this subject—namely, by the Supreme Court of the United States. In the Constitution of the United States there is a provision that any infringement of property by a State Law is unconstitutional and may be set aside.

> "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of any citizen of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law."

Therefore, if a law is made which attacks property it will be set aside as unconstitutional. In the State of Arkansas a law has recently been passed abolishing licensing and public-houses altogether, and certain persons thereby affected appealed to the Supreme Court to get a direction that the law was unconstitutional as being an infringement of their rights of property. The subject of compensation was fully considered, and in an elaborate judgment the Court laid it down that—

> "The power which the State has of prohibiting such use by individuals of their property as will be prejudicial to the health and morals or the safety of the public is not, and, consistently with the existence and safety of organized society, cannot be burdened with the condition that the State must compensate such individual owners for pecuniary losses they may sustain by reason of their not being permitted, by a noxious use of their property, to inflict injury on the commuuity."

That is the view of the Supreme Court, and I hope that Parliament will adopt the view thus expressed. The Court regards, and we regard, public-houses as being in certain cases an evil, and the principle laid down in this judicial judgment is sound, and, I think, should be adopted by us. This matter is, I consider, the most important in this Bill. I desire, as I have always desired, that the localities should have the control of this matter; but I do hope that this House will not allow such control to be hampered and burdened by a provision such as this as to compensation, which would render it illusory and practically nullify its effect. I have desired in the observations I have made to show that there are in this Bill many points which will require careful consideration. I do not think that the debate we have had has been superfluous. On the contrary, it has thrown a great deal of light on several points of importance. We may now, however, allow the Bill to go into Committee, where we shall be able to address ourselves to the important questions which it raises.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St, George's, Hanover Square): The hour at which I rise to make a few observations at the conclusion of this debate effectually compels me to carry out the suggestion made at an earlier period of the debate that speakers should study brevity. I regret that the lack of time at my disposal robs me of the opportunity of paying the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) as many compliments as I should otherwise wish to pay him. I should desire, in the first place, to compliment him on the edifying example which he has set in abstaining from entering into Party politics.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have said nothing against the Party to which the right hon. Gentleman belongs.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I must compliment him upon refraining from that line of controversy in which he so much excels, and in which I think he very greatly delights. As far as the Government is concerned, we have very little to complain of in the tone of the right hon. Gentleman. He attributes to me great wrath at the length of this debate. He has apparently treated me as I have latterly been compelled to treat him. He has been unable to read my speeches as I have been unable to read his. I expressed no wrath whatever; I merely gave expression—and I hope a perfectly genial expression—to some amazement which I felt at what I believed to be the change from the original attitude taken up by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite towards this Bill. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that some advantage has been derived from this debate. We have received some valuable suggestions, and whether they could as effectually have been made in three nights as in six is a question that I shall not pursue very closely. Light has been thrown, we admit, on several points by the discussion that has taken place; and, in answer to the appeal made at an earlier period of this evening by an hon. Member opposite, I can assure him that the Government will be prepared to listen to suggestions in a friendly spirit, and with the same absence of Party spirit which has, I admit, mainly characterized this debate. With regard to the subject of licences, the right hon. Gentleman addressed some autobiographical questions to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke), and asked him as to the date when he held particular views. I should now like to say a few words as to the present views of the right hon. Gentleman himself as compared with those held in a former Parliament by the hon. Member for Oxford with regard to the question of licensing. There is no time to inquire into the biography of the right hon. Gentleman, but I should like to ask him when he adopted the views on this subject which he has with so much unction placed before the House this evening?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: When I became Home Secretary.

Mr. GOSCHEN: When Member for Oxford the right hon. Gentleman held very different views. It is not for me to follow so great a lawyer with regard to the legal aspect of the case; but it is extremely interesting to note that it was not when the right hon. Gentleman was occupying a legal position as Solicitor General that he held these views, but when he had dropped the lawyer and become Home Secretary. But, it is true, the question of compensation is not a lawyer's question merely. I am not sure that it can even be decided definitively by the tribunal which is now considering it. It is a question which has to be decided by the equities of the case. These were the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in 1880—

> "I should have been better pleased with the matter of the Resolution if my hon. Friend had included in it some reference to the principle of equitable compensation."

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I myself am not conscious of any change of opinion between 1880 and 1883; but, of course, I cannot now enter into details.

Mr. GOSCHEN: My right hon. Friend is not conscious of any change of opinion; therefore, I trust that the opinion of 1880 may still be quoted as the authoritative opinion of my right hon. Friend. The right hon. Gentleman continued—

> "I do not want my hon. Friend to commit himself upon that point; but I want a frank recognition of the principle that we are not to deny to publicans, as a class, the benefits of equal treatment because we think their trade is at so many points in contact with, and even sometimes productive of, great public mischief. Considering the legislative title they have acquired, and the recognition of their position in the proceedings of this House for a long series of years, they ought not to be placed at a disadvantage on account of the particular impres-

sion we may entertain."—(3 *Hansard*, [253] 363.)

These were the views of the right hon. Gentleman, and I do not think that they can be set aside by a decision of the Court of Queen's Bench, because the case does not rest upon the legal decision of a Court, but upon what my right hon. Friend calls the "equities." I will not follow the right hon. Member for Derby into his statistics as to the enormous number of millions that would be required for compensation, because he estimated that all the property of all the publicans would be taken from them. What a change from the time when the right hon. Member only wished to curtail by one or two the number of hours during which public-houses should remain open. The change is remarkable; and I suppose it shows the truth of the statement of my right hon. Friend that we grow wiser as we grow older. I trust that I have shown that there is high authority for awarding equitable treatment to the great interest whose title was recognized in the quotation I have cited from the speech of my right hon. Friend. Now I come to another point. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby considers that in regard to the government of London our Bill precisely resembles his own, he is perfectly entitled to entertain that most satisfactory view for his own self-esteem. We do not recognize entirely the likeness between the two Bills; but we admit that there is similarity between the two measures, if not to the extent which he claims. Speaking generally, I observe that the Bill has been attacked rather on account of its sins of omission than on account of its sins of commission. One of the former is the omission of a provision for the consolidation of rates and the better valuation of property. I can assure hon. Members that that matter has been considered and embodied in a clause which at one time formed a portion of the Bill itself. We thought, however, finally that it would be wiser to keep this portion of the reform of local government for separate treatment; but we consider ourselves pledged to deal with the question, and we shall approach it as soon as the time of the House permits. Another point which has been raised has reference to the great borrowing powers which have been given to the County Authorities. We have in connection with this matter adopted the clause of the Public Health Acts; but if it should be thought that the powers are too wide our proposal will certainly be open to reconsideration in Committee. We share to the full the anxiety expressed in many quarters that this Bill should neither lead to a great increase of expenditure nor to any abuse of borrowing powers. I do not say that there is no danger that the new County Authorities may be ambitious and may wish to emulate the munificence or, perhaps, extravagance of Municipalities; and it must be the duty of Parliament to diminish the risk of expenditure of that kind. I am prevented by the limits of time from entering upon a most interesting subject, introduced in one of the most striking speeches made in this debate—I refer to the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means (Mr. Courtney). It is quite impossible for me to enter upon the subjects which formed the staple of his speech—namely, the precautions which ought to be taken to prevent the swamping of minorities. But he also examined the financial aspect of the Bill, and expressed his disappointment that we had not been able to give counties greater power to initiate and regulate taxation, and that we had not settled more clearly the limits between local and Imperial taxation. I acknowledge that in this respect our scheme is not perfect, and cannot be perfect. Among the enormous variety of suggestions that have been made with regard to the Budget, both Imperial and local, there has not been one single suggestion made in the direction of discovering any such local taxation as my hon. Friend would wish to see placed in the hands of the Local Bodies. The areas of counties in this country are too small; there is too much moving about from one county to another, and there is too much distribution over various counties. You cannot have licences on one man raised in one county which will not run over other counties. Take such a question as the Horse Tax. A man living on the boundary may pay his licence in one county, but if that were exclusively a county licence it would not hold good when he crossed the boundary. While I perfectly admit that it would be more satisfactory if you could give each County Authority more discretion as to the imposition of taxes within its own area, still I think no suggestions have been made which would render it possible to do so; and we defend our solution as the best that has hitherto been made with regard to this complicated question.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin): I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that I subsequently claimed, in answer to an observation of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, that I had in my mind an extended House Duty.

MR. GOSCHEN: That is, no doubt, a valuable suggestion, and my hon. Friend will remember that 16 years ago I proposed to hand over the House Duty to the Local Authorities, but it was discovered that it would be so unequal in the different counties that the proposal did not receive the approval which I, as its author, thought it was fairly entitled to. I am sure, however, that my hon. Friend, if he gives his attention to the matter, will be able to supply important suggestions in the future. This brings me, Sir, to another point on which we have been most severely criticized. Two great criticisms have been made against us in this debate. The one relates to the parish, and the other to our proposal with regard to distribution according to indoor pauperism. With regard to the parish, it has been a very satisfactory thing to myself personally to see that the view I placed before the House in the year 1871, that the parish should be the unit of local government, has been exhumed by hon. Members on the other side of the House, and that they have discovered that in the parish lies the essence and point of local government reform. It has taken a very long time for them to arrive at that conclusion, for during all the years that have passed since 1871 nothing has been heard of the parish. I have frequently read articles and speeches stating that the Bill had been drawn on false foundations; but I have never met with any body of public men who have taken up until now the point that the parish ought to be the unit of local government reform. The great difficulty which has always subsisted in that matter subsists now—namely, the difficulty of the varying sizes of parishes. It was said you would have to amalgamate parishes before you started, and if you began to amalgamate parishes you would destroy the very local life you wish to create. When I heard hon. Members opposite making their speeches to-night, it was some pleasure to me to know they were plagiarizing the speeches of myself, whom they always considered to be a reprobate politician. This proposal has been my dream, and it has been my wish from the very beginning, and I regret the difficulties that have been discovered in the way. At the same time, we do not despair at all that it will be possible so to reform the parish that we may have more interest infused into local life than exists at present. But the plan which the present Government have pursued is this. We have had to create a great structure. We have begun at the top instead of at the bottom, and just as if we had begun at the bottom we could have gone to the top, so having begun at the top we can go to the bottom, and there is no reason why all parts of local government should not be by degrees reformed. We have admitted to local government all ratepayers, and we have given as extended a franchise as hon. Members opposite could wish to see, and having given that extended franchise to the County Councils, I am surprised to see some hon. Members already beginning to depreciate those Bodies before they come into existence. Do not let it be thought that if we have not dealt with the parish we have not exactly the same sympathy with parish life as the hon. Member for the Spalding Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Halley Stewart) has, who spoke to us of all the parish institutions, including the cricket club and the provident society, and asked us why we did not deal with them in the Bill.

MR. HALLEY STEWART said, he did not complain of those institutions not being included in the Bill. He only referred to them as representative of parish life.

MR. GOSCHEN: In the manly indignation with which the hon. Member spoke the words, no doubt, slipped from him—"Why do you not deal with them in the Bill." I can quite understand that he did not mean what he said, and that the words slipped out in that warmth of his which I would wish to emulate and with which I sympathize. The real way to create parish life is for everyone to endeavour to create local interest, and that is being done with very considerable success by all classes in the different parts of the country. In conclusion, a few words upon the method by which we propose to distribute the Probate Duty at 4*d.* per head per diem for indoor paupers. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby did us no more than justice when he said it was not intended by this proposal to put any pressure upon Boards of Guardians to drive people into the workhouse. We had to select from various tests. The test of population would have left many of the poorest parts of the country with less assistance than they have hitherto received and are entitled to receive. If we had taken the test of rateable value, many districts that are richest would have received most money. If we had doubled the contribution at present given, those that now receive more than others would have received still more. Accordingly, we selected the method proposed as the best solution we could find and the least dangerous with regard to the apportionment of the money. We do not believe the contribution will have the tendency some hon. Members have suggested. After all, there is something like local opinion; and we do not think this allowance will be sufficient to induce Boards of Guardians to sweep all the paupers they can into the workhouse. It would not be possible, for the accommodation does not exist; and it would produce results which would lead to the intervention of the Local Government Board. In the Metropolis we have had the advantage of experience of the Indoor Common Fund, which has had a remarkable effect upon pauperism. But some rather dangerous doctrines have been uttered on the subject of outdoor relief. We will do our best to remove any controversy as between indoor and outdoor pauperism from the discussions which are to follow; we will endeavour to see what modifications or precautions can be taken to remove this difficulty which has struck the imagination of hon. Members on both sides; but when we hear that going to the workhouse offends the *amour propre* of the poor, we must also look to it that we do not encourage the belief that there is no loss of *amour propre* in the receiving outdoor relief. It is a dangerous doctrine to lay down that while the stigma of pauperism attaches to the workhouse it does not attach to outdoor relief. It is a doctrine unworthy of the future of the agricultural labourer. The assistance which we are giving by this Bill would be very soon swallowed up if we were to allow outdoor relief to be looked forward to by the agricultural labourer as a natural provision involving no stigma of dependence. The Bill is large enough without introducing such a controversy as this; therefore we will endeavour to find some mode of regulating the contribution which will not raise this particular controversy. As to the fear that Imperial politics of a critical nature will be imported into these assemblies elected on a broad suffrage, we believed that there is no reason to fear that they will trench upon the proper functions of Parliament. On the contrary, we are convinced that by removing a great portion of our administration from Parliament to Local Authorities, we are strengthening Conservatism in its truest sense, we are interesting a large number of people in the affairs of the country generally, and we shall really strengthen our Imperial by giving this broader basis to our local institutions.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) ELECTORS BILL.

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

[BILL 181.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, he would make an appeal to the Government to allow some time for the consideration of this Bill, which dealt with a most important matter in relation to the scheme of Local Government, and he ventured to think that time given for a discussion of the Bill and to elicit information would tend to the ultimate progress of the Bill. It proposed to set up a new register for the counties, and there were several hon. Members who desired to know whether it would not be possible to take the existing register rather than set up a new annual charge. At any rate, seeing that it was nearly 12 o'clock, there was no opportunity for discussion, and it would be altogether unusual for the Government to expect that the House would be satisfied to pass the second reading without discussion. He appealed to the First Lord of the Treasury to postpone the second reading, and he believed the House would approve the suggestion made in all good faith.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he thought it was understood that the discussion on the Bill which had just been read a second time included that Bill. It admittedly travelled over the ground this Bill occupied. The two measures were practically one in object; but it was necessary to divide them, because this second Bill must be passed before the first, inasmuch as the register would have to be prepared, if the County Councils were to come into operation in the early part of next year. Under the circumstances, and seeing that the remarks of hon. Members in reference to the cost of the register and on any other points were such as could more conveniently be discussed in Committee, he trusted the House would now consent to give the Bill a second reading. It could not be taken next week, as Government time had been apportioned for other Business with which it was necessary to make progress. There would be great delay and difficulty in giving effect to the constitution of the County Councils, unless ample time were given to complete arrangements for bringing the Local Government Bill into operation.

MR. WHITBREAD (Bedford) asked how the House would be placed should there be a desire in Committee to make grave alterations, vital changes, in the first Bill which would affect the principle of the Electors Bill? If the House passed the second reading of the latter Bill, it would not be able or might not be able to deal with clauses in the principal Bill which affected registration, and might involve the reconstruction of the whole Electors Bill. It would be highly inconvenient, to say the least, to be told, when the clauses of the main Bill came to be considered, that alterations could not be made affecting the principle of the Electors Bill which had already been agreed to. He would ask, would there be left to hon. Members absolutely free hands if they agreed to this second reading? Would they in the least degree be binding themselves as to their action in Committee on the main Bill in relation to clauses dealing with electors? If free action were not prejudiced, he should not object to the second reading, but he thought the debate just closed had shown that though no Amendment was moved, time was not wasted and the ground was considerably cleared. The question of registration, however, had been passed over. He and others were anxious to express opinions on the subject to which it was not desirable now to refer. He desired not to prejudice free discussion of one Bill by the fact of having agreed in principle to another Bill.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, it would be perfectly evident that it would be quite impossible to bring the main Bill into operation unless the Registration Bill were passed, and it was also evident that if the main Bill was to be brought into operation at the time they hoped and anticipated next January, no time must be lost in passing this Bill so that the register could be made up in time for the elections to the Councils to take place. All that the House was asked to assent to now by the second reading was that there shall be a register forthcoming of the electors under the main Bill. No one would be debarred from debating the details of that register in Committee by having assented to the second reading, nor would any one be prejudiced in reference to the main Bill. Unless, without delay, the House agreed to read the Bill a second time, there would not be time to make up the register for the main Bill to come into operation, but there was no desire on the part of the Government to restrain full discussion so far as the register was concerned. He might add that it was quite understood that the discussion just closed covered the ground occupied by both Bills.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, he was quite sure there was no desire to obstruct the progress of the Bill or either of the Bills; but the right hon. Gentleman must see that he could not go on with the Registration Bill, and make it operative upon the main Bill, until it had been settled what the franchise was to be. Thus the main Bill affected the Registration Bill. He had no strong feeling himself on the subject; but if any number of hon. Members desired to make observations on the subject, it might be well for the Government to pay some deference to the wish.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, it was just on that point he made his appeal to hon. Members to reserve their observations until Committee. This was a Bill of machinery only, and to avoid considerable delay, it was necessary now to take the second reading. Next week, as he had explained, would be occupied with other business.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) suggested that many Members on that side were anxious to go into the matter very carefully; but if they passed the Bill now, they passed a Bill to which many hon. Members had given little or no attention. They had given their time to the consideration of the larger measure, and they had made the discussion as brief as possible, making no great demand on the patience of the Government. He thought the Government might be fairly asked to extend to hon. Members a little time for the consideration of the Register upon which the Councils would be elected. Surely, if it were necessary, provision might be made for making the registration a little later than ordinary, as when the last Reform Act was passed. This was a great measure of reform for County Government, and he did not think the question of registration should be hurried over at this pace.

Mr. RITCHIE said, by the indulgence of the House he might be allowed to assure hon. Members that after very careful consideration and discussion with the Parliamentary draftsman, as to the time required for preparation, he arrived at the conclusion that unless the House proceeded with great rapidity with the Registration Bill, it would be quite impossible to get the register made up in time for the elections.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) asked, when it was proposed to go into Committee on the second Bill?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he proposed the House should go into Committee before taking the same stage of the Bill just read a second time.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, surely there would be no opportunity of putting the Registration Bill in force until the first Bill was through both Houses, and there was nothing unreasonable in the request for more time.

Mr. RITCHIE explained that the Bill had been drawn separately with the view that by the time the other Bill passed, the register might be made up in preparation for the elections to take place in January. This would be impossible, unless the Bill were proceeded with and passed long before the other Bill was through.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH, asking the indulgence of the House, said, there were certain views on that side as to the possibility of proceeding on the existing register, but when the House was in Committee, and such a change was proposed, then the Government might say it was too late to make the alteration. On some day next week surely two or three hours might be allowed before the Budget Bill was passed; that time would probably be sufficient for the purpose. It was impossible for the House to pass without consideration the second reading of a Bill of this magnitude, throwing on the rates an expenditure of £1,500 a year on a new register. In the interest of the ratepayers, which was the supreme concern of the Government, he pleaded for more time.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he could only repeat that the Bill merely provided the machinery by which the whole scheme could be brought into operation. The Committee stage offered every opportunity for such suggestions as the hon. Member referred to, and the Government would give them every consideration then.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, he had had some experience of registration, its expense and importance, and it was imperative that some time should be devoted to discussion, even though some of the Business appointed for next week were postponed.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) said, he had had some personal experience in reference to registration, and the expense entailed.

Mr. W. H. SMITH rose in his place, and claimed to move "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put accordingly, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time," put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS' ACT (1866) AMENDMENT BILL—[Bill 161.]

(*Mr. Dugdale, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Curzon, Mr. Dixon, Mr. Mark Stewart.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. DUGDALE (Warwickshire, Nuneaton) said, the object of the Bill would be apparent to every one who had seen it, and would, he thought, meet with approval on all sides. He therefore hoped the House would take the second reading. The object was stated in a short memorandum attached to the Bill itself, which he would read. It gave to Courts of Justice and magistrates the option of sending youthful offenders brought before them to reformatory schools without their first undergoing sentence of imprisonment. Provision was made for such offenders being temporarily detained until the reformatory school was ready to receive them. The Bill was a counterpart of that brought in last Session, when, under the persistent attention of the hon. Member for Mid Cork, it eventually died. On this occasion he hoped it would be more fortunate, and that no hon. Member would oppose the second reading. It had an object that must commend itself to all. He was quite aware that the Home Secretary was going to bring in a Bill dealing with reformatory schools, and if the House passed the second reading of the present Bill, he would defer the Committee stage until after Whitsuntide, and if the Government Bill, in the meantime, was found to contain provisions similar to this Bill, he would be quite prepared to drop the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dugdale.*)

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): I object.

Second Reading *deferred* till *Wednesday* 9th May.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 154.]

(*Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Baird.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he hoped the House would devote a few minutes to finishing off the Bill. He believed he had met all objections by agreeing to confine it to burghs, and one or two Amendments would be necessary for that purpose. The first of these was in Clause 3.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, there was one Amendment the right hon. Gentleman had omitted to assent to, which would come in on page 1, line 11, after the word "amendment," the introduction of the word "Scotland." The Bill referred to Scotland only, and it was desirable that this intention should be clearly set out.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 11, after the word "amendment," to insert the word "Scotland."—(*Mr. F. S. Powell.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 17, after the word "repealed," to insert the words, "so far as relates to factories and workshops situate within burghs."—(*Sir George Trevelyan.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Mr. BARING (London): I object to further progress with the Bill now.

Objection being taken, Further Proceedings stood adjourned.

Further Proceedings *deferred* till *Tuesday* next.

MOTIONS.

—o—

TRAMWAYS PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The Tramways Act, 1870," relating to Barrow-in-Furness Tramways, Birmingham and Western Districts Tramways, Bradford Corporation Tramways, Leeds Corporation Tramways, Newbury and Lamborne Tramway, Pontypridd and Rhondda Valley Tramways, and Stratford, Ilford, and Romford Tramways, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 222.]

FACTORS ACTS CONSOLIDATION BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to consolidate and amend the Factors Acts, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Baring, Mr. William Beckett, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Robert Reid, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, and Mr. Whitley.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 223.]

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES CONSOLIDATION BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to consolidate and amend the Laws relating to Collecting Friendly Societies, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Dr. Cameron, Dr. Commins, Mr. Whitley, and Mr. Charles Wilson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 224.]

EAST INDIA OFFICERS BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Gorst, Bill to amend the Law relating to certain Officers in India, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir John Gorst and Baron Henry de Worms.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 226.]

ORDER OF THE DAY.

——o——

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolution [April 19] read a second time.

"That, in addition to the Duties of Customs payable on Wine before the twenty-seventh day of March, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be levied and charged the Duties following (that is to say) :—

Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

	£	s.	d.
If in imperial half-pint bottles or bottles of less capacity ..	0	1	3
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial half-pint bottles and not exceeding imperial pint bottles	0	2	6
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles	0	5	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles and not exceeding two imperial quarts..	0	10	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding two imperial quarts ..	1	0	0

—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

And, Objection being taken, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon *Monday* next.

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 23rd April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Referred to a Select Committee*—Land Transfer (21).

Committee — Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment (38-75).

Committee — Report — Metropolitan Board of Works Commission * (62).

STATE OF IRELAND—BOYCOTTING—THE WIDOW AND DAUGHTER OF THE LATE JAMES FITZMAURICE, LIXNAW, CO. KERRY.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN, in whose name the following Notice stood upon the Paper—

"To ask whether it is true that the widow and daughter of James Fitzmaurice, who was murdered at Lixnaw, county Kerry, and whose murderers await execution in Tralee Gaol, are being severely boycotted and are obliged to have police protection; whether it is true that upon Norah Fitzmaurice, on whose evidence the murderers were found guilty, entering chapel on Sunday, 15th April, a person named Dorling, who was secretary to the local branch of the National League, signalled to the congregation to leave, upon which a considerable number of the congregation left"—

said that it had been his intention to bring certain facts under the notice of the House; but he saw by the morning papers that the local secretary of the National League, a person of the name of Dorling, to whose action he had intended to draw their Lordships' attention, had been prosecuted by the Government for using intimidating language towards Norah Fitzmaurice, the daughter of the murdered man, and had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour, against which sentence he had appealed. Although his Question related to matters of fact and was not directed to the point whether those matters were legal or not, yet if a discussion were to arise in the House at the present moment, it might be said that such discussion had prejudiced the defence of a man who was upon his trial. Therefore, with their Lordships' permission, he would postpone the Question of which he had given Notice. Of course, on a future occasion, as soon as the appeal had been disposed of, he should exercise his right of bringing before the House all the facts of the case, which appeared to him to reach issues extending far beyond this murder, terrible though the murder was.

NAVY — DOCK ACCOMMODATION IN THE COLONIES AND NAVAL STATIONS.

MOTION FOR RETURNS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in rising to move for Returns of dock accommodation in the Colonies and naval stations immediately available for the use of Her Majesty's ironclad ships and other vessels of war; and inquiring whether it was the intention of the Government to acquire any naval stations in lieu of and with the same object as Port Hamilton, which was recently occupied and had since been abandoned, said, he need hardly explain to the House the importance of this question. In the Mediterranean the only dock accommodation possessed by us was at Malta, and there was nothing between that and the Channel ports. The four docks at Malta were the sole resource for the repair of our ships in the Mediterranean. Malta had always been considered impregnable, but he was present last year, when there was a sham attack upon Malta, and he thought that the result was to shake that feeling of security in the place which had previously been felt. The first act of an enemy seizing Malta by a *coup de main* would be to disable the works. In the Mediterranean they had Cyprus, where there was an excellent harbour, which might be useful in time of war, but there was no dockyard establishment. It was the same at Gibraltar. There was no dock at that place, and the establishment there seemed in other respects inadequate to meet the demands of a large fleet engaged in warlike operations. The value to the country of Gibraltar without the means of docking and repairing our first-class men-of-war there was, from a naval point of view, comparatively small, the harbour itself being incommodious and unsafe. Provided with a large and well-defended dock, it would be all important. Proceeding eastward at Suez there was no establishment —nothing to speak of—between Malta and Bombay, a distance of 4,500 miles. At Bombay there were five extensive docks, but not exclusively in the hands of the Government. He trusted that the docks there would be adapted to the use of large vessels without delay. Trincomalee was practically abandoned and the Mauritius docks were in private hands, but Lord Brassey stated that one of them might be made available for first-class ironclads at an expenditure of £50,000. At the Cape the Table Bay docks, which were private, were extensive and adequate but unprotected, and the railway connecting Cape Town with Simon's Town, where the Government works were situate, was still incomplete. Going eastward the next docks were to be found at Singapore; these were private and not adapted for the larger ships, but might be made so by means of a Government loan. At Hong Kong there was a large private dock, but also inadequate for the reception of first-class ironclads; but he had heard that a new one was opened in January last, and if that was so they would be in a better position. There were deficiencies in the West Indies which should be considered by the Government. Attention was drawn some time ago to the construction of a railway between Simon's and Table Bays; but he was not aware that it had been made, and it would be very useful in the event of a war. The docks in China and Japan hitherto made use of would, of course, be closed to us in case of war. He sincerely hoped that our dockyard accommodation in various parts of the world was in a more forward state than he thought, but it was a subject of such importance that he was justified in calling attention to it.

Moved, That there be laid before the House—

> "Returns of dock accommodation in the Colonies and naval stations immediately available for the use of Her Majesty's ironclad ships and other vessels of war; and to inquire whether it is the intention of the Government to acquire any naval station in lieu of and with the same object as Port Hamilton, which was recently occupied and has since been abandoned."—(*The Viscount Sidmouth.*)

LORD ELPHINSTONE: I hope my noble Friend will not think it necessary to press for this Return, for full information with regard to dock accommodation in all parts of the globe is already given in a work published with the authority of the Admiralty called *The Dock Book*. It gives information as to every dock in the world, whether belonging to this country or to any Foreign Power, with the required details as to their capacity. He is perfectly correct in the description he has given of the dock accommodation in the different parts of the world, and I thank him for the private information he has given me as to the object of his Question. As he told me, he wished to know what dock accommodation was available for first-class ironclads in ports east of the Mediterranean. If I include Australia there are 11 docks, nine of which are open at present, and the remaining two will be completed this year. Of these one is at Saigon, belonging to the French Government; one at Nagasaki and one at Tokosuka, belonging to the Japanese Government; one at San Francisco, belonging to the United States Government; one at Hong Kong, which is in private hands; and six belong to various Colonial Governments—namely, the Cape of Good Hope, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland, and Esquimault. The noble Viscount asked whether access to private docks can be assured at all times in case of emergency. If by "emergency" he means in time of war, I apprehend the captain of a man-of-war would in any British port insist upon priority; but, at other times, special arrangements for priority exist only at Hong Kong, Halifax, and Esquimault. In times of peace, the whole of these docks, whether British or foreign, are available. The noble Viscount then asks for particulars of the dock at the Cape of Good Hope. It is a Colonial Government dock, 500ft. long, open and available at all times. At Hong Kong there is a private dock 500ft. long, open and available at all times. At Bombay a dock is in course of construction, and arrangements between the Imperial and Indian Governments are in progress for increasing the size of this dock, so that it will be sufficient to accommodate a first-class ironclad. In Japan the two docks are 420ft. and 513ft. in length. They are available in time of peace. In Mauritius there are three docks—two of 318ft. and one of 378ft. These belong to private firms. They are open and available at all times. At Esquimault the dock is 445ft. in length, but an additional 30ft. may be obtained by shifting the caisson. With regard to the dock at Vladivostock it is a floating dock, and is formed in sections which can be joined together as needed, according to the size of the vessel to be docked. The main piece or section, called the "first part," can lift 1,850 tons, and it is complete and in working order. The dock when complete will be capable of docking vessels of 8,000 tons, and the actual lifting power of the whole dock is 20,000 tons. *The Dock Book* published by order of the Admiralty is complete to December, 1887. With regard to the second part of the Question, I do not know whether the noble Viscount has read the correspondence that passed relative to the retention or otherwise of Port Hamilton. Three Naval Commanders-in-Chief on the China Station strongly advised its being given up. They felt that in the event of war a portion of their squadron would have to be detached for the protection of that island, and that those vessels would be better employed elsewhere. The island was, therefore, restored to the Corean Government under certain conditions, and it is not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to acquire any other place in lieu of it.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

ARMY AND NAVY (COMMUTATION OF PENSIONS).

MOTION FOR RETURNS.

Viscount SIDMOUTH, in moving for a Return showing the numbers of officers of the Army and Navy respectively who during the last 15 years had commuted their pensions; the Return to show the numbers for each year separately, and the partial and whole commutations to be shown in separate columns, said, his object in asking for the information was to ascertain the extent to which the practice of commutation had been carried in view of the large number of officers who, having commuted their pensions and received a lump sum of money, had afterwards fallen into the hands of speculators and others, and been completely ruined.

Moved, That there be laid before the House—

"Returns showing the number of officers of the Army and Navy respectively, who during the last fifteen years have commuted their pensions; the Return to show the numbers for each year separately, and the partial and whole commutations to be shown in separate columns."—(*The Viscount Sidmouth.*)

Lord ELPHINSTONE said, there was no objection on the part of the Admiralty to grant the Return.

Lord HARRIS said, he would be happy to give the information from the War Office if the noble Viscount would be satisfied with a Return of commuted pensions from the year 1880 inclusive. They could not go beyond 1880 without complicating the Return with the operations consequent on the abolition of purchase in the Army.

Viscount SIDMOUTH said, he should be happy to change the terms of his Motion in the way suggested by his noble Friend.

Motion *amended*, and *agreed to*.

LAND TRANSFER BILL.—(No. 21.)

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury), in rising to move that this Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, said, he had some difficulty in introducing the Motion to their Lordships, as he was not certain in what way it was going to be met by his noble and learned Friend (Lord Herschell). As far as his researches extended, he believed it was absolutely without precedent that a Minister of the Crown in charge of a Bill should be refused the opportunity of sending that Bill to a Select Committee. If, however, he had understood him correctly, the noble and learned Lord on the Front Opposition Bench rather intimated on a former occasion that he intended to resist the Motion for the reference to a Select Committee. What had happened had a little surprised him, and he thought that a Motion should have been made on the second reading to reject the Bill; but instead of that being done, criticisms had been made on clauses of the Bill. The Bill passed through that House last Session without any serious objection to any principle in it. It was said, that the drafting of the Bill was defective; if that were so it should be sent to a Select Committee, where all points could be discussed across the Table, and he hoped that his noble and learned Friend would assent to that course. He believed it would be possible in a Select Committee to mould the Bill, if objectionable, into such a form as would produce a great improvement with respect to the expense, facility, and speed of land transfer. There were some who took the view that registration should be confined to sales; but if it were so confined the result would be simply to add one process to the mode in which land is transferred. Last year in "another place" Mr. Fowler thought it necessary that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee of their Lordships; and he had received representations to the same effect from almost all the law societies in the country. He hardly thought that the noble and learned Lord appreciated the difference between the Act of 1875 and the state of things now existing in consequence of the Settled Land Act and the Conveyancing Act. He believed that if the principle of compulsory registration both on sale and succession were agreed to, a Select Committee would be the best body to carry that principle into effect. Some noble Lords had been prejudiced by previous attempts at legislation in this direction. He believed one cause which had prevented the success of those efforts had been undue timidity in shortening the period for showing a good title. He was extremely anxious that the Act when passed should not be a mere barren addition to the Statute Book.

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Lord HERSCHELL said, that he had not the slightest intention of dividing the House on the question, as he knew it would be absolutely useless to do so; but in spite of his noble and learned Friend's lecture he must renew his protest against referring the Bill to a Select Committee on the ground that it would not be for the public advantage. The Bill was one of great importance, and did much more than embody any single principle. The House might be agreed on the general question of registration of title. But it was another matter to insist on registration both in transactions *inter vivos* and on successions. The House had expressed no view on that extension. Their Lordships would be as well able to deal with the important questions raised by the Bill as a Select Committee. The Committee was to include four lawyers, the rest being laymen. No doubt the House would not be bound by the determination of the Select Committee; but there was a natural impatience in the House to discuss a matter which had been referred to a Select Committee. There were several important questions which would have to be considered; whether the owner would have to register before transfer to a purchaser; whether registration was to be compulsory on every succession or only when transfer took place; and whether a distinction should be drawn between a possessory or qualified and an absolute title. There was, further, the important question of succession on intestacy, which certainly ought not to be decided by a Select Committee. Then, if the Select Committee were intended to revise the drafting of the Bill, he should certainly decline to take part in so dangerous an operation. He believed that after a Select Committee had tinkered with the Bill, it would be found when it came into operation that they had created confusion instead of avoiding it. Besides, the legal Members of the House had not time to spare from their judicial duties to deal with a Bill of this character in a satisfactory manner. It was perfectly true, as his noble and learned Friend had said, that the law societies were in favour of referring the Bill to a Select Committee; but it was with the proviso, which had been rejected by his noble and learned Friend, that evidence should be taken by the Committee.

The Earl of SELBORNE said, he was very far from differing from all that his noble and learned Friend who had just sat down had said, and he quite agreed that there were several important questions to be considered, which it was not to be assumed that the House had decided, if the Bill went to a Select Committee. On some of those questions he had last year expressed his opinion, and, if he had not then pressed his views on all those points to a division, he had not changed them, and should feel quite at liberty to urge them now. But he did not think that his noble and learned Friend had done justice to the arguments in favour of the course recommended by the Lord Chancellor. He certainly should not join the Committee for the purpose of any mere criticisms upon the drafting of the Bill. But there were questions of machinery, on which the success of the Bill would largely depend, and of the relation of the Bill to the previous Acts dealing with the question, with which a Select Committee would be eminently qualified to deal. Last year he had urged the consolidation of those Acts with the Bill, which was now done, with such changes in and Amendments of them as the Settled Lands Act, and other intermediate legislation, had rendered necessary. This alone, in his judgment, was a sufficient reason for the course which the Lord Chancellor now proposed. The Bill ought to receive, in all its details, careful consideration; could that be done in that House? There was no doubt that a Select Committee, including much of the legal strength of the House, besides lay members, was exactly the body to deal with such work, which the House could not possibly do. He quite agreed that there were several important questions which could eventually only be determined by that House, and that those questions must be considered in the House; but surely it would be more convenient to consider those questions without feeling that it was necessary for the House to go into every other question as well. Even with regard to those questions which the House itself must consider, he had no hesitation in saying that he thought that the House would be assisted in that consideration when the Bill had come back, and was re-committed, by knowing what had been the opinions expressed after full deliberation and consultation by the noble Lords, both legal and others, who might compose that Committee. The great argument in favour of a Select Committee was that in it a discussion of this character could be carried on under conditions under which it was impossible for a legal argument to be carried on in that House. He did not mean that they could not speak as often as they chose in Committee; but in a Select Committee there was an interchange of ideas which could hardly take place in the House. If the majority of the Select Committee, after full consideration, returned the Bill to that House, recommending changes which perhaps the Government might not have been disposed to accept, he felt sure that those changes would stand a better chance of being adopted than they might otherwise have.

Lord THRING said, he was opposed to the Motion to refer the Bill to a Select

Committee. The important points of the Bill could only be decided by the Whole House; and, in his opinion, a Select Committee was the worst tribunal that could be imagined for the consideration of a Bill of this kind, which hung together like the links of a chain.

Lord ESHER said, it seemed to him that this was a Bill which more, perhaps, than any other required that it should be sent to a Select Committee. It bristled with technicalities; and, speaking for himself, having read it very carefully, there were some pages of questions which he would like to have solved before he could understand the wording of the Bill. How those questions were to be asked across the Table of the House passed his comprehension to know. The real working point, the backbone of the Bill, was the compulsory registration of possessory titles. If that registration could be made at little or no expense, and with little or no delay, it seemed to him that the objections which had been stated to compulsory registration would almost fall to the ground. The answer to that question depended on the amount of evidence which they should require in order to put on the register the possessory title. If the Bill went to a Select Committee it would be possible to put into the Bill the amount of evidence which should be deemed necessary. The question whether noble Lords would agree to compulsory registration or not would depend greatly upon the matter of evidence. Another point requiring to be carefully looked into was a so-called "Interpretation Clause," which was really a misinterpretation clause, because it put an almost impossible meaning upon words which were used in the body of the Bill. That circumstance afforded another reason why the Bill should go to a Select Committee.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said, he would point out that last year their Lordships had a Bill of the same kind before them, and it never seemed to occur to anybody then that the Bill should go to a Select Committee. Moreover, some of the questions raised in this Bill had on a former occasion been debated in the House and divided upon. He rather supported the suggestion of his noble Friend behind him that the Bill should be partially dealt with in Committee of the Whole House, and afterwards, if necessary, referred to a Select Committee, because he did not see how the Bill could be sent, in the first instance, to a Select Committee until the wide and important questions involved in certain portions of the Bill had been determined upon. As had been pointed out, the Bill did not contain the materials on which the House could form a judgment—namely, as to whether the scheme of the Bill would involve serious expense and delay, which depended not upon any provisions in the Bill, but upon provisions which were to be made on Orders under the Bill; and he submitted it was the duty of the framers to put those provisions into the Bill, and not to leave the House in the dark as to material points.

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury) said, it was necessary that the Bill should not only be intelligible and clear to those who made it, but also that its clauses should not be ambiguous, either in the minds of those who interpreted it in the Court of Law or of the landowners, whom it would affect so largely; and it, therefore, became a matter of careful discussion to know whether the clauses as they stood had a thorough application to all the detailed objects the Bill had in view. There seemed nothing more unsatisfactory, as a general rule, than the manufacture of the clauses of an Act of Parliament across the Table of the House, and there was no subject on which that was less satisfactory than where it affected the pecuniary rights and the very existence of a very large and important interest in the country. In his opinion, some other machinery must be found for framing the Bill than that which consisted in a debate between the two sides of the House. Select Committees did not appear to enjoy the admiration of the noble Lords opposite, who seemed to regard with scorn anything that was done in the way of framing a Bill by anyone except what they termed a competent draftsman. In his own opinion, the best course would be to refer the Bill to a Select Committee.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill *referred* to a Select Committee accordingly.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 1.)

(*The Lord Thurlow.*)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 2 (Repeal of s. 27 of 45 & 46 Vict. c. 56. Purchase of undertaking by local authority).

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN moved to omit the words "the goodwill of the business and of," on the ground that they rendered uncertain the elements of value in the property of the Companies to be taken over. He desired, at the same time, that at the expiration of the period during which the Companies' privileges were to endure, their plant and material should be valued as being *in situ*, and as suitable for the purposes for which they were intended, instead of being taken over at the "old iron" value.

Amendment *moved*, in page 2, line 3, to leave out ("market"), and leave out ("the goodwill of the business and of").—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

THE EARL OF CRAWFORD said, that inasmuch as it was understood that the noble and learned Lord opposite intended to propose an Amendment upon this clause, it would be convenient if he would now state the effect of that Amendment.

LORD HERSCHELL said, that the effect of his proposed Amendment would be to insure that at the expiration of the Companies' term their plant and material should be taken over at the price it would fetch as being ready for immediate working.

VISCOUNT BURY said, he hoped that the word "goodwill" would not be omitted from the Bill. When the measure was before the Select Committee the Committee appeared to be divided into two parties—one in favour of giving the Companies a right to the value of their goodwill, and the other in favour of treating their businesses as those of breaking up concerns.

THE EARL OF CRAWFORD said, that in justice to the public they should make it clear a time would come when the Companies would no longer be justified in putting fresh capital into their works for the purpose of keeping them in going order, and, in fact, to save themselves would have to starve the business.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) said, he confessed that his first view with respect to a matter of this kind was that if compulsory powers for purchase of a going concern were enacted, the full value of the going concern at the time of purchase ought to be given. He did not see that there was any reason why, in the nature of things, the Electric Lighting Companies should be burdened with burdens different from those placed upon other industries. He understood, however, that the Companies themselves on the whole preferred that this word should be left out, and as their Lordships ought not to affect to be wiser than the Companies themselves as to their own interests, he was content on their representation to vote for its omission. But in doing so he did not wish to bind himself at any future time not to vote for its inclusion, for he could not in the least assent to the view, either, on the one hand, that this industry should be subjected to greater burdens than were imposed upon others, or, on the other, that they were entitled to any special preference.

LORD HERSCHELL said, that he agreed with very much that the noble Marquess had said. He had always thought it desirable to provide against unreasonable terms being required if the Local Authorities wished to purchase these undertakings; but he had never seen any reason why special burdens should be imposed upon the undertakers. If the condition were imposed upon them that at the end of any given term they should not receive the full value of their property, they would recoup themselves in some other way, as by making higher charges. The present generation would thus pay more for the electric light in order that some 30 or 40 years hence the next generation should have it for less than they ought to pay. At the same time, he recognized the difficulties of the situation, and if the Bill could not be got through without, he agreed that the word "goodwill" should be struck out of this clause. He would prefer that instead of the term "goodwill" the words "market value" should be substituted. This was all that any reasonable person could expect to obtain.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK) said, that it was only on the same ground taken by his noble Friend (the Marquess of Salisbury) that he consented to this Amendment.

Lord THURLOW said, he was quite willing to assent to the Motion. It was essential for the passage of the Bill through "another place" that the word "goodwill" should not be in it. What he dreaded was that unless the purchase of these undertakings was made a fair one—and more than fair, liberal—during the last few years of the term the undertakers would be tempted to do what was called scamp the undertaking. He had consulted the representatives of most of the London and Provincial Electric Lighting Companies, and he had come to the conclusion that the prolongation of the term from 21 years to 42 years, as now proposed, would be sufficient to insure the public against overcharge. On behalf of the Companies he was authorized to accept this Amendment, as they were satisfied that the prolongation of the term would bring capital into the business.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Viscount BURY said, he wished to draw the attention of the noble Lord opposite to the provision that on the purchase of an undertaking the purchaser should get a clear title without the seller having to make one. This would absolve the Local Authority from the necessity of investigating the title to see whether it was free from mortgages. He should like to ask what would become of mortgagees and other creditors?

Lord THURLOW said, he did not think that any difficulty such as that suggested by the noble Viscount would arise. At the same time he might say that he was not responsible for these words in the clause.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Remaining Clauses *agreed to*, with Amendments; the Report thereof to be received *To-morrow;* and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 75.)

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

QUESTION.

Lord SUDELEY asked the Lord President of the Council, Whether Her Majesty's Government propose to refer the question of granting a new Charter to the Royal College of Surgeons of England to the Commission about to be appointed (or already appointed) to consider the question of the formation of a new University?

The LORD PRESIDENT (Viscount Cranbrook): The Petition of the Royal College of Surgeons is not for a new Charter, but for a supplementary Charter to that already existing. I do not think that the points raised in it, though of some importance, can properly be referred to the Commission which is about to be appointed to consider the question of a new University.

House adjourned at half past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'locck.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 23rd April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—Emigration and Immigration (Foreigners), Mr. Heneage *disch.;* Mr. Kenrick *added.*

Private Bill (*by Order*) — *Third Reading* — Assam Company, and *passed.*

Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Customs and Inland Revenue * [202].

Provisional Order Bill — *Ordered* — *First Reading*—Water * [227].

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—IMPRISONMENT OF MESSRS. COX AND BLANE.

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following Letters, relating to the imprisonment of two Members of this House:—

"Ennis, Co. Clare,
April 20th 1888.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. Joseph Richard Cox, Member of Parliament for the Eastern Division of the County of Clare, was this day, upon an Appeal from the decision of two Resident Magistrates, brought before me, as acting County Court Judge of this County, convicted of an offence under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," and sentenced to be imprisoned for one calendar month; and that he has been by my warrant committed to the Gaol of Limerick, and is now confined there pursuant to his sentence.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
William Hickson.

The Right Honorable the Speaker.

Letterkenny,
19 April 1888.

Sir,

I beg leave to inform you that I have to-day confirmed the conviction of Mr. Alexander Blane, a Member of the House of Commons, on the charge of inciting persons to take part in a criminal conspiracy, and that I have sentenced him to be imprisoned for the period of six calendar months in the Prison of Londonderry.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
Thos. S. Webb,
County Court Judge of Donegal.

To the Right Honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW AND COURTS OF JUSTICE AND LEGAL PROCEDURE.

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure, have leave to print and circulate with the Votes, the Minutes of their Proceedings from day to day.—(*Mr. Osborne Morgan.*)

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure, have leave to print and circulate with the Votes any amended Clauses of Bills committed to them from time to time.—(*Mr. Osborne Morgan.*)

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

HORSE GUARDS AVENUE BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) complained that there was no Member of the Government present to give an explanation of the object and scope of the measure. In the circumstances, he objected to the Bill being proceeded with.

Bill to be read a second time *To-morrow.*

QUESTIONS.

COMPANIES ACTS—THE PROVIDENT ASSOCIATION OF LONDON (LIMITED).

Mr. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been drawn to the Provident Association of London (Limited), and to the statement publicly made by Baron Joseph Profumo, the Managing Director, during the past week, to the effect that, in the past 15 months, the Association has issued 49,700 Bonds; that these Bonds, added to the 30,000 Bonds, of the face value of £2,000,000 previously issued, would amount to upwards of £5,000,000 sterling; that the Assurance Fund in respect of the Bonds issued to the end of last year amounted to only £81,929; that no account is obtainable from the Association showing the sum annually received from the Bondholders (who are mostly of the poorer classes) in respect of these Bonds, nor of the amount of the expenditure; and, whether, in view of the above facts, and considering that avowedly the business of the Association is partly of the nature of Life Assurance, he will take the necessary steps for enforcing the publication, as prescribed by statute, of proper accounts of receipts and expenditure, as well as of the assets and liabilities, of the Association?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): My attention has been called to the Bonds referred to by the hon. Member, and the opinion of counsel is being taken as to the position of the Board of Trade in the matter. I think it right to add that since I came into the House this afternoon I have received a letter from Baron Profumo, in which he states—

> "(1) That it is not correct that the Company have a deferred liability of £5,000,000. (2) The present worth of the liability of the Bonds in force, as certified by actuaries, is fully secured by securities in the hands of Trustees. (3) The Company is not an Insurance Company, and the accounts are presented in the form prescribed by the Articles of Association."

I make this statement without expressing any opinion upon it.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—THE MORAY FIRTH OR FIRTH OF FORTH.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, having regard to the provisions of 7 & 8 *Vict.* c. 95, fishermen on the sea coasts of the Moray Firth or Firth of Forth, who take salmon outside one mile from low water mark, are subject to any penalty; whether in the above Firths or elsewhere on the coast of Scotland the Crown or their lessees claim any and what right to prevent the taking of salmon beyond the mile specified in 7 & 8 *Vict.* c. 95; and, if any right is claimed, what is the nature of the right; to what distance seaward does it extend; has it ever been exercised; and, if so, how?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The points of the hon. Member's Question are almost all points of law, and I cannot undertake to answer them. But I may point out to the hon. Member that the Act 7 & 8 *Vict.* c. 95, is not restrictive of the rights of the Crown, or those deriving right from the Crown, as it expressly declares that nothing contained in it shall affect the rights of the Crown, or the right vested in any proprietor to prevent any person from fishing, either within or beyond the one-mile limit. The purpose of the Act was to give a summary and penal remedy within that limit. I may add that no right of the Crown or proprietor can extend beyond the limit to which the territory of the Crown extends seaward.

Mr. ANDERSON asked, whether the fishermen were not entitled to have defined by the Law Officers of the Crown the rights of the Crown to the salmon fishings; because it was well known that difficult questions had arisen between the proprietors and fishermen on the coast?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I am quite ready to give my hon. Friend unofficially any guidance I can; but I am not prepared to give an opinion on points of law in this House, I have stated that the rights of the Crown, or those of the proprietors, are not limited by the Act to which he has referred. Those rights extend beyond the international rights.

Mr. ANDERSON: In consequence of the unsatisfactory answer, and the unsatisfactory way in which Scotch Business is conducted in this House, I shall in Committee of Supply call attention to this question, and move to reduce the salary of the right hon. and learned Gentleman.

METROPOLITAN POLICE FORCE—GOOD CONDUCT BADGES.

Mr. W. G. C. BENTINCK (Penryn and Falmouth) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the system of granting good conduct badges, at present in vogue in the Army and Post Office Departments, could be extended to the Metropolitan Police Force, whereby their length of service and good conduct could be recognized?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have consulted the Chief Commissioner of Police as to the suggestion of my hon. Friend; and he is of opinion that the system of good conduct badges could not be advantageously introduced in the Metropolitan Police Force. The long service and good conduct of a man are, under the present system, always carefully considered and rewarded.

SIAM—THE CONSULAR COURT AT BANGKOK—BRITISH SUBJECTS.

Mr. F. W. MACLEAN (Oxford, Woodstock) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether serious complaints have been made to Her Majesty's Government by a large number of British subjects resident in Siam, relative to the administration of justice in the Consular Court at Bangkok, in that country; whether, in default of the removal of the grounds of such complaints, such British subjects have asked that they may be placed under the protection of the Consul in Bangkok of some friendly European or American Power; and, whether, under these circumstances, Her Majesty's Government have taken, or propose to take, any steps to remove the cause of such complaints, if well founded?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Some complaints relative to the administration of justice in the Consular Court of Bangkok have been received at the Foreign Office. They appear to have originated with certain Englishmen in the employment of the Siamese Government. Inquiry has been made; but Her Majesty's Government do not consider that the complaints are well founded, and they do not propose to take any steps in the matter. It is hardly necessary that I should state that in countries such as Siam, where Her Majesty exercises by Treaty extra territorial jurisdiction, there can be no question of placing British subjects under the protection of the Consul of any other Power.

RAILWAY SERVANTS—LONG HOURS ON DUTY.

MR. F. W. MACLEAN (Oxford, Woodstock) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the long hours during which engine-drivers, stokers, and signalmen on railways in this country are on duty has been brought to the attention of the Board; and, whether the Board has any jurisdiction to interfere in the matter; and, if so, whether the Board is prepared so to limit the number of working hours of such men as not to be excessive, with a view to the better safety of railway travellers.

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The attention of the Board of Trade has been called to the matter referred to by the hon. Member, and a Return relating thereto has recently been laid before Parliament. The Board of Trade have no jurisdiction to interfere in the matter; but the desirability of obtaining information on the subject will not be lost sight of.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL FUNDS—THE CONVERSION OF CONSOLS.

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, What will be the net annual loss to the Funds of Greenwich Hospital consequent on the conversion of its Three per Cent Stock; and, whether he will press on the re-investment of the Converted Stock in securities giving a higher rate of interest, so as to compensate for such loss?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The net annual loss to Greenwich Hospital Funds in consequence of the Conversion of the Three per Cent Stock will be about £1,950. Steps will be taken to re-invest at a higher rate of interest a certain portion of the Stock of the Hospital so converted.

AFRICA (SOUTH-WEST)—WALFISCH BAY.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he can give the House any further information as to the reported threat of an attack on the British Settlement of Walfisch Bay by inhabitants of the neighbouring German Protectorate; and, whether the German Authorities have taken the steps necessary to maintain an effective control over the inhabitants of their Protectorate, especially in regard to preventing hostile aggression outside the boundaries of the Protectorate?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In answer to my hon. Friend, I can only say that our information on the subject is at present incomplete; but that Her Majesty's Government are in communication with the German Government as to the apprehended disturbance.

INDIA (BOMBAY)—ENFORCED IMMORALITY.

MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been directed to a statement made by the Rev. Alfred S. Dyer, dated Bombay, 30th March, 1888, wherein he states that—

> "A medical officer, in a private communication, says that respectable girls are forced into lives of prostitution. The poorer class of natives are in great awe of persons in authority. Officials go out into the villages, and say it is the order of the Government that so many girls should go and be registered as prostitutes. The poor people are afraid to refuse or resist, their daughters are delivered up, and thus virtuous girls are consigned to lives of infamy;"

and, whether the Government will inquire whether any such practices exist?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): Any person guilty of the offences described in the Question would, under the Indian Penal Code, be liable to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment and a fine. If evidence of the Commission of such offence were laid before the Public Prosecutor at Bombay, it would be his duty to institute proceedings; but an anonymous statement that Government officials are in the habit of committing such an offence does not afford any basis upon which an inquiry could be directed.

GUN LICENCES—REVOLVERS.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the law which requires a person using or carrying a gun elsewhere than in a dwelling house or the curtilage thereof to take out a licence applies to revolvers?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, the law with reference to the two was precisely the same.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACT — LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE EDENDERRY DISTRICT.

Dr. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Local Government Board will hold an inquiry as to the Petitions presented for the erection of labourers' cottages in the Edenderry District?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the inquiry was fixed to be held on Thursday, the 26th April, and the Board of Guardians were duly informed thereof.

TREATIES WITH FOREIGN NATIONS—RESTRICTIONS ON THE COLONIES.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is a fact that Treaties are in force between the United Kingdom and some foreign nations, precluding the exercise, even by self-governing Colonies, of the right, if so desired, to admit the productions of the Mother Country on more advantageous fiscal conditions than the goods of foreign nations; and, in such case, with what nations such Treaties exist, and when they were concluded; and, if Her Majesty's Government can take steps to terminate foreign engagements calculated to impede the commercial federation of the British Empire?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): There are such Treaties; but it would exceed the due limits of a reply to recount them and explain the differences between them. If my hon. and gallant Friend will move for a Return of them there will be no objection to lay it upon the Table; but, inasmuch as Commercial Treaties relate to a variety of subjects, it would not be desirable to terminate any of them without carefully considering what effect that step would have upon British commercial interests generally.

Mr. J. W. Barclay

MERCHANDIZE MARKS ACT—ADOPTION BY FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Mr. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he has any information, and would state to the House, how far foreign countries have adopted, or are preparing to adopt, legislation on the lines of the Merchandize Marks Act, passed last Session, for the protection of honest trading?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): A Circular was sent on the 8th of October last to Her Majesty's Representatives in those States that are parties to the International Union for the protection of industrial property, instructing them to communicate copies of the recent British Merchandize Marks Act, and to invite reciprocal legislation on the same lines. As yet few States have intimated their readiness to do so.

DOCK LOANS ACT, 1865—LOANS TO DOCK COMPANIES.

Mr. M'EWAN (Edinburgh, Central) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, How many Dock Companies have availed themselves of the facilities of the Dock Loans Act of 1865; and, if he has any objection to give a Return showing name of dock aided and its situation, sum advanced, and security?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): Two Dock Companies have received loans under the Colonial Docks Act, the Hong Kong and Whampoa Dock Company and the Anglo-Maltese Hydraulic Dock Company. The former received a loan of £12,000 in 1864, which has been paid off, and a second of £20,000 in 1885; the latter received a loan of £20,000 in 1873, the security in each case being a mortgage of the property.

CRIMINAL LAW—ALLEGED OUTRAGE ON A GIRL.

Mr. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a case in the Thames Police Court on the 14th instant, in which a woman was committed for letting her servant, a girl of 15, be outraged by a Captain William Wallace; whether any effort has been made to discover Captain William Wallace and bring him to justice; and, whether he will instruct the police to try and find him and have him prosecuted?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I understand that this woman has been committed to take her trial at the Central Criminal Court at the Sessions which commence to-day. No information was given to the police at the time of the alleged offence; but the matter is now engaging the attention of the police, who will watch the case carefully and endeavour to bring all the offenders to justice. I cannot say more than this pending the trial of the woman.

FINANCE, &c.—THE GOVERNMENT AND THE BANK OF ENGLAND.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the case, as shown by the published weekly Returns of the Bank of England, that, since January last, the balances at the credit of the Government with that Bank amounted to an average of £5,500,000 sterling during the month of January, of £8,750,000 during the month of February, of £13,750,000 during the month of March, and of £10,000,000 during the period to run of the present month of April; the lowest balance being £4,721,896, on the 25th of January; whether, notwithstanding such large credit balances, the Government, on the 7th of January last, issued Treasury Bills to the amount of £1,600,000, payable three months after date, at a cost to the Treasury of about £8,000; on the 4th of February last issued other Treasury Bills to the amount of £1,500,000, payable three months after date, and to the amount of £500,000 payable six months after date, at a further cost to the Treasury of between £7,000 and £8,000; and on the 27th of February last issued further Treasury Bills to the amount of £1,000,000, payable three months after date, at a further cost to the Treasury of £4,000, amounting in all to a cost or loss to the Treasury of between £19,000 and £20,000; whether, having regard to this large cost or loss, it is possible by legislation to make such a financial rearrangement of the banking business of the Government as will permit of the balances at the credit of the Government being drawn upon before any such borrowing in the public market is resorted to; and, whether he would consider if, when in the months of February, March, and April, when the balance at the credit of the Government is necessarily high and money at the credit of private bankers and in the open market is necessarily low, a large saving to the country could be effected if the Government were authorized to lend such surplus funds, or parts thereof, for short periods on the security of Consols or other Government Stocks?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The figures used by the hon. Member are correctly given, except that the £1,000,000 Treasury Bills issued on the 27th of February were for six months, not three months; but it must be remembered that in public deposits which are described as the "balances at the credit of the Government," there are included many other balances besides the Exchequer balance, more especially the balance of the National Debt Commissioners, which it was important to keep at an exceptionally high figure this year in view of the Conversion of Debt Scheme. As regards the Exchequer balance, it was carefully watched during the first nine months of the year, the result of which was that a considerable saving to the State was effected, as referred to in the Budget Statement. The saving was effected by dropping Treasury Bills temporarily, and only renewing them according to actual requirements. During the last three months of the year, to which the hon. Member especially refers, a similar latitude is not allowed to the Treasury; for, under the present law, if Treasury Bills are not renewed within the financial year, the Treasury loses the power of renewing them. In other words, they have to be paid off. Whether or not it would be expedient to remove the restriction raises an important Constitutional question; and the question of employing Government balances is one which is not capable of being dealt with within the limits of an answer to a Question. I am, however, ready to admit that, as regards the monetary effect of our financial arrangements in the last quarter of the financial year, they are not in all respects so entirely satisfactory as to preclude my carefully considering them.

EGYPT—LIGHT DUES IN THE RED SEA.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the President of the Board of Trade, with regard to the statement that the total amount received by the Egyptian Authorities in respect of light dues in the Red Sea amounted to £60,000 annually and the expenditure to only £30,000, Whether he has seen the statements in *The Liverpool Journal of Commerce* and *The Bullionist* that, as a matter of fact, the receipts are now £90,000 a-year and the expenditure only £30,000, there being thus left a clear annual balance of £60,000; and, if so, whether this Estimate is correct; was it agreed upon between the Egyptian Government and the Powers, when the light dues were first levied, that the present tariff shall be subject to be increased or lowered according to the state of the budget of lighthouses to be drawn up every year; whether such a budget has ever been drawn up; and, whether the Government has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House the whole of the Papers on the subject of lighting the Red Sea, the suggestions made for improving the lights, and a statement of the profits now derived from the light dues?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): I have not seen the statements referred to by the hon. Member. The amount of Receipts and Expenditure by the Egyptian Government in respect of their lighthouse administration, as shown by their accounts, which are furnished annually, were stated in this House by the Secretary to the Board of Trade on the 21st of February, 1887, in reply to the hon. Member for Greenock (Mr. T. Sutherland), and are, speaking generally, in accordance with the figures now quoted by the hon. Member. About one-sixth of those receipts are on account of Egyptian lights in the Mediterranean, and about five-sixths on account of those in the Gulf of Suez and the Northern portion of the Red Sea. The question as to any agreement between the Egyptian Government and the Powers respecting reduction of light dues was answered by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on the 1st of September, 1887, to the effect that there is no formal agreement. The Egyptian Government, in a notice to the maritime trade issued in 1870, made the declaration referred to; but it leaves the reduction within their own discretion. The accounts are, as I have already stated, furnished annually. It would not be advisable to publish the Papers, as the question is still the subject of communications with other Governments.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTION—THE HORSE DEALERS' DUTY.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the following persons, or any of them, will be exempt from the Horse Dealers' Duty; farmers who, in the ordinary course of their occupation, buy and sell horses or breed horses for sale; tradesmen (not horse dealers) who occasionally buy or sell horses, or who breed them for sale; masters of hounds and other owners of hunting studs who buy and sell horses for hunting, and many of whom have annual sales of their studs?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): It is not the correct way of putting the Question to ask whether the persons in the cases quoted would be exempt from Horse Dealers' Duty. They are not horse dealers, and would not come within the definition of horse dealers. The tax on horse dealers is not a new one, and all these questions were dealt with by the old law.

POST OFFICE—CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE—INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether clerks employed at the Central Telegraph Office are compelled to absent themselves from duty when there is an infectious disease in their homes; whether they are allowed full pay during their enforced absence; whether, if the clerk suffers from an infectious disease himself, he has one-third of his pay deducted; and, whether he will grant full pay in both cases?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (A LORD of the TREASURY) (Wigton) (who replied) said: The hon. Member has stated the practice correctly. Telegraphists at whose homes there are infectious diseases are required to absent themselves; and this absence being not for their own sake, but for the sake of others, it appears only fair that their pay should continue. But when telegraphists are themselves ill, they become subject to the deduction common to all officers of similar rank; and, for the reasons given the other day in reply to a previous Question from the hon. Member, the Postmaster General is not prepared to alter the practice in this respect.

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND) ACT—SCHEMES OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. HUGH ELLIOT (Ayrshire, N.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it would be consistent with the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act to appoint a Select Committee to consider such schemes of the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Commissioners as may from time to time be laid upon the Table of the House, and against which Addresses to the Crown are moved; and, if so, whether the Government will consent to the appointment of such a Committee for the purpose of inquiring into, and reporting upon, each such scheme before a decision is taken upon it in the House?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): It would not be consistent with the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act to appoint a Select Committee to consider schemes. The Act provides a mode of doing this, which must be followed, and the Government could not consent to the appointment of such a Committee.

POST OFFICE—REFUSAL OF LICENCE TO THE WRITING TELEGRAPH.

Mr. M'EWAN (Edinburgh, Central) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that, after six months' consideration, the Post Office Authorities have refused to grant a licence to the proprietors of the Writing Telegraph to use their system under the same conditions as the various Telephone Companies use their systems; and, whether, if it be true, this is in accordance with the usage in respect to other companies desiring to use telegraph systems?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (A Lord of the Treasury) (Wigton) (who replied) said: I am requested by my right hon. Friend to say, in reply to the hon. Member, that it is the fact that, after due consideration, he has refused to grant a licence to the proprietors of the Writing Telegraph. He thinks it preferable that, if there is a substantial demand for the establishment of exchanges to be worked by that instrument, they should be in the hands of the Post Office, the instruments being supplied by the proprietors on terms to be arranged.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT (IRELAND)—SERVICE OF REQUISITION FORMS BY POST.

Mr. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the practice for Clerks of Unions in Ireland to serve the requisition forms under the Representation of the People Act (Ireland) by post instead of through the rate collectors; and, whether this practice is legal; and, if not, whether he will cause it to be discontinued?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he had not had sufficient time to inquire whether it was the practice of Clerks of Unions, as alleged, to serve requisitions through the post, nor could he say that such practice, if in vogue, was illegal. He was not aware there were any grounds for the statement that the practice was illegal.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked the right hon. Gentleman, did he remember that he was the President of the Local Government Board, to whose jurisdiction Clerks were subjected?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, that the fact of his being President of the Local Government Board did not confer on him power to express an opinion on the illegality of the practice.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—EXISTING TAXATION IN THE COUNTIES.

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) asked the Lord Advocate, in view of Local Government for Scotland, If he will lay a Return upon the Table of the House showing the amounts paid for existing licences and taxation in each county; the Treasury grants now paid to each county; the proportion of the Probate Duty which it is estimated each county would receive on the basis of its indoor pauperism; the estimated amount of expenditure for main roads in each county; and the general county expenditure to which the whole county contributes?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): There is no objection to give the hon. Member a Return of the nature asked for. But as the Secretary for Scotland is having some statistics prepared bearing on the question, perhaps the hon. Member would wait for a short time till it can be ascertained on what other points information is desired so as to include all that is required in one Return.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—HORSEDEALER'S LICENCES.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, How many horses a farmer may buy and sell within one year without incurring liability for a horsedealer's licence?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No limit will be placed under the Bill to the number of horses bought and sold by a farmer, so long as such horses (1) are used solely for purposes of husbandry; (2) have been bred on his farm; or (3) have been purchased when under two years of age.

THE MAURITIUS—MARRIAGE AND LEGITIMACY.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If the figure is correctly given in the last Report on the Mauritius, which makes the illegitimate births to be 53·7 per cent of the whole number, and to be greater among the Indians than among the general population, implying that some three-fourths of the births among the Indians are illegitimate; whether the laws of the Mauritius recognize the Hindoo and Mahommedan marriages of the great majority of the population; how he can account for the very small marriage rate and apparent extraordinary prevalence of illegitimacy among an Indian population which in their own country marries very much and is singularly free from illegitimacy; whether the allusion, in paragraph 19, to the repeated representations of the Protector of Immigrants, of the need of elementary instruction for the Indian population, and the expression of a hope that something effectual will be done, means that it has not hitherto been done; and, whether the Secretary of State will insist that it should be done?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): It appears from the Annual Report of the Registrar General of Mauritius for 1886 that in that year the percentage of illegitimate births was 53·7 for the whole population and 62·3 for the Indian population. The law of Mauritius does not recognize any marriages contracted in the Colony which are not celebrated before an officer of the Civil Status. As regards the small marriage rate, the explanation which suggests itself as most probable is that a considerable number of the Indians who marry according to their personal religious law do not think it necessary to contract civil marriages. The provision for the elementary education of the Indian population is inadequate. The Colonial Government and Legislature have been repeatedly urged by successive Secretaries of State to supply this want; but financial and other difficulties have hitherto prevented effectual measures being adopted; and I can only add that the Secretary of State will be glad if the hope expressed by the Governor may be realized. The Secretary of State cannot insist upon the passing of a measure of this kind, which involves expenditure.

FINANCE, &c.—SCOTCH CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EXCHEQUER.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he can indicate, or give reference to the figures on which he calculates the contribution of Scotland to the Exchequer to be 11 per cent; and, whether, in making that calculation, he has allowed anything for property of Scotchmen held and taxed in London, as the money capital of the Kingdom, for taxable goods for Scotch consumption imported into the Port of London, and for other cases in which the inclusion of the general capital in one of the Divisions of the Kingdom may give an undue advantage to that Division in any such calculation?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The calculation upon which the figure of 11 per cent was based was a very complex one. I used several independent sets of figures, and checked one set by another. No doubt there was room for error in each set; but the net result, which I may say was nearer 10 than 11 percent, must approximate nearly to the truth. Of course, I am aware that duties are paid in one country on account of the other, and this fact added materially to the difficulty of the calculation. To the best of my belief, the figures I have adopted are favourable to Scotland.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: Will you put the figures in a Return?

Mr. GOSCHEN: No, Sir; it will not be possible to do so.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACTS, 1881 and 1887—STATISITCS.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, If, in the Return of Proceedings under the Land Law (Ireland) Acts, 1881 and 1887, for September, October, November, and December 1887, and January 1888, as to the number of originating notices, the total of 149,191 (comprising 141,644 applications under "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881," to 31st August, 1887, and 7,527 applications received in the months of September), and the total of 10,643 applications by leaseholders under "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," in the month of September—include the originating notices served in order to fix fair rents in the Civil Bill Courts; and, if so, will the Government direct the Land Commission, in preparing these Returns, to set out in separate columns the applications to go before the Sub-Commissioners, and those to go before the Civil Bill Courts?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University), in reply, said, he was informed by the Land Commissioners that the number of cases heard in the Civil Bill Courts were included in the Returns. They saw no objection to act on the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman; and, for the future, Returns would be prepared in the manner he wished.

Mr. FLYNN asked, would it be possible to get the Returns of the present year furnished in that form?

Mr. MADDEN said, he would convey the suggestion to the Land Commissioners, and see if it could be acted on.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT, 1887—SEC. 12—KIRKINTILLOCH COLLIERY.

Mr. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a statement that at a colliery at Kirkintilloch the owners have posted up a notice to the following effect:—

> "If any foreign material be found in a hutch, he shall be fined 5s. for the first offence, 10s. for the second, 15s. and instant dismissal for the third;"

whether he is aware that this notice is not the result of an agreement with the men, in terms of the 12th section of "The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887," but is objected to and resisted by them; whether, if these facts be correct, this action of the owners is in accordance with the provisions of the Act; and, whether the Government propose to take any action in the matter?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The owners of this colliery have posted up a notice substantially corresponding with the terms stated in the Question. The men have not agreed to the terms of the notice. They have been on strike, and no work has been done, or deductions made, under the notice. The notice is inoperative for the purpose of settling deductions under the 12th section of the Coal Mines Regulation Act, unless its terms are expressly or impliedly agreed to by the men or adopted on arbitration. No action by the Government is called for under this state of things.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—RETURN OF CARETAKERS EVICTED.

Mr. A. E. PEASE (York) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Return of Caretakers Evicted in Ireland has been completed; and, if so, when it will be laid before Parliament?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Return was prepared, and would have been laid on the Table that day, only he was not satisfied with its form. He hoped it would be very shortly ready in its altered form,

SMALL HOLDINGS, &c. FOR AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS (SCOTLAND.)

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, considering the demand for small holdings now being expressed at public meetings of ploughmen throughout Scotland, the Government intend to introduce a Bill to provide small holdings for the ploughmen and other agricultural labourers in Scotland?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): So far as I am aware, there is no immediate prospect of any legislation such as is indicated by the Question of the hon. Member.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—BECHUANALAND.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government are aware that grants of 400 square miles have been granted by several of the Bechuana Chiefs in the Protectorate for mining purposes, with right of wood and water in the districts; whether these grants were given by the Chiefs with the consent of the Council; and, whether the Government mean to recognize these grants as valid, if the Protectorate were taken into the Colony of Bechuanaland?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Baron Henry de Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Of the three principal Chiefs in the Protectorate, one —Gasitswe—in conjunction with his son and heir, has given such a concession. Another Chief—Khama—is supposed to have given a concession of 100 square miles; but the most recent information is that there has been some misunderstanding as to its tenure and extent. The third Chief—Sechele—does not appear to have made any such concession. Her Majesty's Government are not possessed of full information on the point raised in the second paragraph of the hon. Member's Question; and they cannot undertake to say what would be their action in the contingency contemplated by the last paragraph.

CRIMINAL LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES) — AGGRAVATION OF SENTENCES BY COURTS OF APPEAL.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will state the number of cases in recent years in which any English tribunals of Criminal Appeal have aggravated sentences inflicted by tribunals of the first instance, in the manner now being practised in Ireland?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have no information in my possession to show the number of cases in which Courts of Appeal in England have aggravated criminal sentences. The Judicial Statistics only show the number of sentences modified, and not the nature of the modification. In 1886 on 171 appeals the sentence was confirmed in 97, modified in 18, and the conviction quashed in 56 cases.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE inquired, whether the Home Secretary knew, in his own practice, of sentences having been aggravated?

Mr. MATTHEWS replied that he had no experience of such cases. He did not believe that he had ever appeared before a Court of Criminal Appeal.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Lord Advocate, what was the practice in Scotland; and, whether, within his knowledge, any case had occurred in which the sentence had been increased?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, the general rule in Scotland was that there was no appeal in a criminal case except on a point of law. Except in such cases, it very seldom happened that sentences were altered. He was quite aware of cases which had been sent back for proper sentence.

Mr. ANDERSON: Is the right hon. and learned Gentleman aware of any case in which the sentence has been increased?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he was not; but in the Scotch law the position was entirely different. He was not prepared to go into it at the present moment.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND) — THE INSPECTOR OF SALMON FISHERIES.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Inspector of Salmon Fisheries in Scotland is an officer of the Fishery Board;

or, if not, what is his position towards that Body?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The relation of the Inspector of Salmon Fisheries to the Fishery Board is fixed by Sections 5 and 6 of the Act 45 & 46 *Vict.* c. 78, to which I would refer my hon. Friend.

EXCISE—MR. J. HEGARTY, J.P., MILLSTREET, CO. CORK.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that Mr. Jeremiah Hegarty, J.P., of Millstreet, is, and has of late been, retailing porter and spirits in the town of Millstreet, County Cork; whether such dealing is sanctioned in the case of persons holding the Commission of the Peace; whether the licence was obtained in or transferred to the name of his elder son on his appointment to the Commission of the Peace; whether the said son has left the country for Australia; and, whether the Government propose to take any action in the matter? The hon. Gentleman also wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman if the son who has left the country is not one of three who left in consequence of the general detestation in which Jeremiah Hegarty is held?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Inspector General of Constabulary reported that it was not the case that Mr. Jeremiah Hegarty, senior, retailed porter and spirits. The licence was transferred two years ago to the son, who has now gone on a temporary visit to Australia.

Dr. TANNER: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman if it is not a fact well known in the County Cork that the son has given it out publicly that he had left his father's home for ever, and that he never will return; and that there is so serious a difference of opinion between them that the son has broken every article of furniture he could possibly get at?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, the domestic differences of the Hegarty family might be well known in the County Cork, but they were not well known to him.

Dr. TANNER: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman, as the Head of the Executive in Ireland, whether these facts were not known to the police, and also in whose name does the licence now stand? Is a magistrate for the County Cork to be permitted to sell and retail spirits and porter in the town of Millstreet when his son has left it for ever?

[No reply.]

Dr. TANNER said, he would put the Question in another form on the Paper for Friday.

GENERAL POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—SALARIES.

Viscount CURZON (Bucks, Wycombe) had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the Postmaster General, Whether it is the case that established clerks in the Telegraph Department of the General Post Office are kept on a scale the maximum of which is £140 per annum, or less than other clerks who have to perform the same duties on a scale rising to £190?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (A Lord of the Treasury) (Wigton) (who replied) said: The maximum pay of the first class of telegraphists in the Central Telegraph Office is £140 per annum, and of the next higher class, the senior telegraphists, £190 per annum; and promotion from one class to the other takes place from time to time if there are vacancies.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND) — BALLINASLOE PETTY SESSIONS— —— TRACY.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it be true that last November, while in the act of running away, a man named Tracy was fired at by Lord Clancarty's gamekeeper, Henry Mayne, and that 37 pieces of shot were extracted from the wounded man's legs, arms, and body by the medical officer of the Ballinasloe Union, Dr. Delahunt; whether it is a fact that, when Mayne was brought before the Petty Session Court, Ballinasloe, he was allowed out on bail, Tracy being unable to attend and give evidence, on account of the state of his wounds, and that, when Mayne was brought up a second time and committed to stand his trial at the next Assizes, he was again allowed out on bail until the Assizes; whether it is true that he was not tried at the following Winter Assizes, which were held in Sligo; and, has he been tried since; and, if so, with what result?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am informed that Tracy entered early on the morning on preserved lands for the purpose of killing rabbits. The gamekeeper had some rabbit traps set which he was watching, when he observed Tracy taking a rabbit out of one and running away. He called upon the man to drop the rabbit, at the same time firing at him. Twelve grains of small shot were subsequently removed from the man's arms and back. The gamekeeper was the day afterwards arrested and remanded. On the following day he was admitted to bail on the doctor's certifying that the wounds were not dangerous. He was not tried at the Winter Assizes, not being in custody; but he was tried at the Galway Spring Assizes, pleaded guilty, and paid £10 compensation, and was allowed out on his own recognizances to come up to receive sentence when called upon. That, in the opinion of the Judge, met the merits of the case.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—A DOG TAX.

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will take into consideration to raise the tax on dogs to £1, excepting on those dogs at present exempted; if he will make it compulsory that all dogs shall be registered with a number, and be provided with a badge or label engraved with that number; and, if he will substitute such tax in modification of the Van and Wheel Tax?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir. Such an impost would be regarded as practically the extermination of dogs, except those belonging to the wealthiest classes, and would create as much feeling among the people attached to dogs as the proposal for a Wheel Tax does on the possessors of carts. The second Question relates to what would be a Police Regulation rather than a Revenue proceeding. I have received a hundred suggestions from those who own vans and carts, and those who represent them, as to taxes to be imposed upon other people than themselves; but every suggestion, if adopted, would lead to as much outcry as the taxes proposed.

RIOTS AND DISTURBANCES (IRELAND) CONFLICT WITH THE MILITARY AT CLARECASTLE, CO. CLARE.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he has seen the following account, taken from *The Cork Herald* of Thursday, 19th instant, of an encounter between the soldiers of the Derbyshire Regiment, stationed at Clarecastle, County Clare, and civilians:—

> "Ennis, Wednesday.
>
> "Last night several soldiers belonging to the Derbyshire Regiment, stationed at Clarecastle, with headquarters at Limerick, had an altercation with some civilians, terminating in a fierce encounter, in which stones were freely used on both sides, to the injury of the combatants. The military, however, not content with the result of the engagement, commenced to demolish the windows of a range of houses in the vicinity of the barracks, including that of the Rev. Sylvester Malone, the Parish Priest of the district, which they completely wrecked. They were interrupted in their work of destruction by a military picquet, who, with the aid of the local police, succeeded in placing them under arrest;"

and, whether, having regard to the frequent hostile meetings of the men of this regiment, with people of Clare and Limerick, he will remove them from the district?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: I beg to state that the account of the affair appears to have been greatly exaggerated. There was some dispute between three soldiers of the Derbyshire Regiment and some civilians, and stones were thrown and some windows were broken. It is quite uncertain by which party the damage was done; but the damage has been paid. There appears to be no ground for holding an official inquiry.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: Has the hon. Gentleman seen a report of a collision between some men of this same regiment and a number of civilians at Limerick within the last few days?

MR. BRODRICK: I have not seen that.

RIOTS AND DISTURBANCES (IRELAND)—CONFLICT AT YOUGHAL—CAPTAIN PLUNKETT, R.M.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What was the character of the injuries inflicted upon Captain Plunkett at the recent suppressed meeting in Youghal; and, whether there is any ground for the statement, which appeared in *The Times* newspaper of Saturday, 6th of April, as emanating from the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, that Captain Plunkett was seriously wounded?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Captain Plunkett was, fortunately, not seriously injured on the occasion in question. The Lord Chancellor has favoured me with a communication, to the effect that he cannot find in the newspaper referred to any such statement as that attributed, nor, as a matter of fact, did he ever make such statement.

DR. TANNER: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that it appeared in *The Times* of that date?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware of that.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—FERMOY—FINE ON A POLICEMAN.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the fine imposed by the Fermoy Bench of Magistrates upon a policeman named Hyde, upon the 14th of last October, has been paid; what were the reasons for which the fine was imposed; and, whether the said policeman has latterly been promoted; and, if so, can he state why he was promoted?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Inspector General of Constabulary reports that Acting Sergeant Hyde was not fined as alleged; but on the 11th of October Hyde and other members of the Police Force were charged before the magistrates with alleged assaults, arising out of the dispersal of a disorderly stone-throwing crowd in Fermoy on the 21st of September, and ordered to pay a fine, and this sentence was subsequently reversed on appeal. The acting sergeant has not since been promoted.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—AGGRAVATION OF SENTENCES BY COURT OF APPEAL.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton), asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, How many cases he knows of as having occurred in Ireland in the last 10 years in which a sentence appealed against by the person convicted was increased by the Court of Appeal?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): I am informed that there are no available records at the Irish Office which would supply the information asked for by the hon. Member. It would be necessary to obtain such information with regard to the last 10 years from Clerks of the Peace of the different counties.

MR. JAMES STUART: I asked the hon. and learned Gentleman how many cases he knows of. Is he aware of any?

MR. MADDEN: These cases are not matters of public notoriety. They do not come before me officially, and I have no knowledge I can impart on the subject.

MR. JAMES STUART: Does the hon. and learned Member know of any such case?

MR. MADDEN: I consider that I have already answered that Question.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): May I ask the Solicitor General who, then, is the responsible officer of the Government of Ireland, who can answer the question as to whether or not it is the practice under the Criminal Law in Ireland to increase sentences on appeal?

MR. MADDEN: Sir, I am. I have, Sir, I believe, answered that Question. The only manner in which I could possibly afford the information asked for, as I have endeavoured to explain, is by obtaining the necessary information from the Clerks of the Peace in the several counties in Ireland. I submit to the House that that is an answer to the Question.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I confess it must be my fault; but I did not gather he has answered the Question. Is it a fact that sentences have or have not been increased on appeal in Ireland previous to those of which we have recently heard?

Mr. MADDEN: Sir, I am not in a position to know; and I have explained to the House that this is a matter which I cannot be expected to know, because the information would not be laid before me officially, and I also stated to the House the proper means of obtaining the information.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I again must ask who, then, is the person who does know? The Solicitor General says he does not know. Of course, if the Question was asked in reference to the administration of justice in England, if the Secretary of State for the Home Department was asked whether this information—["Order!"]—we may have got rid of a good deal; but surely we have not yet got rid of responsibility. If the Home Secretary were asked what the practice was in England he would certainly answer; and we want to know who will give the answer with respect to Ireland?

Mr. MADDEN: Sir, the Secretary of State for the Home Department was asked the Question a few minutes ago, and he replied that he could not give the information.

Mr. JAMES STUART: In the fire of Questions that have been put my simple Question has remained unanswered. My simple Question was, does the hon. and learned Gentleman know of himself of any such case? That is a simple Question which requires no explanation, and I again put it to the hon. and learned Gentleman.

Mr. MADDEN: I really do not want to be discourteous to the hon. Member; but I was under the impression that I said I had no knowledge of any such case; but the fact that I have no knowledge of any such case does not lead to the inference that no such case exists, and that information can only be obtained in the manner I have indicated.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Will the hon. and learned Member obtain the information from the Clerks of the Peace?

Mr. MADDEN: If a Return is moved for in the ordinary way it will be for us to consider whether it can be granted.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Will the hon. and learned Member undertake not to oppose the Motion for a Return?

Mr. MADDEN: When the Notice of Motion is put upon the Paper the Government will consider whether they can agree to it or not.

POST OFFICE—CONTRAVENTION OF RULES.

Mr. SEAGER HUNT (Marylebone, W.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is a fact that Tom Dredge, a postman in the N.W. Division, has recently been degraded from the 1st to the 2nd Class because he wrote to the public Press in contravention of Rule 42 of G.P.O. Orders, thereby losing status, seniority, and pay, to the extent of 4*s.* per week; if so, whether it is true that another officer in the S.E. Division broke the Rule in exactly the same way, but has not been similarly degraded?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (A Lord of the Treasury) (Wigton) (who replied) said: It is the fact that the postman Dredge has been degraded, as represented by the hon. Member, for systematic breaches of the Rules of the Service by attempts to stir up agitation among the postmen; and the Postmaster General is by no means sure that it would not have been right to dismiss him. He is not aware of another officer in the South-Eastern District having similarly misbehaved himself.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE HORSE, CAB, AND WHEEL TAXES.

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, under the proposed Horse Tax, cab and omnibus horses will be regarded as trade horses; if cab and omnibus horses are to be regarded as trade horses, whether the vehicles which they draw will continue to be classed as carriages, and be liable to the Carriage Tax; and, whether cabs will be classed as trade vehicles, and be liable to the Wheel Tax the same as carts and vans?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): As regards the hon. Member's first Question, cab and omnibus horses will certainly not be treated as pleasure horses. As regards his second Question, no alteration will be made in the existing law under which cabs and omnibuses are liable to Carriage Duty. As regards his third Question, these vehicles will not be liable to the Wheel Tax.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—KING JA JA, OF OPOBO.

Sir **ROBERT FOWLER** (London) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the report is true that King Ja Ja is about to be removed from Accra to some other place?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): I believe that he has already gone. As I informed the House, the recommendation of the Naval Commander-in-Chief that Ja Ja should be removed from the coast was approved by Her Majesty's Government, and he will reside at one of the West India Islands.

Mr. **W. REDMOND** (Fermanagh, N.) asked, whether Papers would not be laid on the Table on this subject?

Sir **JAMES FERGUSSON** said, he thought that they were printed and distributed a few days ago, but he would inquire.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—BALLINASLOE PETTY SESSIONS— —— FINERAN.

Mr. **HARRIS** (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it true that in November last a man named Rhatagan, gamekeeper to Messrs. William and John Hynds, 28, Elgin Road, Dublin, fired a shot at a man named Fineran while Fineran was on the public road and in the act of running away, and that the medical officer for the district (Dr. Delahunt) extracted several grains of shot from the head and back of Fineran; and, whether Rhatagan, when convicted at the Petty Sessions, Ballinasloe, for this offence, was only bound to keep the peace for 12 months; and, if so, will the Government consider the advisability of taking steps, by legislation or otherwise, to secure the more severe punishment of similar offences?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am informed that at daybreak Fineran was discovered poaching. The gamekeeper pursued him to ascertain his identity, as he wore a mask. Fineran made no charge against the gamekeeper until he was summoned for poaching, when he took out a cross-summons against the gamekeeper. The medical officer did not extract several grains of shot, but one grain. On the cases being heard at the Petty Sessions Fineran was fined £1 for poaching, and the gamekeeper was bound over as alleged. The existing law is ample to deal with all such cases.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—BUILDING AT THE ALBERT GATE.

Mr. **KELLY** (Camberwell, N.) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether the Metropolitan Board of Works has any power of restricting the height of the building now being erected near Albert Gate; and, if so, whether, in the interests of public safety, that Board will take steps to prevent that building being carried to a height of 185 feet, including the mansard roof finial?

Mr. **TATTON EGERTON** (Cheshire, Knutsford): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state the Board has no power to restrict the height of the large building in course of construction near Albert Gate. The Schedule of the Building Act, 1855, provides for the thickness of the walls up to 100 feet in height. The thickness of walls exceeding that height requires a special sanction of the Board. That has been granted in this case. The Act of 1862 gives the Board power over building on new roads where they do not exceed 50 feet in width, and restricts the height to the width of the road except by special sanction. Comparing this building with Walsingham Chambers, at the corner of the Green Park and Piccadilly, the height of the Albert Gate building to main parapet is 113 feet, against 70 feet, of the principal feature to base of finial 160 feet at Albert Gate, against 100 feet 9 inches. The height of the projecting bows to parapet at Albert Gate is 124 feet 6 inches.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WHEEL AND CART TAXES.

Mr. **BLUNDELL MAPLE** (Camberwell, Dulwich) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has been able to consider the representations made to him with reference to his proposals as to the Wheel Tax and Tax on Carts; and, whether he is able to make any modification?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, he had been considering very carefully the representations that had been made to him in reference to his proposals as to the tax on carts. He had expected to be in a position that afternoon to announce what modifications he proposed to make; but he had acceded to the wish of a very numerous body of men, who were in London at present from various parts of the Provinces, to receive a deputation to-morrow, and he thought it better to defer making any announcement on the subject until after he had seen that deputation.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) inquired, how soon the right hon. Gentleman expected to be able to lay on the Table the details for which he had asked in reference to the tax?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, that the modifications he had in his mind would probably require a fresh Resolution in substitution for the Resolution already passed; and, if so, he would need a little time to draw it up. He would ask his right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury, if possible, to arrange that that Resolution should be taken on Monday, if on Thursday the House should have disposed of the Committee on the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. He shared in the desire that those interested in the matter should know the proposals of the Government as soon as possible.

Mr. CHILDERS: Will that include any modification of the Horse Tax?

Mr. GOSCHEN: I am speaking now only of the Cart and Wheel Tax.

ADMIRALTY (THE DOCKYARDS)—HAULBOWLINE—DISCHARGE OF WORKMEN.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, If it is the case that the greater number of skilled workmen and unskilled labourers have been discharged from the works at Haulbowline Dockyard, Queenstown; can he state if these works are now at a standstill; and, what are the intentions of the Admiralty with regard to this dock, which has been so many years in course of erection?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The extension works at Haulbowline, with the exception of placing the caissons, being now practically completed, it has been necessary to discharge the greater number of the men employed upon them, such only being retained as are required to carry on the minor works mentioned at page 205 of the Navy Estimates, 1888-9. The placing of the caissons, which are shortly to be delivered, will complete the dock, which will be brought into use as circumstances require it.

Mr. FLYNN: Is it not a fact that the dock has been curtailed 70 feet in length from the original plan?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: No, Sir; that is not the case.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—REGISTRARS OF LAND SUB-COMMISSION COURTS—VALUATIONS OF LAND.

Mr. FINUCANE (Limerick, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Registrars of the Land Sub-Commission Courts communicate with the land agents, announcing the day on which the Commissioners will go to value the farms; and, whether complaints have reached him that they have refused to give similar information to the tenant, and that, as a result, farms have been often valued in the absence of the occupier; and, if so, will he communicate with the Land Commission, and request that equal facilities be given to both occupier and owner, so that both may be present at valuations of land?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that the instructions issued by them to the Registrars of Sub-Commissions are distinct as to their duty to give notice to both tenants and landlords. The Commissioners do not believe that any Registrar ever refused to give information or notice to either tenant or landlord. They have never heard of such refusal, and no complaint has ever reached them to that effect. The Commissioners have always exercised the greatest possible care that equal facilities shall be given to both occupiers and owners.

Mr. FINUCANE said, he had personal knowledge of such a case which had come under his notice within the past three weeks, and he was prepared to give the name of the Registrar who showed this partiality.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No doubt, if the hon. Gentleman will communicate the fact to the Land Commissioners, with the necessary evidence, they will take steps to have it remedied.

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS ACT, 1887—CANEWDON (ROCHFORD UNION), ESSEX.

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is a fact that application has been made to the Rural Sanitary Authority of the Rochford Union by a number of labourers for allotments at Canewdon; whether land was offered to the labourers at the price of £4 per acre, and that, in addition, each labourer was expected to pay his share of rates, tithes, &c. per acre; whether he is aware that the amount of tithes is equal to rather more than 15*s.* 6*d.* per acre, making the amount the labourers were required to pay £4 15*s.* 6*d.* per acre, and that the average rent for farm land at Canewdon is from 15*s.* to £1 per acre; and, whether any application has been made under the Allotments Act to put in force the Compulsory Clauses in the case of allotments at Canewdon in Essex?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Long) (Wilts, Devizes) (who replied) said: The Rural Sanitary Authority of the Rochford Union have been applied to by eight labourers at Canewdon for allotments under the Allotments Act. The Committee to whom the applications were referred were of opinion that the land most suitable for the purpose was a field of about seven and a-half acres, belonging to Mr. Potter, of Rochford, who was willing to let the land for £26 a-year. The persons who applied for allotments were asked whether they were willing to take allotments at 6*d.* a-rod, exclusive of the share of tithes, rates, and taxes, and they were unwilling to do so. I am unable to state what is the amount of the tithes on the field in question. I am informed by the Clerk of the Rural Sanitary Authority that he believes the average rent of farm land in the district is from 15*s.* to £1 per acre, and that the Authority could, no doubt, have obtained land at that price per acre, but at an inconvenient distance from the village, and then only by taking a larger quantity than is required. It is stated that a part of the field of Mr. Potter is now let in allotments at 1*s.* a-rod, and appears to find ready tenants at that rent. No application has been made to put in force the Compulsory Clauses of the Allotments Act as regards the Rochford Union.

COUNTY COURTS—SOLICITORS' CLERKS—RIGHT OF AUDIENCE.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked Mr. Attorney General, If a County Court Judge is empowered to refuse to allow a clerk in the permanent and exclusive employ of any party to an action to appear and conduct his employer's case; if his attention has been drawn to the conduct of the County Court Judge of Suffolk, at Stowmarket, on the 9th of April, when he refused to allow the representative of Messrs. Lankester and Wells to appear for them, and subsequently ordered the removal of the applicant; if his attention has been drawn to the circumstance that the Judge, at the same time and place, on being asked for permission to issue judgment summonses against debtors residing out of the district in which judgment was obtained, and on production of the usual necessary and duly attested affidavits, is alleged to have refused to look at them, saying, he would do so during lunch time and communicate with the Registrar, and that no notice was taken of them, but an answer sent that their consideration stood adjourned until the next Court; if, considering that the next Court will not be held until the 19th of June, the Government will introduce a clause into the County Courts Consolidation Bill providing that Registrars, upon filing an affidavit as to means by the plaintiff to the action, shall be enabled to issue a judgment summons against defendants residing out of the district in which judgment was obtained; and, if inquiry is being made into the accuracy of the statements contained in the Petition presented on the 5th of March?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): I am informed that the learned County Court Judge of Suffolk at Stowmarket did refuse to allow the representative of Messrs. Lankester and Wells to appear. In doing this he was acting within his rights, and in accordance, as he informed me, with the practice which has prevailed in that Court for upwards of 25 years. The removal from the Court was necessitated by the insolent and offensive conduct of the person in question. The learned Judge refused, on the same occasion, to issue certain judgment summonses, on the ground that the usual and necessary affidavits were not produced. He did not say that he would look at them during lunch time, nor was their consideration adjourned to the next Court. I cannot undertake to introduce the clause suggested, as, according to my present information, no such clause is necessary. I am unable to trace the Petition to which the hon. Member refers.

CIVIL SERVANTS IN SCOTLAND—INTERFERENCE IN ELECTIONS.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is to be understood that all Civil servants of the Crown, including supervisors, collectors, and preventive men in the Excise, are prohibited from taking an active part, as canvassers, committee men, or otherwise, in connection with municipal, school, and parochial board elections in Scotland?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Under existing Regulations, neither Civil servants nor officers of Excise are prohibited from taking an active part in municipal, school, and parochial board elections in Scotland.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—PRISON SURGEONS AND CHAPLAINS—SALARIES.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the case that prison surgeons in the principal prisons of England are appointed at a salary of £400 per annum increasing to £500 per annum, while the prison surgeons in the principal prisons in Scotland are appointed at £200 per annum increasing to £300 per annum; whether the prison surgeons in the principal Irish prisons begin at £350 per annum and increase to £400 per annum; whether the prisoners in the principal Scotch prisons are as numerous as in the English and Irish ones; whether the assistant surgeons in England begin at £250 per annum increasing to £300 per annum; whether the prison chaplains in England begin at £350 per annum and increase to £450, while the prison chaplains in Scotland begin at £200 and increase to £300; whether the assistant chaplains in England begin at £250 increasing to £300; why Scotland is treated in this way; and, whether the Treasury intend to level up the Scottish officers or to reduce the English and Irish ones?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: It would not be possible, within the limits of an answer, to follow the hon. Member into elaborate comparisons of salaries in the Three Kingdoms, though I must not be understood to admit the accuracy of his statements. His whole argument rests on the supposition that the prisoners in the larger Scotch prisons are as numerous as those in England, and this is not the fact. Several first-class prisons in England contain over 1,000 prisoners; whereas the largest Scotch prison contains only 735 prisoners, and the next two contain 550 and 450 respectively. It must be borne in mind that several of the largest English and Irish prisons, unlike those in Scotland, contain convicts.

In reply to a further Question by Dr. CLARK,

MR. JACKSON said, the whole question was carefully gone into, and the conclusion was arrived at that the pay which was at present given was sufficiently adequate for the work performed.

DR. CLARK gave Notice that he would put the Question again on the Paper.

ELECTIONS—FEES ON APPOINTMENT OF RETURNING OFFICERS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been directed to the demands made, in the years 1887 and 1888, by the Under Sheriffs of Middlesex upon Mr. William Miller, the present Returning Officer for the Division of Chelsea, for the payment of a fee of two guineas in respect of his application for, or appointment to, his present office; whether the payment of similar fees has been insisted upon by the same Under Sheriffs at the hands of other Returning Officers in the remaining divisions of their county; and, whether he will cause to be laid upon the

Table a Copy of the Correspondence between the said Under Sheriffs and Mr. William Miller?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Under Sheriffs have been asked for their explanation of this matter. Their statement is that gentlemen seeking appointment as Returning Officers commonly apply to them to prepare the form of appointment, to procure the signature of the Sheriffs, and to file the appointment with the Clerk of the Peace. This work is done by them, in their view, not as Under Sheriffs, but as solicitors, and their charge for it is two guineas. This charge has been voluntarily paid by several Returning Officers. The Under Sheriffs state that the fee is not demanded as a condition of appointment, or in respect of the application for appointment. Although Mr. Miller has paid no fee his appointment has been prepared, signed, and filed. The correspondence between the Under Sheriffs and Mr. Miller is not in the possession or control of the Government.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether the Government had any means of preventing the appointment of Returning Officers being made dependent on a system of blackmail; and whether the Government could put a stop to the practice?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the Government had no control whatever over the Sheriffs.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether the Secretary of State for the Home Department could not direct proceedings to be taken against the Sheriff?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, the Question of the hon. Gentleman involved points of considerable nicety, and therefore he thought Notice should be given. As he understood this transaction, it was not a fee demanded for the appointment; but a charge made for the labour of preparing the appointment, procuring the signatures of the Sheriffs, and filing the appointment to the Clerk of the Peace. All these things any applicant for the appointment was perfectly at liberty to do for himself if he thought fit.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE, CHANCERY DIVISION (ADDITIONAL JUDGE.)

In reply to Questions from Mr. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford) and Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.), as to when the Order for an Address for the appointment of a new Judge of the Chancery Division would be taken,

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had already undertaken that it should not be taken after 12 o'clock. He was hardly able to see what Notice was required, since the order had been on the Paper now for some time past. If it could be reached before half-past 10 on Thursday it would be taken then.

LOTTERIES ACT—THE CHURCH CONSERVATIVE CLUB.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he was aware that a Conservative newspaper in the neighbourhood of Church, Lancashire, boasted on Saturday that the lottery arranged by the Church Conservative Club had taken place in spite of the Questions he (Mr. Bradlaugh) had put in that House?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): No, Sir; I am not aware of that fact.

MR. BRADLAUGH: If I give the right hon. Gentleman information on the subject, will he take care that some strict inquiry is made?

MR. MATTHEWS: Certainly, Sir.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

In reply to Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside),

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he stated last week that he hoped to take this Bill and the Employers' Liability Bill next week; but until the Budget Bill was through Committee he could not say precisely the day on which either Bill would be taken.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—RESIDENT MAGISTRATES—LEGAL KNOWLEDGE.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question about Resident Magistrates in County Kerry. I want to know who selects them to try cases under the Criminal Law and Procedure

(Ireland) Act; if it is the Lord Lieutenant; and how it has happened that within the last fortnight magistrates have gone twice to places to try cases under this new Act, and only then and there, after going 40 or 50 miles, discovered that neither of them had sufficiency of legal knowledge which would satisfy the Lord Lieutenant?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): If the hon. Gentleman would give Notice of the Question, I should be able to ascertain the facts.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

WAYS AND MEANS.—REPORT.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [20th April], "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Resolution."

"That, in addition to the Duties of Customs payable on Wine before the twenty-seventh day of March, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be levied and charged the Duties following (that is to say):—

Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
If in imperial half-pint bottles or bottles of less capacity ..	0	1	3
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial half-pint bottles and not exceeding imperial pint bottles	0	2	6
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles	0	5	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles and not exceeding two imperial quarts	0	10	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding two imperial quarts ..	1	0	0."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

SIR JOHN SIMON (Dewsbury) said, he wished to make a few observations before the Resolution was agreed to. He felt it his duty to call attention to the course which was being pursued by Her Majesty's Government, and upon grounds of public policy to protest against what practically amounted to a prohibition of the importation of French wines. The Prime Minister of France, on having his attention called to the matter in the Chamber of Deputies, had indicated a possible course of retaliation if the duties on French wines were increased. He would, therefore, put it to the House whether it was wise or politic to increase this duty to a prohibitive degree, at a time, too, when we were asking France to remove the bounties on sugar? There was at the present moment a Conference sitting in this country upon the subject of the sugar bounties, and yet this was the moment selected by the Government for imposing prohibitive duty on French wines, a trade which had done much to increase the friendly feeling and commerce between the two countries. These duties, it was urged, were to be imposed as duties upon luxuries, and would only touch the rich No doubt the rich would continue to have their bottle of wine all the same; but those who contributed most largely to the Revenue were the middle classes, men of moderate means, who would not be able to indulge in the luxury of these wines if the duty be increased. He, therefore, thought it was unwise and impolitic to increase them under such circumstances, and he felt it his duty to protest against the Resolution. He could not allow himself to remain silent, and permit the Resolution to pass without this protest.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Before any notice is taken from the Government Bench of the observations of my hon. and learned Friend behind me (Sir John Simon), I wish to say, on the part of myself and of those who sit near me, that if we do not enter into this subject at the present moment, it is only because there is a general understanding in the House that another subject has been marked out as the subject of debate to-night, and not at all on account of our taking a different view of the matter from that of my hon. and learned Friend. On the contrary, our opinion is that this question is one of the gravest character. I will not, however, detain the House at this moment by entering into it, as a full opportunity will be afforded on another occasion. Having said these very few words, I may add that several hon. Members on this side of the House will, at any rate, feel it their duty to support the view of my hon. and learned Friend when the question comes to be considered in Committee.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman that it was understood that this was not to be the occasion on which the increased duty on wines was to be discussed, but that another opportunity was to be taken for discussing that matter. Of course, I am put in a position of some embarrassment by the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir John Simon), seeing that he has alluded to what has passed in Paris and in France generally. But I feel that it would be inconvenient to the House if I were to make any reply now to those observations. At the same time, I am bound to say that I entirely differ from the statements made by the hon. and learned Gentleman as to the effect of these new duties in France, and at the proper time I may have a good deal to say with regard to the arguments by which France justifies a protest against them. I also disagree with the hon. and learned Gentleman that this is a tax which will fall on the middle classes, because the enormous proportion of wine drunk by the middle classes either is or will be imported in casks.

SIR JOHN SIMON said, he had referred to those classes of wines which were now consumed by the middle classes, but which would not in future be consumed by them.

MR. GOSCHEN: They will continue to be imported in casks.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he would only detain the House for a moment, on account of the understanding that the discussion on wines would be taken later on. He, however, wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if the Government had yet obtained full information in regard to the amount of bottled wines imported from Italy and Greece; and whether he had considered the inequality of the taxation proposed to be imported as between the expensive wines of France and the more wholesome wines imported from the countries he had mentioned? He wished to know from the right hon. Gentleman whether, before the discussion was taken, the Government would obtain information from the Consular Authorities as to the amount of the bottled wines imported?

MR. GOSCHEN said, there had already been laid before the House statistics as to the amount of wine imported both in bottles and in casks.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked if the right hon. Gentleman would obtain further information from the Consular Authorities in Italy and Greece?

MR. GOSCHEN: I will do my best to obtain all such information as the House desires.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, That they have power to make provision therein pursuant to the said Resolution.

Seventh Resolution [9th April],—(Excise Duties), — Carriages, Trade Carts, Horses, &c., and Horsedealers, read.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, That they have power to make provision therein pursuant to so much of the said Resolution as relates to Excise Duties on Carriages and Hackney Carriages.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.—[BILL 202.]

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian), in rising to move as an Amendment—

> "That in the opinion of this House, after Parliament shall have made the appropriations it may deem just in relief of local rates, the Duties accruing upon deaths should be so fixed as to equalize the charge upon real and personal property respectively,"

said: Mr. Speaker, I have been sincerely desirous of compressing my remarks upon this important subject within a very limited space for the convenience of the House; but there is one thing which would be still more convenient for the House, and more detrimental to the public interests involved, than the length of any statement of mine, and that is that a subject of such importance should be treated with less of detail than is absolutely necessary for its full comprehension. Therefore, I am afraid the only promise I can make is that I will studiously endeavour to avoid in my remarks all that is irrelevant or of secondary importance, and confine myself to an endeavour to give a full and clear idea of my meaning in regard to the important Resolution which I have laid upon the Table of the House, and the reasons which appear to me to make the moving of that Resolution a matter of urgent and imperative duty. I have also to express my regret that I have now to do what I do not recollect to have done on any former occasion, and that is, to move an Amendment on the second reading of a Bill of this nature. It is a practice, however, not at all unusual, sometimes justifiable, and sometimes even necessary, yet still it is one in respect to which certainly, in my opinion, founded on experience, ought not to be resorted to without strong reasons. On the present occasion my reason is the strongest that can be conceived, and it is this—that it is not in my power to raise the question or make the proposal which I wish to make in any other manner. In Committee on the Bill I should not be permitted to move a general Resolution, and it would be very improper if I were to make any such attempt, as the only other way in which I could proceed would be to move an increase of duty, and an increase of duty, I need hardly acquaint the House, would not come within the powers of the Committee. Therefore, I am reduced to the necessity of moving an Amendment on the second reading of the Bill declaratory of a general principle, or I must forbear raising it at all. I think the House will see, as I proceed, that to forbear to raise it at all would, on my part, considering the gravity of the interests involved, be a failure of duty, and I think the House and the Government will be disposed to admit that I am justified in taking this course, as I think it will see that I have chosen the only available course open to me for submitting a question of public importance to the consideration of the House. Further, I may say that I rejoice very much that I am not in the condition of one who, from the Opposition Benches even, is proposing financial changes which would increase the financial difficulties of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. On the contrary, although no reference is made in the words of my Resolution to the precise rates of duty, it is perfectly well understood that the policy which I wish to recommend to the House is a policy of equal Death Duties upon realty and personalty; and that as it is an opinion widely entertained, so it is an opinion strongly entertained by myself that the Death Duties ought to be equal upon realty and personalty, the effect of which would be to augment the funds at the disposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I hope I shall not be deviating from the subject before me if I say that, in our view, this augmentation would be particularly seasonable and advisable at the present moment, when there are before the House a number of proposals for augmenting and increasing certain taxes, in respect of some, if not all, of which I am afraid it is impossible not to entertain the gravest doubt as to their effect on trade and industry. We may, therefore, relieve our consciences by the reflection that we are endeavouring to place in the hands of the Government additional means which might enable them to exercise greater freedom in waiving some of the financial proposals they are going to bring forward for the further imposition of taxes upon the public than they might be able to do unless the Motion I propose were adopted. I think I shall best serve the purpose I have in view, and the convenience of those who may be inclined to support or oppose the proposition I shall lay before the House, if I at once, in clear and precise terms, state the main propositions I shall endeavour to establish. They are five in number. The first of them is this. That the present enormous disparity under the Death Duties between the charge upon realty and the charge upon personalty has only been tolerated because of the advantage enjoyed by personalty in respect of its limited contribution to the rates, and, in regard to a great portion of personalty, its not being liable to any contribution at all to the rates. That is my first proposition. My second proposition is that on an occasion which Her Majesty's Government have very properly chosen for the opening up of the whole of this wide and complex subject the advantage now conferred upon personalty ought to be entirely cancelled and withdrawn, and that the proper mode of withdrawing it is by adequate aids to rates from Imperial sources. My third proposition is, that under the new proposals of the Government, including those which will come into operation next year, taking the plan of the Government as a whole, between £4,000,000 and £5,000,000 levied on personalty will go in aid of rates, and principally in aid of realty, or the landed interests of the country. My fourth proposition is, that, in the event of the adoption of the proposals of the Government as they stand and without any alteration, there will still remain a gross inequality under the Death Duties in favour of realty, which inequality will have lost its whole and only justification. The fifth proposition is, that immovable personalty or visible personalty, which has, of all property, by far the strongest claims of relief, will remain liable to the action of this gross inequality. I hope that these propositions will have the effect of raising the question I am bringing forward in a broad and intelligible manner. My first proposition has regard to the enormous disparity between the charge on realty and personalty in respect of the Death Duties, and I will endeavour to put the House in possession of the exact amount of that disparity as I take it to be. It is, I believe, generally admitted that a large disparity exists; but I do not think that it is as generally realized how large that disparity is. In all the figures I may lay before the House which are matters of conjecture I will endeavour so to describe them, and where there are Returns to give such Returns. I have certainly used the best means in my power to be correct, and I shall adopt such methods as I think most likely to lay the whole question before the House in a most practical form. I will proceed now to make good the first proposition. I have to state what the present enormous disparity, as I have called it, under the Death Duties between the two great descriptions of property actually is. The whole amount of the Death Duties is £7,519,000. I quote, not from the figures given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for a reason which will become perfectly plain as I go forward. Those figures are not the subject of an official Return, and even if they were it is not possible, at the present time, to obtain certain other figures which are absolutely necessary to make them available in the present argument. The figures which I take are the latest figures that are before the House and the country in a state of completeness—I mean the figures of the year 1886-7, ending on the 31st of March last year. Under those figures, I will describe the manner in which the largest sum I have named —£7,519,000—is divided between personalty and realty. In the first place, we come to the Probate Duty, which for the year 1886-7 stood at £4,108,000, with one exception, in my opinion, much too insignificant to be taken into the account—namely, the case of real property which is not actually sold, but is contracted to be sold, and which I do not believe can exceed 1 per cent of the total amount, and is not worth, therefore, taking into the account. With that trifling exception the whole of the Probate Duty of £4,108,000 is levied on personalty. Then I come to the Legacy Duty of £2,572,000, which is also levied on personalty; those two sums together making £6,680,000. I then come to the Succession Duty. There is a common and prevailing belief or idea in the public mind that the Succession Duty is levied on realty, and is to be regarded as a countervailing duty, not in amount, but in kind, and is in the main levied on personalty. But here is a very serious error; and the contention I shall make is this—that only two-thirds of the Succession Duty are levied on realty, and one-third levied on personalty. I must trouble the House by explaining the grounds on which I make that assertion. Probably it would be more convenient for the moment that I should assume the point, and explain when I get one step further on in the argument. If one-third of the Succession Duty is levied on personalty, that sum, added to the £6,680,000 which represents the two great Death Duties of Probate and Legacy, makes a total of £6,960,000. Then there is the question, upon what mass of property is this duty levied; and here I apologetically state to my right hon. Friend and the House, that I will enter into no discussion whatever as to the comparative amount of the total values of personalty and realty in the Kingdom at large. It would be extremely difficult to arrive at it in a positive form, and it is in no way necessary for my purpose. That which is necessary for my purpose and that to which I shall confine myself, is to show the rates of duty that are charged upon one and the other respectively. When I have shown that, my argument will be complete. Then I must consider upon what amount of property this annual duty is levied; and there I am not involved in any difficulty, because it is levied upon an amount of property that in my opinion—and I doubt if that opinion will be contested—is fully and amply represented by the Probate Duty. The Probate Duty was levied for that year on the sum of £138,000,000. The Legacy Duty was levied at a smaller sum, there being many kinds of property that escape the Legacy Duty, including those kinds of property which, to a very large amount, pass under the Succession Duty while being personalty. But the Probate Duty, as far as I know, includes every sort of personalty that pays the Death Duty at all. I take the amount as it is—at £138,000,000, and I make the sum of which I have already spoken £6,960,000 levied on £138,000,000 of capital, and if the hon. Gentlemen will have the kindness to make the simple calculation for themselves, they will find that they amount to a rate of little over 5 per cent, levied on death on every change of hands upon personalty for the purposes of the Exchequer as the law now stands. I want to compare that amount with the amount actually levied on realty; and here I must show why it is that I withdraw from the proceeds of the Succession Duty no less a sum than one-third of the proceeds, and treat it as levied on personalty and not upon realty. The amount of property which passes under the Succession Duty annually is £43,797,000, or, for the sake of round numbers, £43,750,000. Of that £43,750,000, £35,000,000 are realty, and £8,750,000 are personalty. But the realty which passes under the Succession Duty is charged upon the life interest; the personalty which passes under the Succession Duty is charged upon the capital value. A contention that I make with the utmost confidence, and which I am bound, I think, to make good—although the amount involved is not very large, but it has application to other portions of the argument—is this: that the charge upon the life interest, as it is made, reduces by at least one-half the incidence of the charge. In answering some remarks which I offered to the House the other day, the Chancellor of the Exchequer contended, if I understood him rightly, that to treat the charge on the life interest, amounting to no more than a half of the capital value, was a mistake; and the reason he gave was the depression of landed property, and that landed property would not sell for so much now as it did 10, 20, 30, or 40 years ago. I say that is a condition totally irrelevant. If landed property sells for less now, why is it? I am not speaking of the monetary state of the market; I am assuming probably that which the Chancellor of the Exchequer assumes, or what might prove to be the case, and most people will think it to be the case—namely, that the value of landed property will be depressed, but depressed not on account of its selling for a smaller number of years' purchase, but because the number of years' purchase will be assessed on a reduced income, and that reduction of income will be represented in full in the figures which we have before us. I believe that if the average of the values of lives is taken, though they run up as high as 15 or 16 years, according to the ages of successors—if the average values of those lives be taken, I believe it will be found that even supposing the charge on the life interest were a full charge—which it is not—that the capital value is at least twice, nay, is more than twice the value of the life interest. But, Sir, the charge on the life interest is not a full charge. And there, again, I mention to the House that one point must be kept in view, if we are really going to consider and understand the question, and that is the point that there is offered to the successor in the case of landed property, while the successor to personalty is bound to pay at once, a licence to pay in eight half-yearly instalments, the first instalment only falling due after the first rent day which follows the decease, and in case of paying up at once, as the successor to personalty is bound to do, he receives from the Revenue Department a discount of 11 per cent. I am understating my case when I say that the successor to personalty charged on capital value pays more than double what the successor to realty pays; because the latter pays only on the life interest, and pays on a life interest under the favourable conditions prescribed by the Succession Duty Act. I might adduce a great deal more matter not only in support of that argument, but in enhancement and extension of it; but I have said enough to show, I think, that I am taking the case in a moderate view when I state that the £8,000,000 charged as Succession Duty, which are personalty, are charged at the very least at twice the rate at which the £35,000,000 are charged that represent realty; that is to say, £35,000,000 are charged upon less than half their value; and the real value, though there seems to be only £35,000,000 passing under the Succession Duty Act every year, is not £35,000,000, but £70,000,000 a-year. As the proportion of the Succession Duty is one-fifth, and as it is paid at double the rate, it follows that the charge is double in its relation to the property upon which it is paid. That being so, the simple thing I have to do is to take the proceeds of the Succession Duty and divide them, not into fifths, but thirds, or sixths. Two-sixths, therefore, are paid by the £8,000,000 of personalty which passes in the year, and four-sixths, or two-thirds, by the landed property—that is, two-thirds of the total proceeds of the Succession Duty. All I have to show is that, while £6,900,000 yielded by personalty in the year 1886-7 fell upon £138,000,000 of property, and therefore represented a duty exceeding 5 per cent, £560,000 yielded under the Succession Duty Act by realty fell upon £70,000,000 of property, and represents, instead of 5 per cent, 13-16ths per cent. If you multiply that 13-16ths by the figure 6 it gives you 78-16ths—that is to say, a trifle under 5 per cent. Thus, under the present law the payment of personalty is almost exactly six times the payment of realty. That is a matter which is not undeserving of consideration, and certainly justifies the use of the phrase—"enormous disparity." It is an enormous disparity, and the justification of it, or the cause of it, lies in the working of our present law with respect of rating. My second proposition is that this, and no other, is the occasion on which that disparity ought to be remedied and removed, so that we shall not hear any more of it. I look with a friendly eye, as I have said before, on various points on the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It contains the elements, and even the substance, of very important reforms. In the first place, it puts an end, so far as the great mass of rates in aid is concerned, to that system which I must be permitted to call an abominable system —for we are all more or less tarred with the same brush—of rectifying the injustice done to certain kinds of property by drawing large sums out of a fund—namely, the Consolidated Fund, which is supplied not only by property, but largely supplied by labour. It is not necessary to enter into that now. I admit that, upon the whole, the intention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the plan of the Government is to treat this, as it ought always to have been treated, as a question between one kind of property and another, and not as a question between property and labour. Labour was never liable to be rated; but we have made labour, through our system of rates in aid, pay a very considerable proportion of the charges levied through the medium of rates. For the course adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this respect I am grateful to the Government. I should be very sorry to put to hazard any proposal which would have the effect I stated. I am also very glad that a great reform, I think, is going to be effected by what will be called clearing the accounts as between Imperial and local taxation. All these things are excellent, and when I heard the Budget Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I thought that there was another great public object going to be secured—namely, the final settlement of the question. Now, it appears to me that to go into a subject of this kind, involving, as it does, a vast disturbance of our finance, for it is nothing less than a vast disturbance—the creation of new taxes, and the bodily transfer of certain taxes now received by the Exchequer, is not an operation which ought to be done from year to year, or every three or five years. It is an operation, which, when it is done, ought to be done completely. I have not assumed, in the Amendment I submit, that the figures of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as they now stand, are absolutely final figures. Judging from what I hear much doubt is raised in respect of some of the new charges he proposes to create for the benefit of the local treasuries, and it is not for me to say what is the sum that ought to be paid over by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or through the medium of the collective power of the Exchequer to the local treasuries. All I say is, that the sum ought to be considered now and ought to be fixed now, and when we have fixed it, we ought to have done with it. It is a question of doing justice between various kinds of property. What are those various kinds of property? I want to call the attention of the House to the distinction that ought always to be borne in mind in discussing this matter, but which is very commonly forgotten. It is supposed that the whole question lies between personalty and realty, that when you relieve realty to a certain extent and place certain charges upon personalty without entering further into the matter you have done your duty. There cannot be a more gross mistake. It is necessary to distinguish between personalty and personalty; it is necessary to distinguish between rated personalty and unrated personalty. The case of unrated personalty is one which involves, of course, a very large amount. It is a case with regard to which I do not wish to express an opinion, and I have not formed any very positive opinion of the amount of charge upon it, if you could get at it, in order to do justice to those descriptions of property that bear the rates. Perhaps the Government have more and superior information upon that subject, and I should be disposed to attach great weight to their opinion. But what I wish to impress upon the mind of the House and to insist upon is this, that now is the time to transact this business, and that we are bad workmen and do not know our business if, when we have set our hand to an operation so large and complex as that which is now before us we do not make it, so far as the term can be used in this matter, a complete and definite operation. It ought to be dealt with once for all, and we should not leave to be done over again a work which we have approached in an irresolute spirit and treated in an imperfect manner. The House will, therefore, understand that I ask them to vote, that when adequate compensation has been given to local rates, the Duties accruing upon Death should be so fixed as to equalize the charge upon real and personal property. As to what is adequate compensation, I do not wish to say, and I make no complaint of the proposal of the Government. The proposal is to give £5,600,000, with something more in prospect next year for Scotland and Ireland in aid of the rates, compensation for getting rid of grants in aid. It is our duty to make a just and fair compensation; and when it is made, so that the local treasuries have no longer a just claim against the Imperial Treasury, we should then see that justice is done within the Imperial Treasury by an equality of charge, as I shall endeavour to show it ought to be, upon personalty and realty respectively. Perhaps I may venture to point out to the House what is the best information I can obtain upon the division of the property of the country—upon ratepaying and non-ratepaying property. I do this because I wish to bring into view the grievance which the ratepaying proprietor has against those who do not pay rates. To ascertain the whole property of the country, I have no other recourse open to me, nor any better I think, than to resort to the Return which was laid before the House in 1885 by Sir Henry Holland, now Lord Knutsford, and which I will call Sir Henry Holland's Return, he having been Secretary to the Treasury at the time it was given. That Return, I think it is No. 345, of the year 1885, has the merit of being short, simple, and intelligible. It gives the whole property of the country, that which can be strictly so called, as £9,410,000,000. Realty is set down at £3,778,000,000, and personalty at £5,632,000,000. But when we look into the Return, we find that not quite the whole of the realty, because realty includes ground rents and other interests of that kind, which I need not mention, though if I did it would strengthen my case—nearly the whole of the realty is subject to rating. But besides realty which is set down as subject to rating. I find what the Return calls realized personalty stated at £1,042,000,000, which consists of about £830,000.000 of realty property and £210,000,000 or £215,000,000 of property in mines, iron works, canals, and so forth. I take that property from that side of the Return presented by Sir Henry Holland and put it to the £3,778,000,000 which are called realty, but which I do not think are accurately so called, and which are, in the main, subject to rating. That being so, I divide the property into ratepaying and non-ratepaying property; the total amount subject to rates is £4,820,000,000, and the estimate of the realized personalty not subject to rates is £4,590,000,000. So the House will see that, according to the evidence of this Return, which, I should think, is not very far wrong, the whole burden of rates and of local taxation at present is laid upon little more than one-half of the property of the country.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The whole is not rated really, but only so much of it as is visible.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I beg pardon; I entirely differ from my right hon. Friend. In my opinion, rates are levied upon a great deal of property that is not visible; but my meaning is that that which is visible bears the charge upon the whole. The rate upon railways is levied upon the proprietary interest. It is quite true the shareholders have arranged their interests in a complicated manner, past ordinary, past preference, and so on; but the rate takes no cognizance of these distinctions; it is levied upon the entire beneficial interest. I consider that to be altogether indisputable. This, however, is not connected with the general argument I am pressing on the House. I am referring to it rather to show that the ratepayers have great reason to complain that my right hon. Friend takes a good deal from property subject to rating, and adds to it that which is not. About one-half of the property of the country—not much more than one-half, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer will make it a great deal more than one-half—is subject to rating; and, therefore, I argue that there is a good and strong case for adjustment. There are some important facts I will not refer to, because they would complicate the case too much, without any countervailing advantage; I will mention only those that are material to my argument. I am bound to say that, in the Return of Sir Henry Holland, there are a number of items upon which questions might be raised. One of them is the £300,000,000 that is put down as the value of property belonging to persons who are not represented in the Income Tax; but as that, and various other items which might be questioned, are not immediately connected with my argument, I pass them by. There are varieties in the mode of charging the Death Duties which are also in themselves singular, but which do not require much discussion now. It may be argued that some descriptions of real property, such as ground rents in populous towns, are not subject in any way to rating, either immediately, or in any other way. It is very doubtful if the burden of the rates reaches, or will reach, while the country continues to advance, that description of property. In the main, we may proceed on the assumption—and it is an important assumption—on the present occasion—and one which has always been urged in the interests of the proprietors of land—that lands ultimately discharge the rates that are levied in the rural districts; that personalty in general is charged with both Probate and Legacy Duty. That, however, is not uniformly true, because visible personalty, by which I mean the secondary interests of occupiers in messuages and tenements, is charged to the Probate Duty, and is not charged to the Legacy Duty, but is charged to the Succession Duty in the manner I have described. But I do not think any of these considerations bear very materially upon the point I wish to bring before the House—namely, the disparity—and I will say the gross disparity—it is proposed to leave in the mode of charging personalty and realty after the settlement now in contemplation has been made, and the justice, policy, and necessity of removing that disparity. My next proposition is this—that under the new proposal of the Government £4,000,000 or £5,000,000—or call it what you like—the exact sum may be a matter of dispute—I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer called it £4,000,000; but, at any rate, we know what is meant—under the proposal of the Government £4,000,000 or £5,000,000, which is now levied in one form or other under personalty, will go in aid of rates, and it will go practically in aid of realty and of the landed interest. The way in which it will go principally in aid of the landed interest is this—going back to the statement contained in Sir Henry Holland's Return, the total value of rateable property, with the transfer I made and explained, is £4,820,000,000. Of that £1,746,000,000 does not consist directly of landed property in the strict sense of the word. Then, when one comes to the large item of messuages and tenements, which are put down at £2,032,000,000, the question arises—How much belongs to the landlord and how much to the tenant? Here I wish to state distinctly that I have made nothing more than a conjectural estimate; but considering the matter as well as I could, and taking the whole of this enormous mass of property, valued by the Return at £2,032,000,000, which is, perhaps, rather a low valuation, for it is taken only at 16 years' purchase, I estimate that, in one shape or another, one-half belongs to the landlord, whether he draws the ground rents or whether he has the reversion, and one-half represents the secondary interests. If that be so, of the £4,830,000,000 of rateable property, £2,762,000,000 would belong to realty and £2,038,000,000 would belong to personalty, representing that portion of the interest in houses in the hands of the occupiers which may be called secondary interest. If that be so, the landlord's ultimate share of the subvention which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to give to local rates will be represented by the proportion of £2,762,000,000 to £2,058,000,000—that is to say, as nearly as possible seven-twelfths of the subvention is the landlord's ultimate share, and five-twelfths is the ultimate share of the occupiers. I mention that to sustain the third of my five propositions—namely, that a large and even a preponderating portion of the subvention now proposed to be made will go in favour of realty or of the landlord's interest. I now come to that which is one of the two most important propositions I have to substantiate—namely, that even with the rectifying processes proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer there will remain a gross disparity between the Death Duties charged upon personalty and those charged upon land. We know now what personalty will pay, and the whole that personalty will pay; but what personalty will pay to the Exchequer is a question we must now determine. Here is what personalty will pay to the Exchequer if the proposals of the Government are adopted as they stand. I am obliged again, for the sake of completeness, to go upon the figures of 1886-7, and to put out of sight such changes as may occur in the coming year. On the basis of the figures of 1886-7 the amount of Probate Duty is £4,108,000, but only one-half will go to the Exchequer, or £2,054,000. The Legacy Duty is now £2,572,000, and the Succession Duty is £280,000. There is an addition proposed to be made by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but, of course, that addition, small as it is, will not be levied wholly on land—one-third will be levied on personalty—for so I understand the statement of my right hon. Friend. I understand the proposal to be that the 1 per cent of the Succession Duty is to be raised to $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent; that the other rates in the consanguinity scale are also to have $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent added to them, and the general proposal is that the Succession Duty shall be raised $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. That being so, personalty will pay, on the whole, to the Exchequer in Probate, Legacy, and Succession Duty £5,046,000; and that, charged upon £138,000,000 is a little more than $3\frac{5}{8}$ per cent. Now, Sir, what would be the duty on realty? Recollect I have struck off all the contributions made to the local treasury. I do not take them into the account. £5,046,000 will be received from personalty, representing a charge of $3\frac{5}{8}$ per cent or a little more. Realty will pay the £560,000, which it pays now, and an addition of half that sum—namely, £280,000. The total will be £840,000, as the entire charge upon realty, and it will be paid upon £70,000,000 worth of property. Taking again the figures supplied to me by the Return for 1886-7, that £840,000, which will be paid upon £70,000,000 of property, represents upon the whole $1\frac{1}{5}$ per cent. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes the addition of $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent by way of establishing a sort of equality between the Death Duties charged on personalty and the Death Duties charged on realty, and I make a comparison of the charges as they will actually fall. I find that after we have satisfied the claims of the local rate by a large transfer of taxes, and by other means under the plan of the Government, there will remain a system under which personalty will be charged $3\frac{5}{8}$ per cent, while realty will be charged $1\frac{1}{5}$ per cent—that is to say, personalty will continue to bear three times the charge borne by realty. How is it possible to justify such a state of things as that? What view will the nation take, and justly take, of it? What view will any man who has a regard for financial justice think? What notion will the masses of our countrymen form of the manner in which their interests are studied and cared for by the Representatives whom they have chosen? I should care as little as any man for what the great masses of the country think, if I thought they were going to be deluded, or were being influenced by their own selfish interests; but here is a statement laid before them that realty is only to pay £1, while personalty is to pay £3, and this, too, after the Government have professed to rectify the inequality. What opinion, then, will the country justly form of the manner in which these interests are situated and provided for by the Representatives they send here? Now I come to my fifth, and, I am glad to say, my last proposition—that immovable personalty, which of all descriptions of property has by far the strongest claim to relief, will still remain liable to this gross inequality. Confining my view to a limited portion of the field, I must compare the way in which you are invited to treat land under this plan with themanner in which you are going to treat other personalty at large. I have said that personalty is to pay three times the percentage paid by land. Let me now refer to the case of visible personalty, because the case of visible personalty has also been systematically and almost culpably overlooked in most of our discussions. I want, if I can in some degree, to point out what are the claims and what are the gains of land and visible personalty respectively. Understand that what I mean by visible personalty is represented by the £2,038,000,000 of which I just now spoke, and it is made up of railway property, mines, and ironworks, and property of that class, and all the leaseholders and occupiers' interest in messuages and tenements. A very large sum is £2,000,000,000, and it represents one-fifth of the whole property of the country. I want to show what is the injustice which this property has suffered, and which it is proposed that it should continue to suffer. For that purpose, I must compare the claims of landed property with the claims of visible personalty, and I must compare what it is proposed to do for landed property with that which it is proposed to be done for visible personalty. With respect to the claims of landed property, I must say this—that although there is, in my judgment, a very strong and well-founded claim on the part of those liable to rates in general, yet the claim of landed property is by far the weakest portion of the larger claim. Why is that? It is because the urgency of that claim has been based upon the fact that there has been an enormous increase in the rates; but, in all our debates upon this subject, I have observed—when demands have been made in the interests of the ratepayers on the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Consolidated Fund—I have uniformly observed that those who pleaded the cause of the land —and very ably, I must say, some of them have pleaded it—have never been careful to call attention to the remarkable incidence of this increase in the rate. They always took it in the lump, and enlisted the whole support of the urban Members, who knew how their constituents were groaning under these imposts. The landed proprietors, in fact, posed as the sympathizing friends of the urban communities. They represented that they had a common grievance, and took a common stand with the towns—they held their interests were one, and a tender brotherly feeling was displayed on the part of the landed proprietors towards the whole urban community of the country. I do not recollect that the same sort of thing was shown at the time of the discussion of the Corn Laws. But the fact is, that the land took enormous profit from an increase of rates, which it never suffered itself. There has been an enormous increase of rates in connection with a system by which almost all new rates are to be borne by the tenant, and not one sixpence by the landlord, who stands by with folded arms. We have now received a Return on this subject, and I am much obliged to those who have compiled it. It is, I think, a Return published by the Local Government Board, and it gives a comparison between the rates in 1873-4 and the rates in 1884-5. There is also a volume published by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who is a very high authority, but it is of an earlier date, and does not exhibit the case as well as the more recent document. Now, how does the case stand? Taking, first, the case of the Metropolis, I find that comparing 1873-4 with the rates in 1884-5 there was an increase in the rates in those 11 years, amounting to £2,653,000, or 67 per cent. Now, are the provincial towns much better off? Not a great deal, Sir. The absence of self-governing institutions appears to have given to the Metropolis a slight pre-eminence and superiority in regard to the increase of this expenditure; but I am bound to say that the self-governing towns run a very fair race with it, and in some cases make a very creditable show indeed. I take next, then, the case of all urban districts outside the Metropolis, and I find that in the period specified there was an increase of £2,729,000 upon the rates, representing 59 per cent. I come now to the mixed urban and rural districts, which are very extensive. Their total rating is £9,858,000; but what I am alluding to—namely, the increase, is only £1,194,000, or 13·8 per cent—under 14 per cent. And that, Sir, is not all, for, perhaps, the most interesting of all these classes is that composed of the districts purely rural. I must heartily congratulate the rural districts, and I rejoice, myself, in being personally in any manner associated with them, for I find that in their case this large increment of rate dwindles down to the almost contemptible sum of £213,000, or 12 per cent.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport): Are they self-governed?

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I have not the least doubt that the hon. Member is quite as competent to answer that question as I am, and that he knows as much about the rural districts. Does he wish to impose upon me the duty of putting into my observations a parenthesis which would occupy at least a quarter-of-an-hour, without the smallest countervailing advantage of increasing the knowledge of the House at large or that of the hon. Member? So much for the general claim of the landed interest; but what is its claim under the present plan? The landlord will get, undoubtedly, the benefit of the whole contribution we are going to make to the rates in the rural districts. But when will he get it? That is the question. But I do not think that it requires any lengthened argument at the present moment. My opinion upon it is clear and strong. He will get it very quickly indeed. If rents were rising he would not get it quickly. If rents were stationary he would not get it quickly. If there were no general movement in rents he would not get it quickly. He would get it by degrees upon a change of hands in his various lettings. But I am a fraid it is an admitted and melancholy truth that rents are feeling the depression of the times and are going down from year to year. Some have come down, perhaps, and some may, I hope, have reached their lowest points; but, upon the whole, they are moving in a downward direction, and if we are to consider them in a declining state, the full benefit of this subvention from the Consolidated Fund to the local treasury must come at once, or very shortly, to the landlords. If we are agreed, and I am afraid there is no difference of opinion—I wish there was—that rents are generally declining—if we are agreed in that, I will illustrate my meaning in this way. Let us suppose the case to be represented generally by a single farm belonging to a single individual—a farm rented at £300 a-year under the old system, and what we should call a flourishing state of agriculture. On the farm the rates are £60. On the day before the Budget, I received a statement from the tenant setting out the condition of the farm, of course including the amount of the tithe and rates, and saying that he cannot continue to pay the £300 any longer, but that he could pay £200, and making an offer of that amount. Very well, I suppose that I myself, as the landlord, receive that offer on the day before the Chancellor of the Exchequer is going to speak. The Chancellor of the Exchequer makes his speech, and the next morning, before giving an answer to the tenant, I read the speech and I find that the rates on my farms will be very considerably reduced, and that on this particular farm they will be reduced from £60 to £40 by the important subventions that are about to be made. Very well, I make my answer to my tenant, and I say to him, "That is very hard upon me. You ask me to reduce your rent from £300 to £200 a-year, but since your letter was written, there are to be important changes in regard to taxation. You calculated your offer on the basis of the rates being £60. The rates are now to be £40, and, that being so, your offer is evidently an offer of £220 a-year." In that way the landlord gets the benefit of £10, £15, or £20, as the case may be. Now, I take that as an illustration to show that the benefit of these subventions must necessarily fall into the hands of the owner of the freehold, and will pass by the occupier. Well, Sir, for these benefits, which, as I have said, will go entirely to the owners of landed property, cannot be represented by a less sum than £2,000,000 out of the subvention you are going to make, the entire landed property of the country is to be called upon to meet a charge of £280,000. I want, now, to compare this mode of treating the landed property with the mode in which you are going to treat the visible personalty of the country, which is of no less importance than landed property, and, if the observations I have made are correct, at all events of not much less importance; for while the value of the whole freehold of the country is one-fourth of the entire property of the country, the value of visible personalty, or the secondary or tenant and occupiers' interest—call it what you like—it falls under the head of "visible personalty"—is about one-fifth. What, then, is the claim of the owners of visible personalty if we are to be just towards the owners of land, the owners of visible personalty, and just towards everybody. The claim of the owner of visible personalty then is greatest, and it is the greatest on these two perfectly distinct and perfectly substantive grounds. First of all, it is upon him that this enormous increase in the rates must come. This increase of 67 per cent in the Metropolis, and of 59 per cent in the urban districts, is an increase, nearly the whole of which must fall upon the owner of visible personalty. This is one of his claims. The other claim is, that while other classes have been touched on one side only, while the owners of other kinds of personalty have been touched by the Death Duties and not by the rates, and the owners of landed property have been touched, or very slightly touched, by the rates, and not by the Death Duties, the owners of visible personalty have been, to use a homely phrase, hit both ways, they have been hit by the rates and by the Death Duties through the medium in full of the Probate Duty and in part of the Succession Duty, therefore the owners of visible personalty have a double claim for relief upon the Government, of which, however the plans of the Government take no cognizance whatever. Especially in regard to this enormous mass of property held by tenants and occupiers, with a secondary interest no cognizance whatever is taken of it in the plan of Her Majesty's Government. How do the Government treat them? I have shown their claims to be a maximum; I shall show their advantages to be a minimum, though I do not say they have none at all. Of course, they gain like the landed proprietors from the reduction of the Income Tax, and they gain upon the Succession Duty. But the peculiarity of the case is this. This plan is a great plan and a good plan in many respects, and the essence of it is that by giving about £1,125,000—I think it is from the Probate Duty, one moiety of the Probate Duty—compensation is to be made to the ratepayer for his disadvantage under the present system of maintaining local rates. Nothing could appear to be more equitable. But what is the real state of the case with regard to the owner of visible personalty? He contributes his full share to that very fund out of which he is to be compensated. In fact, he is to pay his own compensation. While the landed proprietor is to get, with perfect justice and propriety I admit, his compensation from other people, the owner of visible personalty is to get his from himself. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is to put money into one of his pockets, and immediately extract it from the other; because, so far as I recollect, this claim of compensation, although very large, consists mainly of the moiety of the Probate Duty you are going to hand over, and to that Probate Duty the owner of visible personalty contributes as fully as any other class of owners. Now, Sir, I think I have made good what I have described as my fifth proposition—namely, that visible personalty, which of all property has by far the strongest claim of relief, will still remain liable to this great inequality. And while, on the one hand, the owner of visible personalty will, through the medium of the Probate Duty, have to pay to himself his compensation, which other owners will receive from other parties, they are likewise to be called upon by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to pay under the Death Duties three times as much as is levied upon the landed proprietors. How long will these inequalities continue? It is impossible that they should continue without limit. Well, Sir, they will not continue without limit; they will continue for a time and then they will disappear. What is to happen to-night? A Division, of course, we shall have, and the House will give its decision. On whom does that decision depend? It depends on Liberal politicians who take the name of Unionists. I think I have kept, as I am bound to do, my pledge to the House to avoid drawing its attention to any irrelevant matters, and therefore I am not now going to dispute the right of those Gentlemen to that name. I say that the decision of the House depends on the Unionists. I may take it for granted that some of our old Friends—a sprinkling, at any rate, if not many of them—will give their votes with us to-night; but that will not much matter, for individual votes are of comparatively small importance. A stray Tory used in the past to be allowed to vote for the Ballot, but then it was perfectly well known that the votes of the whole Party would be sufficient and adequate to prevent any mischief that might arise from the fact that a single sheep had gone astray. So with regard to the Liberal Unionists; it is not the vote of this or that Member, but of the Liberal Unionists as a body, that is of importance here. Do not let it be supposed that we shall not be thankful for their votes; we shall be glad of any individual votes—the more the better, and few are better than none. But with reference to the public issue, they are not equally important. A larger Division or a smaller Division, a larger majority or a smaller majority, may cause a few cheers upon that side or upon this, but the cheers will pass away, while the result will be recorded. The result depends upon the action of the Party as a body. They are acting as a body—they have shown their capacity to act as a body—and in what they deemed to be the saving of the Union they have shown that they are a body, and in that capacity they have supported the Government upon a hundred questions that have nothing whatever to do with the Union. Let them show it to-night. If they go as a body with the Government, it is upon them, and them only—it is upon Liberals, and not upon men who are not Liberals—that the maintenance of this system of inequality will rest. It will be their crime, for the Government are in a minority in this House. They have supported them on 20 or 50 occasions when the majority was made up by Liberals. What the country must understand is that these Gentlemen professing the Liberal creed, many of whom believe conscientiously—and they are entitled to that belief if they think fit—that they are the best Liberals, the most consistent of Liberals, the most resolute Liberals—those are the men who are to maintain and keep alive this inequality. These are the men who will be responsible for handing down this system of threefold taxation on personalty as compared with land, and support it as one of those precious institutions which they think we ought to bequeath to our posterity. If there is to be victory for the Government, if this Resolution is to fail, to that cause, and that cause alone, will that victory and that failure be due. But it is necessary to do something more than achieve that victory. It is necessary to answer the facts that I have laid before the House. It is necessary to answer them, not with mere generalities, not by doleful representations, true as they may be, that the landed interest of the country is depressed; it is necessary to break down, and not in detail but in their main substance, the statements and the figures I have laid before you, and which have proved that you are going to give a final sanction to a threefold system of taxation as regards personalty under the Death Duties as compared with what land is called on to pay. Do you think that system will last? Let me say — and perhaps I may make an appeal a little nearer home—that this subject is not entirely new. There was a Cabinet in this country in 1885, and there was a proposal then with regard to it; at that time, hon. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway, who we now know, on the most unquestionable authority, were welcome allies of those who now sit opposite us in opposing our financial proposals.

What was it that we proposed? It was a proposal which had the support of my noble Friend the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire—a proposal which, with a single exception that we did not remove what I have described as the 10 per cent discount in respect of half-yearly payments, was similar to our present proposal. With that single exception, we proposed in 1885 to establish for the purpose of meeting the wants of the Exchequer, a perfect equality between the Death Duty on land and the Death Duty on personalty. That was then the sentiment of my noble Friend the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire, and which I hope he will support to-night. And why should he support it? Not only from consistency, but from the strongest possible *à fortiori* cause. In 1885, to meet the necessities of the case, we then proposed to equalize, along with my noble Friend, the Death Duties on land and on personalty, although at the time we were not in a condition to make, and we did not propose to make, the slightest concession to ratepayers. There was no Liberal Unionist Body then. We adjourned the claims of the ratepayers; but we, and my noble Friend among us, declared that even under these circumstances, the Death Duties upon realty should be made equal to those upon personalty. I see my noble Friend has some notes in his hand. I have no doubt they contain a most admirable and conclusive speech in support of the Resolution. If by any accident or caprice of fate, if by any of those marvellous or secret causes which operate in the decisions and actions of men and sometimes even of the best and most distinguished men, if from the wheel of the lottery or from any cause, by the support of my hon. Friend, victory should come to the Government to-night — I do not envy them that victory. It will be the opening of a new struggle, a fresh controversy. It may last for a while. If you take up that ground, you may be able to hold it for a limited period; but it will end, as a hundred other controversies have ended in my recollection, which reaches over the time of the Reform Bill, in the triumph of right and justice, in the triumph of a policy of wisdom towards the nation and against the ill-understood and recklessly supported interests of a class. It will end as it has ended before in this—that we shall have soon upon us a momentary and temporary triumph, followed up by permanent odium and discredit and ultimately by a final defeat.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, "in the opinion of this House, after Parliament shall have made the appropriations it may deem just in relief of local rates, the Duties accruing upon deaths should be so fixed as to equalize the charge upon real and personal property respectively," (*Mr. Gladstone*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): Mr. Speaker, it is not for me to follow the right hon. Gentleman in the concluding portion of his speech or to attempt to defend the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) against the personal attack that has been made upon him, but I cannot help remarking that it is strange to hear from the right hon. Gentleman, who was the author and originator of the plan for levying succession duties on realty, which he now tells us is recklessly supported in the interest of a class —it is strange to hear him attacking the noble Marquess because he may have changed his opinion on this subject. Anyone who looks at the wording of the Resolution which the right hon. Gentleman has moved this night might well wonder why he undertook what he himself characterized in 1885 as—

> "The most obstructive of all proceedings, a course very rarely taken, the proposal of an adverse Amendment on the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill."

But I do not think we had any occasion for surprise when we listened to his speech. We can understand that the real meaning of that speech was not so much a desire to set right what he thinks a financial wrong, as to turn out the Government. I judge the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman, not by its wording, not by his promise—which he did not keep—to abstain from Party criticism, but by the fact that it has been moved as a direct Amendment to the Budget of the Government, and by the interpretation which he has himself placed upon its meaning. Now, Sir, I will say, in the first place, that I think it is rather remarkable that the right hon. Gentleman should, in the terms of his Resolution, have merely professed a desire to equalize the charge upon real and personal property for Death Duties; because the most effective part of the important speech which he has addressed to the House was that in which he dwelt upon the injustice that is done, in his view, to visible personal property under the present system. But the right hon. Gentleman never suggested any mode by which visible personal property should be relieved of that injustice. Does the right hon. Gentleman seriously think that visible personal property would be relieved by inflicting another injustice upon real property? If he wishes to remedy the injustice with which he dealt with so much force—and I am bound to say with a considerable amount, in my opinion, of truth—it would require a thorough recasting of the system of Death Duties, for it is invisible personalty, and not realty, that reaps an unfair advantage from the present system. Does he really call upon the Government to undertake this year such a complicated and difficult a task as that? He did not attempt it, with all his knowledge, power, and experience during the many years he was in Office. For what was the proposal of the right hon. Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers)? Not a recasting of this complicated system of Death Duties, not a plan which would remedy the numerous great anomalies, but a mere attempt to inflict upon real property the injustice which the right hon. Gentleman would inflict upon it, and that alone, as "a final reform"—those were his words—of the system of Death Duties. I contend that such a proposal is both unjust in itself, and is very far indeed, even from the point of view of the right hon. Gentleman, from anything like a complete settlement of this great question. But let us consider the reform which the right hon. Gentleman proposes in the terms of his Resolution. He wishes to equalize the charges for Death Duties on real and personal property. I followed him as well as I could through his statement as to the respective incidence of those Duties upon realty and personalty under the scheme of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I think he was wrong in not eliminating from his calculation that part of the Probate Duty which it is proposed to devote to the relief of Local Taxation. That is part of the whole contribution which, together with the licences, will go to the local ratepayers, and it is not fair to take that part of the Probate Duty into consideration in deciding whether realty or personalty will be most heavily taxed for Imperial purposes under the Death Duties. Let us try to arrive at the relation between the payments which the two classes of property will make to the Imperial Revenue when the scheme of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has come actually into force. The Succession Duty will yield £1,200,000; Probate and Legacy Duty, after deducting half the former for local purposes, £4,850,000. But when you come to analyze those two duties, as the right hon. Gentleman showed to the House, you arrive at the fact that the Succession Duty is borne partly by personalty and that Legacy Duty is paid partly by realty. Deduct from £1,200,000 Succession Duty one-fifth on account of settled personalty, or £240,000, and that reduces it to £960,000. Deduct from that one-eighth for leaseholds, or £120,000, and that brings it down to £840,000. On the other side, deduct from the total annual yield of the Legacy Duty a sum which the Inland Revenue Commissioners calculate at £200,000, for Legacy Duty paid upon real estate directed to be sold, on annuities charged on real estate, on portions for younger children, jointures, dowries, if created by will and not by settlement. I do not include mortgages, though I might do so as part of the *corpus* of the estate. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to add to the Succession Duty ½ per cent for lineals and 1½ per cent for collaterals. It is estimated that the £200,000 I have named will thus be increased by £60,000. These two sums of £200,000 and £60,000 added to £840,000, make a total charge on realty of £1,100,000 a-year for Death Duties. Now, I come to the other side. The Probate Duty and Legacy Duty is £4,850,000; deduct from that £200,000, which I have mentioned above, Legacy Duty paid by realty, and you get £4,650,000; add £360,000 Succession Duty, paid by settled personalty and leaseholds, and you have a total of £5,010,000. Realty, then, pays £1,100,000 Death Duties as against £5,010,000 paid by personalty. Now, the right hon. Gentleman calls this an enormous disparity, and makes an eloquent appeal to the masses against it. I think the right hon. Gentleman in that appeal might have felt it his duty to tell the masses himself the strong arguments which he brought forward in favour of real property when he first imposed a Succession Duty in 1853. Whether the disparity is enormous or not depends on the relative values of realty and personalty in this country. You cannot assume unfairness in the matter without first examining what relation the value of personal property passing by death bears to that of real property passing by death; and, secondly, without inquiring whether there is any other kind of Imperial taxation borne by real and not borne by personal property. The right hon. Gentleman, in his speech the other day, made what, with all respect to him, I will call one of the wildest assertions ever made in this House, when he assumed that the total value of personalty was the same as the total value of realty——

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: It was not my calculation.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I understand from that that the right hon. Gentleman does not think the calculation was made by any Authority on which he can depend. I can accept no such calculation. It is absolutely impossible, in my belief, to arrive at the respective values of realty and personalty in this country, except by the use of statistics which must largely be of a conjectural character. I confess I felt some difficulty, myself, in sanctioning the publication of the Return of 1885, from which the right hon. Gentleman has quoted, because I saw that that Return was composed so largely of conjectural figures. In saying that, I do not intend to cast any reflection on the authority of the eminent statisticians dealing with the matter; but I think the only satisfactory figures we can take in calculating those relative values are those based upon the average amounts which become actually liable to the different kinds of Death Duties over a number of years. Beyond this, I think we can only say, generally that it is admitted by all who have attempted to look into the matter that, in the first place, the total value of personalty is considerably higher than that of realty; and, secondly, that the difference between the two is increasing year by year to the disadvantage of realty. What is the average net annual amount of personalty paying Probate Duty since the right hon. Gentleman's Act of 1881? I find it is £140,000,000. Add to that the value of personalty paying Succession Duty, £8,000,000, making a total of £148,000,000.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: That was already included.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): No.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Yes; it is.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: The figures have been given me by the Inland Revenue Authorities. On the other hand, the net annual value of real property paying Succession Duty is given at £43,000,000, a figure which the right hon. Gentleman quoted. From that deduct settled personalty, £8,000,000, and leaseholds, £4,000,000, or £12,000,000 in all, and that leaves a total annual amount of realty, paying Death Duties of £31,000,000. Well, now, on the face of these figures, of course it would seem very unfair that £31,000,000 of realty should pay £1,100,000, as against £5,010,000 paid by £148,000,000 of personalty. But, of course, these £31,000,000 do not represent the gross value of realty, nor the capital value of realty. It is obviously fair that no man should pay Death Duties upon a greater estate than he receives. The right hon. Gentleman did not make any objection to the system under which, in calculating the value of an estate for Succession Duty, deductions are made for mortgages, legacies, or annuities charged on the estates, or for the necessary outgoings for repairs and insurance. The objection of the right hon. Gentleman was to the calculation of the value on the life interest, rather than on the capital value. Why did the right hon. Gentleman enact, in 1853, that the person succeeding to real property should never be charged with the duty on any higher interest in the property than a life interest? He did so for three main reasons. In the first place on the ground of the other charges to which real property is subject. He spoke then of the enormous weight of local taxation falling solely upon real property; but to-night he argued that this injustice had been put an end to—that the proposal of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer by which

£3,000,000 will be paid, more than is paid at present, to the ratepayers in relief of their burdens, will settle the question, so that the inequality which he admitted in 1853 will be entirely removed. But what I would say is this—that my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer drew a very broad distinction between the hereditary burdens of the ratepayers and the addition to them due to fresh charges upon the rates. This proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is in relief of the great increase in the burdens of realty from new charges upon the rates; it practically leaves hereditary burdens untouched, and the difference between property subject to rating and property not subject to rating still remains as in 1853, because it would be impossible that it could be removed. Nay, it is even increased, because there has been an increase of rates since that time so enormous as practically to outweigh the additional relief now to be given. I find, from the Report of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1870, that the sum of £9,916,000 was raised in 1852 from the rates in England and Wales. In the year 1886-7 that was increased to £26,140,000. Even allowing for the £3,000,000 proposed to be given in aid of the rates, the result will be that 1 per cent more on the total rateable value will be paid by the ratepayers now than in 1852. The right hon. Gentleman followed the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) in saying that this great increase of rates is practically an increase in the towns, and not in the country. I quite admit that fact; but remember that the increase of rates in the towns has been accompanied by an increase of ability to bear the rates. The right hon. Gentleman quoted the increase of rates in Middlesex and some large towns during the last 10 years. But what has been the increase in the value of property on which those rates are levied? I find that in 1875 the rateable value of property in the Metropolis was £21,193,000, but in 1885 it was £29,419,000. The corresponding figures in Lancashire were £10,370,000 and £17,936,000. In the West Riding of Yorkshire in 1875 the rateable value was £7,754,000, and in 1885 £9,722,000. I find these figures borne out by Returns arrived at on a wider basis. Hon. Members are no doubt acquainted with the paper on this subject by Mr. Giffen. Mr. Giffen shows that in 1865 the percentage of house property in the United Kingdom to the total value of property was 16½ per cent. He informed me the other day that from a recent calculation it was in 1885 20 per cent. In the same way the Income Tax Returns show that in 1877, houses were assessed to Income Tax at £90,000,000, and in 1887 at £117,000,000, or an increase of 29½ per cent. There is, therefore, a distinct increase of ability to bear rates on the part of property which I admit has been mainly liable for the increase of rates. But how is it with regard to property in the agricultural districts? I find Mr. Giffen calculates that whereas in 1865 land was estimated by him as 30 per cent of the total property of the United Kingdom, in 1875 it had sunk to 24, and in 1885 to 17 per cent. The Income Tax Returns show that in 1877 land was assessed at £51,000,000, and in 1887 at only £45,000,000, showing a decrease of 12½ per cent. But the official Returns do not show the whole case. The rates levied on land have increased, though I admit not largely increased, since 1853, for though I believe there has been some decrease in the expenditure on Poor Law relief, the increase of other rates has in many cases more than equalled that decrease. But the ability of land to bear rates has never for many years past been lower in England than it is at the present moment. ["No, no!"] I wish hon. Members who doubt that statement would refer to the evidence of Sir James Caird before the Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade in 1886. He informed that Commission that the Inspectors of the Land Office, whose knowledge of the agricultural position was necessarily most intimate, estimated the reduction in the spendable income derived from landed property in the 10 years 1876 to 1886 at from 10 per cent in Lancashire, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, to from 25 to 40 per cent over the South and East of England. His own estimate of the total was that there had been a decrease of £15,000,000 annually, or 30 per cent of the total income from land all over England. I believe that any Member on either side of the House who has any real acquaintance with the present condition of agriculture will admit that in making that calculation Sir James Caird certainly did not go beyond the truth. It may be argued that if the value of land falls, so will the Death Duty payable on it. ["Hear, hear!" *from the Opposition.*] I thought some hon. Members would cheer that statement. But the right hon. Gentleman did not use that argument, because he knows that the Death Duty can only be payable by the successor to the property out of a net income now so enormously reduced that a very little more would make the margin disappear altogether. In many cases, by the increase of the Death Duties you might compel the owner of real property to sell it. [Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Why not?] The hon. Member for Northampton asks why not. I will tell him directly. I have said that the other charges to which realty was subject were not the only reasons which induced the right hon. Gentleman to consider it favourably in 1853. He then said—

> "I think it is a policy worthy of some consideration not only to give something that may tend to counteract the special burdens borne by real property, but likewise to take care that you so adjust the payment of the tax in regard to property of that description, that you do not allow it to become an engine of great and serious evil by forcing changes in the possession of the land."

The right hon. Gentleman gave an example of what he meant by that. He said—

> "Take a large estate worth some £500,000, with a gross rental of £16,000 or £18,000 per year, and a net rental of £13,000 or £14,000, mortgaged for £300,000; the mortgages would absorb some £12,000 of the rental, and leave but £1,000 or £2,000 a-year to the possessor, which will represent the annual value of the life interest, while, at the same time, there would be an excess of capital value over the mortgages reaching to £200,000. Now, I think if you charge upon the capital value, there is no way in which you could meet that case so as not to give the tax the effect and character of an engine for displacing the present possessor."

Some hon. Members may ask why not? I will answer in the words of the right hon. Gentleman—

> "I think it would be an invidious, an offensive, an unwise, and an unjust measure not to facilitate the parting with property by persons disposed to part with it; but to lay on a tax in such a way as would have the effect of forcing them to part with it, and there is no tax, however moderate it might be, if it were fixed upon the capital value of such an estate as I have described—when you consider how attenuated the income would be—there is no tax which would not have the effect of compelling the possessor to bring his estate into the market."

Now, I wish the right hon. Gentleman had referred in some measure to these considerations when he put forward his appeal to the masses of this country. I do not know why such a proceeding should be more offensive, invidious, unwise, and unjust, in the year 1853, than it is in the year 1888, when land has sunk to a point far below anything which it had reached in 1853. In many parts of the country it is practically unsaleable, so that the injustice and unfairness would be largely increased. The right hon. Gentleman then gave a third reason why he would not charge life renters on their life interests, and the person who comes into absolute possession on the perpetuity, because—

> "You would thus establish a system of law that would work in favour of the great landed proprietors, and against the small holders of land."

He referred to the undoubted fact that it is the custom to settle large estates, and not the custom to settle small estates, so that as a rule the inheritor of a large estate would have but a life interest, whereas the inheritor of a small estate would have to pay on the whole. Is it not obvious that if you charged on the perpetuity you might have, in the same parish, a peer paying a diminished rate of Death Duty as tenant for life, and a yeoman or a working man succeeding to a house and a few acres of land unsettled, upon which he would be charged as upon a perpetuity? Is that an injustice which the right hon. Gentleman desires to inflict upon small owners of land? I always thought it was the desire of that as well as of this side of the House to increase the number of small owners of land in England. But what inducement do you hold out to the working man to invest his savings in land, if you not only impose on land burdens which it is unable to bear, but discriminate in your taxation against him and in favour of his richer neighbour. I therefore, for these three reasons, conceive that the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman, addressed to Parliament in 1853 in favour of making a distinction of this kind on behalf of real property in respect of the Death Duties, are as sound now as they were then, and I hold that this distinction should still be maintained. But, Sir, for the purpose of the argument which I now wish to put before the House, I will admit the contention of the right hon. Gentleman that the system of charging on the life interest should be done away with, and that realty should be charged with Death Duties upon its capital value. Now, I told the House that £148,000,000 represents the average annual value of personalty charged with Death Duties, and £31,000,000 the realty so charged, calculated on the life interest. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated the other day that that calculation was based upon this—that the life interest on the average is taken by the Inland Revenue Commissioners at 13½ years' purchase. The right hon. Gentleman opposite thinks that in order to arrive at the capital value, that period should be doubled. I do not agree with the argument addressed by the right hon. Gentleman to the House in proof of his contention that the fall in the income of realty did not carry with it a fall in the number of years' purchase for which it may be sold. I believe the fall in the income of realty and of the number of years' purchase for which it may be sold go together; and that were it possible to obtain Returns showing the number of years' purchase for which estates are now sold, it would be found that the number of years' purchase calculated on the reduced income is less than it was when calculated on the former income. But I have another point which has not been considered. A very considerable portion of the realty to which I am referring is composed not of land, but of freehold houses. It is obviously unfair to calculate the value of freehold houses at anything like 27 years' purchase; but I take the value of the whole at 25 years' purchase, and I find this would make an average annual value of realty charged with Death Duties calculated on the capital value of 25 years' purchase as £57,000,000. Add to that the capital value of realty paying Legacy Duty as £8,000,000, and real property passing direct from husband to wife without any duty at £3,000,000, and that makes a total of £68,000,000 of real property, as against £148,000,000 of personalty. Now, if this paid the same rate of Death Duty as personal property, it would pay £2,300,000 instead of £1,100,000, so that there would be a balance of £1,200,000 in favour of realty. But now I come to a part of the question which the right hon. Gentleman did not touch. I have shown that calculating the relative value of realty and personalty on the basis which he desires, realty benefits in its payment to Imperial taxation through the Death Duties by £1,200,000 a-year. But is not realty subject to other charges for Imperial taxation which personal property does not bear? Why, the right hon. Gentleman did not investigate that question in a single sentence. I will not dwell on the House Duty, because part of the House Duty might fairly be considered a tax on personal property. But how about the Land Tax? Is it charged on personal property? It is charged solely on realty, and amounts to £1,030,000 a-year; but its real amount may be taken as £2,000,000, because the House will remember that half the Land Tax has been redeemed, and that, in calculating the burden of that tax, you ought fairly to take into account the interest on the money spent in its redemption. But, taking it as it stands at £1,030,000, realty is still at another disadvantage as compared with personalty with regard to the manner in which it is assessed to the Income Tax. The owner of real property is assessed to Income Tax at a figure which is calculated by the Inland Revenue Commissioners as 20 per cent more than he receives. The owner of personal property is assessed to Income Tax only upon what he actually receives. The right hon. Gentleman himself stated that a 7*d.* Income Tax on personalty was equal to a 9*d.* rate on realty, so that he appreciated the point to which I allude, and yet he never included that as a burden which realty bears in the estimate he submitted to the House. The total amount charged under Schedule A is £180,000,000 a-year. If you deduct from that income arising from the rent of leaseholds, interest on mortgages, from Corporation lands, and other items which do not come under the head of real estate subject to Succession Duty, the Inland Revenue Commissioners have calculated that £110,000,000 a-year remains as the gross income of real estate subject to that duty. The 6*d.* Income Tax on that amount will produce £2,750,000. If realty bears 20 per cent more than personalty on the assessment to the Income Tax, 20 per cent of that amount represents a sum of £550,000, which ought to be put down to the credit of realty in comparing its burdens with those of personalty, and so, adding to the £1,030,000 of Land Tax that sum of £550,000, I have shown to the House that, on the whole, realty pays £1,580,000 more than personalty towards Imperial taxation, as against the £1,200,000 on account of the Death Duties which, if you assess realty to those duties at its capital value, you may argue that personalty bears more than realty. I will leave this case to speak for itself. It seems to me that I have done something to establish two great propositions. First, that the inequality between rateable and non-rateable property with regard to local taxation is not entirely removed by the proposals which we have submitted to the House, but remains now as it was in 1853, and that, therefore, any arguments which then justified the favourable treatment of realty in the matter of the Death Duties, on account of the burden of local taxation, are equally applicable now, and even more applicable, on account of the ruinous condition of agriculture. Secondly, if you take, according to the best statistics, the relative taxable values of real and personal property in this country, that realty, even under the system of charging it to Succession Duty on life interest, now pays more to Imperial taxation than personalty. The right hon. Gentleman said something about the advantage which realty has in the delay in the payment of Succession Duty as compared with the prompt payment of Legacy and Probate Duty. I think that was answered fairly by the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other night. It is, of course, rarely posible to separate part of the estate in the case of realty, and sell it for payment of the tax with the same facility as in the case of personalty; and where the real estate is small—perhaps only a single freehold house—such a proceeding becomes absolutely impracticable. If, therefore, you were to levy the tax upon realty as promptly as the tax upon personalty, you would impose a charge upon the successors of realty which would directly lead to their burdening their property for the payment of the tax. That surely would be a financial operation which this House ought not to encourage. For these reasons, therefore, I trust the House will not, as asked by the right hon. Gentleman, in the name of fancied equality in the Death Duties, perpetrate a great injustice upon the real property of this country. I suppose we are all ready to exaggerate the difficulties of our own times; but I do not believe that the condition of agriculture in this country has for many generations been so bad as it is at the present moment. Wages are low, yet employment is very scarce. Labourers are flocking to the towns from the country. Why? Because the farmers have no capital, and the landlords see their rents diminishing to a vanishing point. This is not a state of things in which you should seek, by the policy of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, to aggravate the difficulties of a distressed interest. The landowners of England are comparatively few in number, and they have lost much of their political power; but I think they may claim to have deserved at least as well of the country as any other class. They are quietly, and with great patience, fighting difficulties which certainly are not due to any action of their own. They ask for no favour at the hands of this House. All they ask for is fair and unprejudiced consideration of the circumstances in which they are placed, and I believe that that request will not be refused.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I am sure the House will allow me to explain an error into which I fell in the course of my speech. I made my computation that 3$\frac{5}{8}$ was the rate which personalty will pay under the new system, on an assumption that £8,000,000 of second personalty which pays Succession Duty also pays Probate Duty. I find that I was wrong, and I have to apologize to the House for that. It does not pay Probate Duty, and consequently I must add it to the amount of personal property paying Probate Duty, in order to estimate fairly the incidence of the whole charge. Instead of £138,000,000, which was the sum in 1886-7, the sum becomes £146,000,000, on which the amount paid by personalty has to be reckoned. Reckoning it so, instead of being a little over 3$\frac{5}{8}$ per cent, as I stated, it is slightly under 3$\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Consequently, the future payment to be made by personalty, instead of being fully three times the amount paid by realty, will be a small amount short of that.

Mr. HALDANE (Haddington) said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had led the House away from the point of the Motion, the object of which was to remove the inequality and gross injustice in point of principle which attached to personalty as compared with land in the payment of the Death Duties. The details of the proper appropriations in aid of real estate were not what they were there to discuss. With regard to these Death Duties, the oldest and simplest was the Probate Duty, which was nearly two centuries old, having been established in 1694. Then there came the Legacy Duty, imposed in 1780 and remodelled by Mr. Pitt in 1796, which consisted of a sliding scale varying with the degree of propinquity to the deceased of the person who took the succession. Now, with regard to the burdens on land, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) in 1871 had said that a historical retrospect seemed to prove that, as regarded those burdens, they were not so heavy as in most foreign countries. In 1853 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had introduced the Succession Duty Act. It was only when the Succession Duty Act was passed that land was first made subject to a Death Duty. But while on succession to personalty, whether under the Legacy Duty Act or the Succession Duty Act, payment had to be made on the capital value, in the case of succession to land payment was on the annual value only, and that only on an annuity calculated on the life of the person who succeeded, whether he succeeded in fee-simple or not. But the anomaly did not stop there. There was another point to which attention had not been drawn that night, but which was as important as any other in showing the anomalies of the position. Under the Succession Duty Act of 1853 land was to be taxed for the purposes of succession, not, merely, only on the life interest, not only on the footing of an annuity, not upon the value of the land, but upon the value the land was actually producing. If the land was producing nothing at the moment, even although it had an enormous prospective value, it would escape scot free. This led to a very great loss to the Revenue in many cases. The case of Lord Sefton, who succeeded in 1855 to the Toxteth property, near Liverpool, consisting of 48,000 square yards, which at the time yielded nothing, was an illustration. In 1862 he sold a great portion of the land at 16*s*. the square yard, and the Inland Revenue Authorities took the case to the Court of Exchequer, to see if there was any way of making him liable for Succession Duty; and the judgment was that under the Act the claim of the Crown could not be supported. Could there be a more extraordinary illustration of the anomalous position in which this matter stood as regarded the land? He would suggest that the proper proceedings to take to remove the anomaly were—first, to make the appropriations they were all agreed upon, so that personalty might pay as much as land towards Imperial purposes. Next, he would say, devise machinery which will assimilate the contribution which land paid to the Death Duties as compared with personalty; and for that purpose they must do three things. In the first place, they must get rid of the anomaly under which they paid only on the actual annual value or yield in the way he had described, and they must make land pay under Section 21 of the Succession Duty Act in the same way as they made personalty pay. In the second place, the payment must be on the capital value, and not, as at present, on the annual value. In the third place, the landlord ought not, as at present, to escape payment of Probate Duty altogether. No doubt, if they were to redress the grievance, it involved taking in hand certain changes in the Land Laws. But the Government had very fairly brought forward this Session, in "another place," propositions in the form of the Land Laws Bill, which extended to transfer and to changes in the general law. There had been objections taken to the proposals with regard to transfers; but, so far as he knew, no objections had been taken to the others. The Government should separate the substantive portion of the changes they proposed, including the abolition of the principle of primogeniture, making land pass to a real representative, who should take out probate with respect to the land, and pay duty of exactly the same amount and nature as was paid at this moment with respect to personalty. That would bring about a condition of simplicity in the state of the Land Laws which they did not at present possess. They would equalize the Death Duties and make them payable all round. They would thus get rid of the anomalies to which attention had that night been directed, and the great difficulty which now existed, because the whole subject of taxation and rating was left in such a condition that it was almost impossible to get to the bottom of it. He believed those changes might be made very simply. It might be that they would involve additions of a kind not contemplated in a Budget Bill; but certainly they could be brought about very easily in that part of the Lord Chancellor's Bill which dealt with substantive reform in the Land Laws of this country, if it were taken up by the Government and passed, as he believed it could be done. He believed there was a good deal of difference of opinion on the other side of the House on these subjects. It might be that there was a considerable section of the Tory Party which was not ready for these changes, and which had sentimental views regarding them. On the other hand, there were eminent Members of the Tory Party—such as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer — who were advocates of fiscal changes of the kind he had referred to, and who, in writings and speeches, had advocated changes which went to the root of the question. But the difficulty was that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and other hon. and right hon. Gentlemen were fighting with their hands tied. They had, besides, to reckon with the majority behind them. It might be that the majority would not let them have their way. But it was not the less the duty of the Opposition in the clearest way, and without hesitation, to put before the House and the country the line of demarcation which divided them from the other side, and which made it essential that they should not be content with less reforms than were suggested by the Motion now before the House.

Sir RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) said, it was impossible to take any exception to the able speech which had been delivered by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Haddington (Mr. Haldane). He was apparently acquainted with all the difficult and intricate details of the Legacy and Death Duties, and had dealt with them after the manner of an expert. Now, he (Sir Richard Paget) in no way regretted that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had thought right on this occasion to raise the question of the relative taxation on real and personal property. It was just as well that these things should be thoroughly brought to light; that they should be examined in their various details; and speaking here for himself—and he was sure he might venture also to speak for many who sat around him—he could say they shrank in no degree from the fullest and most complete investigation of the whole of the incidence of this taxation. They claimed no privilege; they asked for no favour; they demanded nothing at the hands of the House but the plainest and most absolute justice; and whatever that justice might be they would be content with it. But when they approached a question of this magnitude they were obliged to take a broad view, and not limit their attention to any one incident of taxation. It might be—and he fully admitted it—that in respect of the Death Duties "real" property undoubtedly possessed a considerable advantage; but what they had to consider was whether this was not now met by something on the other side, and whether the balance was not far more than redressed when they looked at taxes of a different description and examined into their incidence. This raised the question whether it was right and whether it was wise as a financial proposal entirely to equalize the Death Duties, and by so doing to present an appearance of equality? He should like, in this matter, to quote the opinion of one who was an ornament to that House, and whose words, he was sure, would always demand attention—he meant the late Mr. Fawcett. Now, Mr. Fawcett clearly, in his admirable work on political economy, after quoting Adam Smith's views as to the justice of taxation, and after having said—

> "The aggregate amount which each individual pays in taxes ought to be in proportion to his ability to contribute to the Revenues of the State,"

laid down that this equality of taxation could never be perfectly secured, and added—

> "It may, however, be approximately obtained by giving to one class, with regard to some taxes, certain advantages which will, in a rough kind of way, provide a compensation for disadvantages which the same class may suffer from inequalities of taxation."

There was no doubt that the class of property which was called "real" property did, with regard to the Death Duties, obtain certain advantages; and was it not the case that in a rough kind of way compensation was rendered by disadvantages which attached to the same class of property in respect of Local Rates, in respect of the incidence of Income Tax, which had already been alluded to; and, further, in respect of the imposition of the Land Tax? Mr. Fawcett evidently was so strongly possessed of the view that there must be inequalities, and that they could not put them all to rights by levelling up on any one tax, that having passed from the question in the paragraph alluded to, 10 or 12 pages further on he was found returning to the same subject—

> "Equality of taxation can be best secured not by botching and patching each single tax, but by contemplating the Revenue as a whole. If it is found that any tax pressed unequally on any particular class, it is almost invariably better not to attempt to adjust the tax by any complicated arrangements. The inequality of taxation should be remedied by placing the particular class whom it prejudicially affects in a relatively advantageous position with regard to some other tax."

Here was the same principle laid down in words almost similar to those already quoted, and another dozen pages later on the writer was seen repeating the same view in these words—

> "Equality of taxation can be most effectively secured not by framing any one tax in obedience to Adam Smith's first rule, but by applying a general process of compensation to the whole revenue."

Now, the question was, not whether there was any inequality in the incidence of the Death Duties on real property as compared with personalty; but the question was, taking the Revenue as a whole, was there a general process of compensation which, admitting inequality here, made up for it by imposing a disadvantage on real property in another direction? What was the case with regard to this? He had observed just now, when the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) was addressing the House, that some observations the right hon. Gentleman made with respect to the incidence of the Land Tax were received with somewhat contemptuous smiling and sneers by certain right hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House. Now, what was the case as to this Land Tax? Here, fortunately, they need not be in any difficulty, for they had the most accurate information that it was possible for them to be provided with. He held in his hand the 29th Report of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Inland Revenue for the year 1886, and he would remind the House that this Report followed in natural sequence after the 28th, which was one of unusual value. The 28th Report was a most able public document, giving a short and concise history of the work of the Inland Revenue Department for many years past; and it was a document which, by the way, he should like to see imitated in another Department of the State (the Customs) in which some hopes had been held out to them that a similar Return would be furnished; but as yet it had not made its appearance. In the 28th Report attention was called to the original position of the Land Tax and its history. That remarkable reference to the Land Tax in the 28th Report appeared to have been made the subject of some discussion. For they found, in the 29th Report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, from which he was about to quote, that it was mentioned in the following terms. They said—

> "As the sketch of the history of the Land Tax given in our 28th Report has occasioned some criticism and inquiries, we take the present opportunity of supplementing it with the following statement."

Now, that statement was of considerable length, and he would not refer to it all; but it was open to hon. Members to consult for themselves. He would, shortly, allude to a few of the paragraphs to be found in the Report. It said—

> "The history of the existing Land Tax may be said to date from 1692. . . . . The tax was levied on all personal property, all offices (except naval and military offices), and all real estate. . . . . For a hundred years the Land Tax was voted annually according to the system about to be described. . . . . In 1798 Mr. Pitt abolished the practice of fixing the amount of tax annually, and put it on a permanent

> footing as a charge of £1,989,673 on England and Wales, and of £47,954 on Scotland, the rate on personal property and offices being left, as it stood, at 4*s.* in the £."

Here, then, they saw that, for a century, the Land Tax was levied on personal property. Now let them go to the next paragraph—

> "In the meantime, however, personal properties and salaries had almost entirely slipped out of assessment, probably owing to the fact that it was impossible to localize them, and the burden of the tax had fallen almost exclusively on real estate, the whole sum contributed by personalty and offices in 1798 being only £150,000. Personal property, however, was only legally relieved from the tax in 1833. . . . . It will be clear from the foregoing remarks that the Land Tax was originally nothing else than a Property and Income Tax locally charged; but it can only now be described as an anomalous relic of past times."

He should like right hon. Gentlemen who treated in a contemptuous manner the suggestion that the Land Tax was a special burden on real property to say what better proof they could have than this. Here was a tax imposed on all property, personal and real, and yet, as the Report said—"Personal properties and salaries had almost entirely slipped out of assessment." The only Land Tax levied was that attached to realty, and this was a case they could point to as being one in regard to which, a burden having been originally imposed on all property, one large class of property had slipped out of assessment; therefore, when they came to consider the relative burdens on real and personal taxation, here was clearly an important factor which they must bear in mind. If they were setting up equality all round, the Land Tax should be altogether abolished. He observed that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had laid great stress upon the necessity of settling this question once for all. His words were that this adjustment was not to be repeated from year to year, not even from five years to five years; but when they had fixed it once they ought to have done with it, and done with it for ever. Now, he (Sir Richard Paget) should like to say a word upon that. If the great increase in the value of the two classes of property, real and personal, were going on *pari passu*, if the increase from year to year was identical and equal, then there would be nothing in the world to contend against the argument of the right hon. Gentleman. But what was the fact? Why, the slightest glance at any figures accessible would show that real property, taken as a whole, including land and houses, was a class of property which was making very slow progress from year to year, while the class of property which was called personal property was increasing at an infinitely more rapid rate; and if they sought to find out what was the effect being produced on different classes of real property by the existing condition of things they would find out that one considerable part of such property—namely, land—was decreasing in value from year to year, and that it was due alone to the number of new houses built that real property exhibited, as a whole, any increase at all. Statistics showed—if he recollected right—a decrease of no less than £5,000,000 of annual value of land within the last few years; but it was acknowledged by all who took the trouble to study the figures that there were no official figures in existence which showed in any degree the amount of the depreciation in the value of land. The reason was obvious. There were many cases in which the owners of property maintained certain rents on paper, but in which, year by year, abatements were made of from 10 to 20 per cent, which abatements found no place in the Returns, because the assessment, which was the sum taken as the value for the purpose of Income Tax, remained unchanged. There was, he repeated, a decrease of annual value of land to the extent of £5,000,000 shown in connection with the Income Tax between the year 1881 and 1886; but in the calculations no note whatever was taken of the temporary abatements which were made from year to year, and there were no Returns which really represented the amount of depreciated value of that class of real property. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had largely quoted from the Return which he (Sir Richard Paget) had had the honour to move for in the year 1885. That Return was called Sir Henry Holland's Return, and it also bore his (Sir Richard Paget's) name. It was with great interest that he had watched the right hon. Gentleman dealing with the figures in this Return to-night. He could not pretend, for a moment, to imitate the right hon. Gentleman in the masterly way in which he had dealt with these figures, handing over huge totals from one side to the other, taking figures on one side as the basis of calculation and dashing them over to the other side, changing them about with such rapidity of motion that he (Sir Richard Paget) could not attempt to follow him. But of this Return, so far as to its accuracy with regard to its estimate of capital value of real and personal property, he was bound to say that through all the observations he had heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, the right hon. Gentleman had not expressed any adverse criticism, unless it were in regard to the valuation of messuages and tenements which he held were valued too low, at only 16 years' purchase. The Return had been accepted by the right hon. Gentleman as the basis of the great speech he had delivered this evening. Now, this Return was one partly of accurate figures and partly of estimate. He (Sir Richard Paget) desired to go into this Return, but he wished to say beforehand that, though it was put forward with all the authority of the Treasury, it was not put forward by them as an absolutely correct account. It was, he repeated, a matter of estimate, and as an estimate it might be open to criticism; but here it remained as the only estimate of the kind made by the best and most qualified officials, and for what it was worth he took it that it might be said that it at present held the field. There was nothing equal to it, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had largely quoted from it, and, as he (Sir Richard Paget) had said, had used it as the basis of most of his calculations. But the right hon. Gentleman had not followed the Return throughout. There was one remark which he (Sir Richard Paget) should like to make with regard to the Return before he addressed himself to the point he wished to make. He would call attention to the fact that real property and personal property, whatever their present value might be, were altering in their relative rates of progress, and that personal property was increasing in value very rapidly, whilst real property, as a whole, was increasing very slowly, and that that portion of real property represented by land was not increasing at all in value, but was rapidly and seriously diminishing in value. Now, for purposes of argument, he had made a calculation which took this Return forward from the year 1883-4 to the year 1886-7; and, applying the figures the right hon. Gentleman had given them to-night to the year 1886-7, he found this. Looking at the estimate of the gross capital value of real property, he found that all real property had increased in value in the short space of three years by £30,000,000. Turning to personal property, to ascertain what had been the relative increase of that description of property, he found that, so far from its having been £30,000,000, it was £170,000,000. Here they had clearly, in the course of three years, an increase of £170,000,000 personalty, as against £30,000,000 in the case of realty. Now, after that, was it possible to contend that they could settle and adjust this taxation once for all, and have done with it? He contended that it was impossible. He contended that if they arrived at the most careful adjustment that the most skilled and accomplished financier could accomplish, they would, at the end of three years, have the balance entirely disturbed again. Hence, if the rates of progress shown in the official Returns still continued—that was to say, if personalty rolled up and increased in volume with great rapidity, whilst real property hardly increased in value at all—whatever adjustment took place, one would always keep on developing at a larger ratio than the other, and would always keep ahead of the other. However often they brought them back to the same starting point, they would always find the same thing happening in a short time; and his contention was, without going into figures to prove it, that, however accurately and however free from political bias they might arrange and adjust taxation on the two great classes of property, real and personal, that as they were increasing at different rates, so fresh re-adjustments would be necessary from time to time. He wished to emphasize this point, as it had appeared to him that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had treated it on a different footing, crying aloud—"Let a re-adjustment be effected now once for all; let us put an end to the matter." Now, in reference to the figures which were quoted by the right hon. Gentleman, it seemed that the right hon. Gentleman had hardly completed his speech before he found it necessary to get up again and make, at any rate, one substantial correction. They were first told that, according to an approved method of calculation, the burden on personalty in respect of the Death Duties was at the rate of 3⅝, whilst that on realty was only 1⅕; but the figures, as amended, put the matter differently, as personalty was at the rate of 3½, whilst realty remained at 1⅕. He (Sir Richard Paget) mentioned this matter to show that though without doubt every figure had been got up with considerable care, yet, before the right hon. Gentleman had delivered his speech five minutes, it was necessary for him to get up and make an alteration of no less than £8,000,000 sterling, by which the figure £138,000,000 had to become £146,000,000. That would give them reason to exercise some care before accepting the whole of these figures as conclusive. Another thing occurred to him. Supposing, for the sake of argument, the amended figures exhibited correctly the incidence of the Death Duties on the two great classes of property, and supposing it was 3½ in the one case and 1⅕ in the other. He wished to draw attention to the other side of the case, and see how that would stand if the Income Tax were levied with absolute equality on real property and on personalty. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian admitted that, owing to the fact that Income Tax on land and houses was levied on a gross rental, whilst on all other property it was levied on a net receipt, there was 16 per cent difference in favour of personalty; in other words, that an Income Tax of 7*d.* did, in fact, exact from "real property" not 7*d.* but 9*d.* in the pound. If they came to sum the figures up, they would find that the difference as against realty was a large amount; and he contended that when they were attempting to equalize the burden of taxation, it was unjust and unfair to take the Death Duties alone, and take no account of Income Tax. It required no great calculation to see that 16 per cent was derived from realty to the advantage of personalty, or was suffered by realty in comparison with personalty, and he therefore held that justice demanded that this important item should be included in the calculation. He had already given some reasons why the incidence of the Land Tax ought fairly to be taken into consideration as well; but if they took first the question of re-adjustment of the Income Tax, and then the question of the Land Tax, and then added the question of the incidence of Local Taxes, he felt satisfied that when the figures were put together, so far from there being any balance whatever to show on the side of personalty, the balance would be entirely turned the other way, and they would find that the aggregate disadvantage suffered by real property more than counterbalanced any advantages real property would derive in the matter of these Death Duties. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had pointed, apparently with great pleasure and satisfaction, to the increase of local taxation in the Metropolis and large towns. He (Sir Richard Paget) confessed that he was unable to enjoy or share the satisfaction which the right hon. Gentleman seemed to feel. The right hon. Gentleman had talked of "magnificent increment." That had reminded him (Sir Richard Paget) of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), whom he was glad to see in his place. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton was one of those statesmen who delighted in magnificent increments of local expenditure, and no doubt the borough which the right hon. Gentleman so honourably and worthily represented might be taken as a magnificent specimen of the increment of very unnecessary local expenditure. But the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian quoted figures as to the increment of local expenditure to them as an example, and said—"Go you and do likewise—spend your money in this off-hand way." If there was one thing they were proud of in the administration of Quarter Sessional areas more than another, it was that they had not given rein to magnificent notions, but had been economical, and had kept their expenditure within reasonable limits. Was this to be thrown in their teeth now, and because they did not exhibit those magnificent increments of local expenditure incurred by the

Metropolis and the large towns, were they to be deprived of the benefits of the urban districts? Some attempt was made in the Budget to restore the equilibrium which had long been admitted to be grievously out of joint; but he had very grave doubts whether the amounts which were to be given in relief of local taxation would have at all the effect of restoring that balance, and when they went beneath the surface of the total figures of £3,000,000 and saw how much of the relief would go to the land, and how much to houses, he very much doubted whether that class of property—namely, land—which he contended was most in want of it, would receive its fair share. Then he should like to call attention to this fact. They had heard a great deal about the advantages of the additional £3,000,000 which were to be given in aid of local taxation; but there were also many disadvantages to be considered. There would be large extra expenditure on the part of Local Authorities of which they had heard very little. There were the expenses of elections to be considered. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) had disposed of an answer to a Question on this subject in a very light-handed sort of way, stating that he thought the charge on this would be one-sixth of a penny in the pound. His (Sir Richard Paget's) impression was that, so far from the elections connected with all these County and District Councils being conducted for so small a sum as that, they would prove not to be one-sixth of a penny in the pound, but a vast increase upon that amount. And there was not only the expenditure of elections to be considered, but also the expenditure of registration in the case both of the new Local Authorities and also the Boards of Guardians. The expenditure of these two subjects was likely to prove very large, and to make a considerable hole in the amount to be made over to the Local Authorities. There would also be expenses in connection with the revising barrister, in connection with audits, in connection with clerks of assize, and in connection also with criminal prosecutions. There would furthermore be expenditure connected with the issue of licences, and then again expenses connected with the administration of Provisional Orders. With regard to licensing, the new authority was to take the place of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and might have to undertake prosecutions. Then it had been suggested that the increased sum of 20 per cent to be paid for licences should be ear-marked, and should be specially hypothecated to defray the expenses of compensation to publicans. In this case £300,000 would be withdrawn from the total of the £3,000,000 which was to go in aid of local taxation. There were also duties in connection with the payment of police pensions, in aid of which there was good reason to believe that contributions had already been promised by Her Majesty's Government, but the whole of which would now have to be paid by the County Councils; so that if they looked at all the services which the new authority were to perform, which were not now performed by the counties, and put the whole in round numbers, it would be seen that a large reduction would have to be made in the sum to be paid in aid of local taxation. He must apologize to the House for having kept it so long. He thanked hon. Members for having listened to the observations he had made. He thought the figures quoted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian would require very careful attention. He trusted that on a future occasion it might be possible to do something like justice to the vast number of figures which he dealt with. He had been unable, as he had said, to follow the right hon. Gentleman in those figures to-night, although he had had the advantage of holding in hand the Return from which they were taken; but the right hon. Gentleman had not allowed the figures to lie in their accustomed bed. He had broken them up, so to speak, and it was necessarily a difficulty for anyone, however familiar with figures, to follow the right hon. Gentleman. It would, he knew, be contended that the burdens of which they complained were merely the hereditary burdens which attached to land; but he would recommend those who put forward that contention to study for a few moments only the work by Mr. Dudley Baxter, who dealt with this contention in a simple but masterly and logical manner, tore it into shreds, leaving not a rag behind. The argument as to the hereditary burden on land was a fallacious one. They might just as well say that railway shares had an hereditary burden attached to them of paying this Passenger Duty, and had no right to be relieved of that tax, the result of the partial repeal of which, if he remembered rightly, was immediately to raise the value of all the Metropolitan Railway Stocks. In re-adjustment of taxation the question to be solved was—Had a sufficient case been made out for relief? Was this class of property unfairly taxed? It was not usual to consider—and they had no right to consider—whether this or that property would be increased or decreased in value by the relief given. The proper thing to consider was what was just, and then they could not do wrong. They should stick to the principle laid down by Adam Smith, as interpreted by Mr. Fawcett—namely, that the aggregate amount which each individual should pay in taxes ought to be in proportion to his ability to contribute to the Revenues of the State. That was the principle he gave his adhesion to—equal justice to all. But he maintained that they gave but the scantiest justice if they withdrew important matters from consideration, and said that the Death Duties alone were to be looked at. A dead set was made upon those duties, and they were held up to obloquy—everyone interested in land or houses was held up to the people of the country as a monster of iniquity who was not charged the proper amount of taxation. It was said that they should leave all else alone, and once for all equalize the Death Duties; but his reply was—"Equalize the Death Duties if you like, but, if you do so, see that, when they are equalized, there is no other tax you can point to the incidence of which is unequal." If they got rid of the inequality of the Income Tax and the Land Tax and of Local Taxation, then, he said, by all means take the Death Duties and level them throughout.

Mr. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.) said, he would not have interfered in the debate, especially considering the high level at which it was started, had it not been that the Death Duties had been dealt with in Questions which he had the honour to put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer with reference to Ulster tenant right. He had practical experience in the North of Ireland, and by statistics which he had searched for he found that his experience was the practice of the entire Province of Ulster. Prior to the passing of the Act of 1870, the tenant's interest in Ulster was not recognized; after the passing of that Act it was realized and became an asset, and this extraordinary thing immediately occurred—that when a farmer died the tenant right of his farm, which had been thus realized by the Act of 1870, became necessarily part of the assets upon which the Death Duties were paid, and in that respect the Ulster farmer stood in a different position to the farmer in any other part of the Three Kingdoms. The Ulster farmer stood permanently the heaviest taxed of all the various persons who paid Death Duties, being even more heavily taxed than the owner of the rated personal property upon whose grievances the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was so eloquent that night. He found, from a Return which was not yet public, but of which he had had the privilege of getting a copy, that the grants of probate and administration made out in the district registers in Ulster from 1870 to 1875 had been doubled. He had no opportunity of knowing the extent of the grants in the Probate Court in Dublin, which also had jurisdiction in local matters; but, certainly, he was within the mark when he said that the number of yearly grants had more than doubled in consequence of the Act of 1870. It was upon that matter that he desired last year, and before this discussion arose, to call the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the injustice under which the Ulster tenants and Ulster land generally was labouring as compared with land elsewhere in the Three Kingdoms. If tenant right in Ulster was something which was exactly analogous to leasehold property in England—that was to say, if it were not held at a rack-rent; and if it were something in repect of which credit would be given to the tenant; if it were a property that was tangible, that was always valuable; if it were an asset, and not a mere possibility of an asset; he could perfectly understand that his grievance would rise no higher than the grievance of any other possessor of rated personal property. But the Ulster tenant right never rose any higher than this—that it was the equivalent, he might say the exponent or the expression in money of the extent to which land hunger had risen in any particular locality; for a tenant right was not a thing which was saleable as any other property was saleable, either personal or real. There was no market for it outside the locality in which the land was situated, and it had no existence whatever unless at the particular time it came into the market, and for some time previously there had been no such sale. He understood that all property which was liable to Death Duty was property which, if sold at any moment and sold altogether, would be saleable property and would realize the amount at which it was assessed to duty; but that was not so in regard to Ulster tenant right. Ulster tenant right vanished entirely if there were three or four farms in a district for sale; it was not like the sale of chattel property or real property; it was a mere good-will, and a good-will which had no possibility of finding purchasers outside its own immediate locality. It was entirely different from any other property in land, and entirely existed in, as he believed, the land hunger of a particular district. What he wished particularly to call attention to was that the property was co-existent with a rack-rent which could be imposed under a system of valuation by which the land in Ulster was valued at 25 per cent above the land in the rest of Ireland. These matters stood until the Land Act was passed. If, when the Land Act was passed, there had been a statement that, in fixing the fair rent of tenants, the owners of tenant right in Ulster should have had credit given to them, their grievances would have been exactly the same as those of leaseholders. But no such direction was given, and no such direction existed; the Ulster tenant farmer got no credit for his property, not a single penny was taken off the full letting value of the property, because he had Ulster tenant right. If he could prove actual matters in existence, and if those matters added to the letting value, he got credit for them; but so far as a property he purchased and for which he was assessed, and as to the letting value of which he had to swear, he got no credit; therefore he stood in a far worse position than that of a leaseholder. So the thing which distinguished the Ulster farmer, the thing which distinguished that rated personal property from any other referred to in the speeches that night was this—that while the Ulster tenant farmer was under the same charge for local rates, while he was paying the Probate Duty, he remained in the full letting value of his farm. While as much was paid in Death Duties in respect to a farm in Ulster as was paid in England, Scotland and Wales, the tenant paid for his tenant right, assuming the figures of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) to be correct, six times as much in the way of duty on personal property as a leaseholder would pay in this country. He called the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the matter last year in order that something might be done in relief of Ulster land, and he was met by the Chancellor of the Exchequer with the statement that the leaseholders in England were in as bad a position as the Ulster tenants. Now, let them examine what a farm in England, Scotland, or the South of Ireland paid in the way of Death Duties. A farmer was assumed to take the land on a rack-rent, and the Death Duties paid out on a farm similar in value in the Three Kingdoms were 1½ or 1 per cent, as the case might be, which were levied on the landlord. At the same time, a farm of the same size in Ulster paid as much as 8 or 9 per cent, and such a state of things had been going on without remedy, or without the slightest attention ever having been given to it, for as many years now as the Ulster tenant right had been realized. Why he desired to interfere in the debate was, if possible, to show that there was one species of rated personal property to which the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had not been called, and that there was one place in which the whole profit was subject to Death Duties six times as much as in any other part of the Three Kingdoms. There had now been established by law in Ireland the system of dual ownership, and therefore it was no longer the owner who paid the local rates, but the occupier; it was out of the produce of the farm that all increase of the rates must be paid, assuming that, at the fixing of the fair rent, the then existing taxation was taken into account. It was perfectly clear that in any system of dual ownership the landlord became the rent-charger, and stood in the same position as the owner of a head-rent in a town, and therefore they would have the full burden of taxation borne by the occupier. He thought it was right that he should show in what way he made it out that there was at least six times as much Death Duty paid on an Ulster farm as was paid in any other place. He made it out in this way. They were not allowed in Ulster to come in under the Succession Duty; it was the Probate Duty they had to pay. Moreover, they could not come in upon the life interest, they must come in upon the full selling value, which in many cases even exceeded the full fee simple value of the landlord's interest. While they were paying Probate Duty upon the full value of the landlord's interest, and while the landlord was paying his full proportion to Succession Duty, they in Ulster were paying—and he thought it was a fair thing to say—as much more for their land in Death Duty as the Succession Duty amounted to. He hoped that in the Bill they were now discussing something would be done to prevent that injustice continuing which had continued since 1870. He did not wish to detain the House longer, except to say that their grievance was aggravated by the present political situation. In England the leaseholder hereafter would be represented in the County Council, and he would be able to look after the local rates; but in Ireland it was proposed that they should go on paying until they had arrived at an altered state of mind. It appeared that they would have to continue to be represented, as at present, by persons who were as hard task masters as anyone could imagine. The Grand Juries of Ireland were completely made up of landlords, and they were the persons who were to look after the rates. If a leaseholder in England had a grievance, he would be represented in the County Council; but they in Ireland were handed over, tied and gagged, to the right hon. Gentleman's (Mr. Balfour's) nominees. Money was to be taken out of both their pockets, and, at the same time, they were to be tied and gagged, and utterly unable to say a word on the matter of local taxation.

Mr. ELTON (Somerset, Wellington) said, he only desired to interpose in the debate with one or two remarks. He came into the House as the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Haddington (Mr. Haldane) was speaking, and when he sat down he (Mr. Elton) rose to reply to him, but was unable to catch the Speaker's eye. The hon. and learned Gentleman made a speech which appeared to be of a very powerful kind, because it was based on an important decision. One part appeared to be based on a truism. The part of it which rested on the fact that personal property and real property paid on a different basis he (Mr. Elton) passed by, because he only wanted to refer to the case which showed, if it was decided, as the hon. and learned Gentleman said it was, that the most extraordinary and anomalous state of things existed greatly in favour of the landlords. The hon. and learned Gentleman made a very good case, as hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite sometimes did, supposing their premises to be correct. The hon. and learned Gentleman referred to the Toxteth Park case, in which a well-known decision had been given. The hon. and learned Gentleman did them the pleasure to read to them part of the judgment of the inferior Court; he did not, however, quote the suggestion of the House of Lords, which made a very material alteration in that decision. Anyone who took up Mr. Hanson's book on *Succession Duty* would see that the Toxteth Park case had exactly the opposite bearing to that which the hon. and learned Gentleman made out. In 1862, seven years after it had been found that the land had no value, the Court of Exchequer rejected the claim for Succession Duty, and held that no duty was payable. So far, the hon. and learned Gentleman was quite right. Mr. Hanson, commenting upon the decision of the House of Lords, said it was to be observed that the decision in the case proceeded on the express admission in the case that the land in question was not capable of yielding income, fluctuating or otherwise, and that Lord Chelmsford intimated that, but for that admission, it would probably be found that the land was not altogether valueless. Duty had since been paid in respect to other property of a similar description, so that the very great and anomalous privilege to the landowners disappeared into thin air on the authority of the House of Lords.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, he thought that hon. Members who read the Resolution which was moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), and who heard his speech in support of it, would have expected a very different issue to be presented from that which was actually laid before the House. When they came to read the Resolution, they found that the right hon. Gentleman proposed—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, after Parliament shall have made the appropriations it may deem just in relief of local rates"—

the right hon. Gentleman was evidently referring to the Budget now before the House, and to the Local Government Bill also before the House, which had been introduced by the President of the Local Government Board—

> "the duties accruing upon deaths should be so fixed as to equalize the charge upon real and personal property respectively."

Now, that pointed not to the equalization of one particular Death Duty, the Succession Duty upon real and personal property, but to the equalization of all the Death Duties. One might naturally have expected the right hon. Gentleman would have proposed that the Probate Duty should have been charged in the event of death upon the value of real property as well as upon the value of personal property. But, instead of that, the whole thing aimed at in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was simply that the Succession Duty should be charged when a man succeeded to the fee simple of real property upon the actual capitalized value of the whole property, and not upon his life interest in it. The total amount per annum involved, taking the right hon. Gentleman's figures as correct, was about £280,000 a-year, so that all the magnificent peroration they listened to with wonder and admiration, if not exactly with delight, really amounted to a matter of £280,000 in each year of our Lord. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] He maintained that the whole point in issue was that they were to charge percentage of duty upon the value in perpetuity and not on the value of the life interest. He should be glad to be set right if he was wrong in the calculation he had made; he certainly listened very attentively to the right hon. Gentleman, who said nothing about the Probate Duty, but only spoke of the Succession Duty. All the wickedness now charged against the Chancellor of the Exchequer lay in the fact that he proposed to increase the Succession Duty by 50 per cent, whereas, in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), it ought to be increased cent per cent. That was not the first time the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had undertaken to settle the question; it was not the first time he had even proposed to settle it permanently, and to make an end of it. The right hon. Gentleman felt very grievously the anomalies of the Death Duties upon real and personal property in the year 1853, and he brought these anomalies before the House, and said then he thought it proper and right to settle the matter at once, to remove the anomalies, and to make a permanent settlement of the matter. What did he do then? He went into the whole question of the Death Duties levied on the different kinds of property, and he pointed out, as he had done that night, that there were three kinds of property—there was the ordinary real property, the ordinary personal property, and that which he had described as visible personalty, such as leaseholds. He found that leasehold property then was subjected both to Probate and to Legacy Duty; he thought it was a hardship upon leasehold property that it should be subjected to both these duties; and he found that real property was subject neither to Probate nor to Legacy Duty. In order to remove this anomaly, and in order to settle the question at once and permanently, what did he do? The right hon. Gentleman was the person to propose, in 1853, that the Succession Duty should be paid, not upon the capitalized value, but upon the value of the life interest. He (Mr. Gedge) intended to repeat the argument which the right hon. Gentleman used in 1853, to show that there would be the greatest injustice and the greatest cruelty if real property were taxed upon the capitalized value, and still more if the duty were to be paid all at once. He recommended any hon. Gentleman who heard the right hon. Gentleman's speech to-night, or anyone who might read the report of the speech to-morrow, and felt disposed to be led away by his eloquence, to turn to *Hansard* of 1853, or to the newspapers of that date, and read the right hon. Gentleman's speech in introducing the Succession Duty Act. There they would find the matter carefully worked out in a temperate way, in a far more temperate manner than the right hon. Gentleman had adopted that night—without any attempt to trot out the masses against the classes or the classes against the masses; they would find that the right hon. Gentleman at that time treated the matter from a purely fiscal point of view, avoiding all sentimental considerations, and showing in the most admirable way, and with that eloquence and power of reasoning for which he was so distinguished, the injustice and cruelty of the course which he had been recommending to the House that night. He (Mr. Gedge) did not say that with the object of pointing out the inconsistency of the right hon. Gentleman, but to show that in a matter of that kind, when a man 45 years of age, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, introduced a new scheme of taxation, and did that in the way the right hon. Gentleman did, they might fairly look back upon the arguments the right hon. Gentleman used, and see that those arguments were not mere opinions, but were founded upon matters of fact; and that if the right hon. Gentleman showed then that a particular course of action was unjust and cruel and mischievous, they might fairly produce that speech when he took the opposite view and advocated the course he formerly denounced. It was conclusively shown by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) to-night that though considerable relief in rates would be given, they still left real property subject to heavy burden. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian argued, in 1853, that the fairest mode would be to tax realty on the life interest only, and he gave a conclusive proof of the reality of the sentiments he uttered in that he took a large part of realty, which were called leaseholds, out of the category of the Legacy Duty and put them in the category of the Succession Duty, and made the duty even on the leaseholds payable upon the life interest only. The Succession Duty Act was passed. No doubt, it did not meet with the success the right hon. Gentleman expected. The right hon. Gentleman said that by 1856-7 the tax would produce £2,000,000 a-year, and would continue to produce a great deal more year after year, whereas it had rarely yielded half that amount. Nevertheless, the principle had been introduced; it was right and just; and he did not think it lay in the right hon. Gentleman's mouth to say that because they were taking one step towards the equalization of the duties they were bound to make another final settlement—to go the whole hog, and put Probate Duty on real property. Nor was it in 1853 alone that the right hon. Gentleman touched this question. He (Mr. Gedge) had a vivid recollection that in 1880 the late Sir Stafford Northcote dealt with the Probate Duty, and made the duty on the estates of men dying testate or intestate identical. He remembered how very angry, not to say savage, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was with Sir Stafford Northcote, because, having once touched the Probate Duties, he did not redress all the grievances connected with them. He remembered that one of the things the right hon. Gentleman was particularly eloquent about was that Sir Stafford Northcote still left the Succession Duty payable upon a different footing to the Legacy Duty; the Succession Duty being payable upon the life interest, and the Legacy Duty being payable on perpetuity. Speech after speech was made at railway stations during the right hon. Gentleman's famous journey Northwards, showing the iniquity of a farmer having to pay Probate Duty on his cattle and crops, while no Probate Duty was paid on the landlord's interest. How was it that a year or two later, when the right hon. Gentleman, being in command of a majority of 100 or more, again touched the Probate and Legacy Duties, he did not make the settlement he now suggested? What did he do then? Did he put the Probate Duty on land and realty? No; he did nothing of the kind. Did he make the Succession Duty payable on the capitalized value, instead of the life interest? No. All he did was to increase the Probate Duty from an average of 2 per cent to 3 per cent, and to take the extra 1 per cent out of the pockets of widows; and he increased by that 1 per cent the duties payable in the case of people who were in a further degree of relationship to the testator than lineal descendants. If it was such an iniquitous thing that the present Government did not set everything right which the right hon. Gentleman thought wrong, why was it not equally iniquitous in 1881 or 1882, when the right hon. Gentleman was in Office? The words of the right hon. Gentleman's Resolution were—"Equalize the charge upon real and personal property." He supposed the right hon. Gentleman intended by the word "charge" the duties accruing upon deaths. He (Mr. Gedge) would be perfectly willing to vote for any Resolution providing for the equalization of all the charges on real and personal property. It was not real property which would suffer from that; but the right hon. Gentleman's Resolution only referred to the equalization of one particular charge, and that was a very different thing. During the dinner hour, while he was absent, possibly some hon. Member might have referred to this question; but he (Mr. Gedge) did not hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, or the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), say a word upon the other charges, especially the charges with regard to the transfer to which the two properties were respectively liable. Let him put a case. Property was transferred from one owner to another during a man's lifetime by sale or otherwise, and at death in accordance with a will. Why should they be asked to make the duties payable to the State in the second case equal unless those paid in the first case were also made equal? There was the greatest possible difference between the two cases. Of course, he was aware that some personal property paid the same transfer tax that real property did—shares in Railway Companies, for instance. But, as they were drawing a distinction between real and personal property, let them consider what an enormous amount of personal property there was which was transferred from day to day without any tax whatever being paid to the State. Take, for example, the case of Consols. The National Debt, he was aware, was made transferable free of duty, in order that the State might borrow on the cheapest possible terms, and there was very good reason for that. But the fact that the State had borrowed the money had not prevented Probate Duty on that Stock being increased, had not prevented an increase of the Legacy Duty and the Succession Duty on that Stock. Nevertheless, there had never been Transfer Duty paid on it, and that was a very large and enormous advantage enjoyed by the holders of that kind of personal property. Take the case of valuable pictures and jewellery and plate. Such property passed freely from hand to hand by delivery, and the State gained nothing by the transaction. Take the case of two brothers, living side by side in two houses, built upon two pieces of land. When each bought his land he had to pay ½ per cent duty on the consideration money. Each built his house. One of them was blessed with a large family, and found it necessary to buy some land on which to enlarge his house. What was the result? He had to pay duty on the consideration money when he purchased the additional land. As soon as he had enlarged his house in order to accommodate his increased family, the rate collector visited him and demanded additional rates. Then the Queen's Tax collector turned up and demanded an increased House Duty and Property Tax. All these things were visited upon the man because he chose to increase the accommodation for his family. His brother, who perhaps was childless, had a taste for valuable pictures, and, instead of giving £2,000 for an adjacent piece of land, gave Sir John Millais £2,000 for a picture, or bought his wife valuable jewellery. There was no duty payable to the State on the purchase. There was no extra rate or House Duty paid, and no additional Property Tax upon his increased possessions. The man was allowed to escape, because he chose to invest his money in the way described. It was only when death came that the State came in and equalized matters, and the State then, no doubt, charged Probate Duty upon the pictures and jewellery. But even then the inequality did not cease. It was true that in the case of death Probate and Legacy Duty would be payable on pictures and jewellery; but these were frequently undervalued by ignorant brokers—some man would be called in to value who did not know a Raphael from a Frith; and the result had been that valuable property to the extent of many thousands of pounds was valued for Probate and Legacy Duty at a very small sum, whereas with regard to land every figure and detail was gone through at Somerset House, and the owner could not escape the payment of a single penny. Then it was the commonest possible transaction at the present day to settle money upon the parents for life, and, after their decease, upon the children during their lives. Before the time the parents were dead new trustees were wanted; the sons generally acted as trustees, and the children quietly divided the property between them, and no Succession Duty was paid. And he would suggest to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that a copy of all settlements should be sent to the Inland Revenue Office as a means of preventing this evasion. But in the case of land the rights of the Crown never lapsed, and there was no possible way of evading the duty. If, then, the duty on personal property could be evaded, while that on real property could not be evaded, he said that this was a reason why they should not put so high a tax upon real as upon personal property. Again, it was enacted by the Parliament of 1880 that if anyone made a gift and lived for three months afterwards, that gift escaped all taxation. He said they ought as honest men and business men to take all these things into consideration when legislating with a view to taxation, and try to make it equal upon both species of property. The right hon. Gentleman had gone into elaborate figures to show that the Succession Duty on realty bore nothing like the proportion to that on personalty which it ought to bear; but he seemed to have left out of consideration the fact that real property went, for the most part, to near relations. They did not find men leaving land to strangers. If a man left anything to a stranger it was generally a legacy of money, and this applied also to the case of distant relations and to charities. It was to these that his personal property was given, and the result was that a smaller amount of taxation was got from real property than from personal property. The strangers who got personal property paid a higher rate of duty than those who inherited real property; and, therefore, he said it was not fair to contend that realty did not pay in proportion to personalty. The right hon. Gentleman, however, had omitted to take this into account in dealing with the question. The House had been told by the right hon. Gentleman that it was a very great hardship that ground rents paid no rates or taxes; but he (Mr. Gedge) pointed out that leaseholds were, in point of fact, real property, a portion carved out of the fee; and it was, therefore, incorrect to say that a great hardship was done by the ground rents paying no taxes. He would put a case. Suppose that a landowner had a piece of land worth £1,000, that a builder came to him and agreed that this was a fair value; if that money were put in the Three per Cents, the annual income would be entirely free from all rates. But if the builder said that he could not pay £1,000, but would give a rental of £30 a-year, the landlord would reply that he would accept the money provided he got that income net; that the rates would be increased by a house being built upon the land, and that whatever those rates were the builder must pay them. Suppose, then, that the landlord let the land for £30, and the builder got a lease for 999 years, what happened? If there were no rates and taxes it was evident that the landowner would get £50 instead of £30. Therefore, the rates and taxes did fall upon real property, and why, then, should the House interfere with the existing arrangements? It seemed to him that in dealing with the Death Duties they must not take them into account only and nothing else, but they must take into account all the charges upon real property. It was a sound maxim of taxation that taxes should be so levied that the greatest possible part of what was taken out of the pockets of the taxpayer should go into the national coffers. But under the existing law of real property, arising greatly from the nature of that property, the cost of paying duties upon it was much greater than in the case of personalty. He had pointed out that there was no mode of evading the taxes upon real property, and that they must be paid to the last farthing; he had pointed out that the taxes on personal property were evaded sometimes by law and sometimes by fraud, and he had also pointed out that when they selected a mode of enforcing taxation, they ought to manage it so that there should be as little expense as possible on the taxpayer. The cost to which the taxpayer was put in paying these taxes was very large in proportion to the amount of the tax which he paid. The owner must either sell his land or he must encumber it, and, as the right hon. Gentleman said in 1853, to force him to sell his estate in order to pay the duty was a cruel injustice. For these reasons, he thought the House ought to be well content with the increase in the Succession Duty made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that they ought to reject by a large majority the unjust and unequal proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, that the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) charged his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) with attempting to upset the arrangement of 1853. But the right hon. Gentleman forgot that in 1885 his right hon. Friend proposed to equalize the Succession Duties in a manner which would remove all unfairness. The House should also recollect that in 1853, when his right hon. Friend proposed to put the Succession Duty upon realty he estimated that its amount would be no less than £2,000,000; but, notwithstanding the fact that realty had increased enormously in value since then, the Succession Duty had never produced more than £800,000, and thus the equality which his right hon. Friend desired to produce had not been created. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade appeared to base the main portion of his argument upon the supposition that realty, on which Succession Duty fell, was landed property in the ordinary sense of the term—namely, landed property subject to agricultural rates. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that there were some exceptions to this. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) would make this admission to the right hon. Gentleman. He thought that agricultural land at this time was entitled to great consideration, and if the Succession Duty fell only on agricultural land he would not press for an equalization of the duties at the present moment. But his contention was that a comparatively small portion of the Succession Duty fell upon agricultural land. He thought that not more than one-fourth of the Succession Duties fell upon land of that description. It was far from easy to understand the complications and difficulties of this question and the real effect of the incidence of the Succession Duty by listening to abstract arguments and general statements. He believed that his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian was under the mark when he stated that the incidence of the Succession Duty on real property was one-sixth only of the incidence of the duty on personalty, and that after the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) it would be under one-third. He could illustrate this by one or two examples of what actually occurred, with the view of showing what the actual incidence was at the present moment. The following was a case which had been mentioned to him by a solicitor, and which occurred only a few weeks ago. A gentleman recently died, leaving his property equally between his two daughters. To one of them he left a freehold house of the value of £8,000, and to the other personalty to the same amount. The first daughter paid Succession Duty, which was estimated at the Inland Revenue Office at £33 12*s*., while in the case of the other daughter, who had the personalty, the Probate and Legacy duties amounted to £240, a difference of nearly eight to one. There was another very interesting case which occurred six or seven years ago. One of the great London landowners died. He possessed enormous ground rent property, and it was generally estimated that the annual income of that property was £90,000. He left it in equal shares to three of his sisters, each of whom was above 70 years of age. The leases of that property were rather short, and it was therefore generally estimated that the property was valued at £6,000,000, although the actual rental at the moment was only about £90,000 a-year. Well, he made inquiries as to what would be paid under the Succession Duty. Having regard to the advanced age of the sisters the amount they paid between them was probably not more than £15,000. If, however, personalty of the value of £6,000,000 had been bequeathed, the total amount of the duty payable would have been £360,000. No one could say that the London ground landlords were entitled to any favour from the State in matters of this kind. He would mention one other case. The Metropolitan Board of Works desired to purchase 260 acres of land at Hackney, valued at £200,000. At present it belonged to a very old gentleman, who would probably leave it to his son. If the negotiation should fall through and the son should succeed to the property in its present condition, he would have to pay Succession Duty to the amount of £72, based on the actual rental of the property as it now is, while if the sale to the Metropolitan Board should be carried out, there would be payable on the death of the owner in question no less than £6,000 in the shape of Probate Duty. It appeared to him that these inequalities and injustices could not be for a moment defended. The right hon Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had never yet stated the total amount which he anticipated he would derive from his proposed increase in the Succession Duty. As far as he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) could make out, it would ultimately be £348,000. If the Government were prepared to equalize the Succession Duties in the sense indicated by his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian, they would have a sum sufficient to dispense with the Horse Tax, the Wheel Tax, the Wine Duty, and the other unpopular taxes which they proposed to levy. He could not but think that the Government would do well to consider whether it would not be better, even now, to follow the course indicated by the Amendment. The case mentioned by the hon. Member for North Donegal (Mr. O'Doherty) was a good illustration to the unequal incidence of these Death Duties. It appeared that the tenant right of the farmer was liable both to Probate and to Succession Duty, whereas the landlord paid Succession Duty only. If it was intended to make a final adjustment of local and Imperial taxation, he hoped that this and other inequalities would be rectified.

Mr. SLAGG (Burnley) said, he wished to refer to one special point which had been raised by the speech of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). The right hon. Baronet appeared to lay very great stress upon the sufferings which agriculture had endured of late years, and upon those sufferings he had based a special claim to the tender regard of the taxpayers for that great industry. But he (Mr. Slagg) wished to point out that agriculture had not alone been suffering of late years; on the contrary, it would be possible to show that of all industries the agricultural had really come best off, and that the depreciation which had taken place in the property of the landed classes and their profits was inconsiderable when placed in comparison with the enormous depreciation which had of late years befallen other industrial interests. He had no feeling of antipathy to the landed class; on the contrary, he quite admitted the claim which the right hon. Baronet had set up with regard to country gentlemen—namely, that they had discharged their duties exceedingly well, and that they were entitled to consideration at the hands of the community. But he said that those who were engaged in commerce, and who had so much contributed to improve the value of land, were entitled to receive equal consideration, although, in consequence of their modesty and reticence, they were likely to be overlooked. When there was agricultural suffering the cry ran through the whole land; they never heard the end of it in that House; they were told in every phase of public affairs how much depended upon that industry, and how great was the consideration that should be accorded to it; but those who were engaged in commerce and industry bore their sufferings quietly, and had to wait patiently in the hope that they would come to an end. The House might remember that, although agriculture had suffered in recent years so far as the value of the land was concerned and the price of agricultural commodities, yet still it had always gained and continued to gain through the increase and influence of other industries. It must be perfectly well known to hon. Members that in many districts where large industries had been planted, the landlords had reaped enormous harvests from the advanced value of their land, owing to the populations which had thereby been attracted. He should give one or two statistics in relation to the industry with which he was most acquainted, namely, the cotton trade in Lancashire, and he would ask the hon. Gentleman who said that the agricultural interest should receive tender treatment, whether such treatment should not also be extended to the industry to which he alluded. He would first show how those who were engaged in the staple industries of the country had been affected in respect of their profits and turnover by the legislation initiated for the benefit of the working classes, and among other things, he ventured to say, that the profits of those industries had been adversely affected to the extent of 2 per cent by legislation limiting the hours of labour. Those hon. Members who were acquainted with the cotton industry must be aware that the value of mill property had enormously decreased. By way of illustration he pointed out that a mill at Chorley which cost £200,000 was now worth only £27,000; another at Oldham which cost £142,000 was now for disposal for £30,000; a third, also at Oldham, had fallen in value from £67,000 to £28,000; and a fourth, on which £100,000 had been expended, could now be had for £30,000. This had happened in an industry which was comparatively prosperous, as the cotton trade might be said to have been. He would ask hon. Gentlemen opposite to consult the share lists and see for themselves to what extent the capital invested in industrial enterprises had fallen of late years, and he believed they would find that those who were engaged in such enterprises were entitled to far more sympathy than the agricultural classes. Many industrial concerns were built on leasehold property, and the leases were in numerous cases approaching their end, when the landlords would gain enormous accessions to the value of their lands, for the property of the tenant was vanishing, and would eventually become the property of the landlord. It was in this way that the landowners were daily gaining a considerable increment of value in their estates. He would then take the case of patents. A patent expired in 14 years; every year its value diminished, so that the person engaged in the industry to which these expensive patents were necessary was losing annually in such a manner that his loss could not possibly be recouped; and it must be remembered that persons so engaged had constantly to renew as well as to buy their patents at a large outlay. Then, again, the landed interest had a great advantage with regard to unoccupied land near towns, which had not only increased in value but had never paid any taxes. It did not appear to him, therefore, that the agricultural interest alone was entitled to their sympathy, a proper share of which he contended should be accorded to commercial enterprise, and for these reasons he should support the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON (Lancashire, Rossendale): Mr. Speaker, I had at an earlier period of the evening some intention of endeavouring to offer a few observations to the House upon this question, but I can assure my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian that the notes to which he called attention in so pointed a manner were not the foundation of an attempt to make an elaborate reply to his speech, but merely an humble endeavour on my part to assist myself in following his extremely able but elaborate argument on this question. I think the House will probably agree with me that after the very strong appeals which were made to me, and to those who have lately acted with me, by my right hon. Friend—and I think I may say not only appeals, but adjurations and something approaching to menaces on account of our not voting with him—I am bound to address a few words to the House in explanation of the position which most of us take upon this question. My right hon. Friend says we are going to commit an act of great inconsistency, an act of aggravated inconsistency, because I, myself, and all the Party who acted with him were, to a certain extent, parties to the proposals in the Budget of 1885, which contained proposals similar in a great degree to those which are indicated in the Amendment which the right hon. Gentleman has moved. I am glad to find that my right hon. Friend now attaches so great a value to the virtue of consistency. I have not been able to find, either from my right hon. Friend or from any of his Colleagues, any considerable amount of support when I have appealed to them to support measures in regard to another class of questions altogether similar to, if not actually identical with, those which they had been responsible for when they were in Office. And, Sir, this observation does not apply only to questions of Irish policy, upon which so great a divergence has lately manifested itself in different sections of the Liberal Party. The other day a Resolution was brought forward upon the subject of the House of Lords, and I have been taken severely to task for the line I thought it my duty to adopt upon that question. I founded myself on that occasion upon the argument which had been addressed to the House on the very same subject by my right hon. Friend, but my right hon. Friend did not think it necessary to be present in his place to continue to support the line of argument he had adopted on a previous occasion, and the whole of his following thought it their duty to act not in consistency with the opinion which had been laid down by the right hon. Gentleman a few years ago, but in diametrical opposition to it; and, therefore, I find myself somewhat at a loss to understand why we are to be held to be so strictly bound by the principles of consistency to a particular line upon this financial question, while they appear to consider themselves on all other questions to be absolutely emancipated from any rule of conduct dependent on the course they had taken on a previous occasion. It is possible that in the few observations which I am about to address to the House I may not be able altogether to free myself from the charge of some personal inconsistency, but I maintain that it is perfectly possible for me, and still more possible for any Member of the Liberal Unionist section in this House, to vote against the Resolution without exposing ourselves to any charge of inconsistency whatever. It is one thing to be a party to or to vote in support of the financial policy of the responsible Government, and it is quite another thing to bring forward that policy in the form of an abstract Resolution, to ask for the assertion of the House to the principle of that policy, not for the purpose of bringing that policy into immediate effect, but as an engine for a political object—to vote upon such a Resolution for the purpose of displacing the Government, or to reverse a policy with which on the whole we agree, and without reference to the immediate practicability of bringing such financial policy into effect. I do not know whether the Government would consider that the passing of such a Resolution should be viewed in the light of a Vote of Want of Confidence, but at all events it must at least have the effect of displacing their whole scheme of financial policy and the scheme of Local Government which is so intimately connected with it. But even if I could agree with the whole or a great part of the arguments which have been addressed to the House by my right hon. Friend upon the financial question of the evening, I should certainly hesitate before I gave my assent to a Resolution the immediate practical effect of which would be to set aside financial proposals which on the whole have been very generally admitted to be just, fair, and beneficial proposals, and with them to set aside a great scheme of Local Government which is still more generally admitted to be the foundation of a great and salutary reform. Now, in illustration of the position which we are entitled to take up upon this occasion, let me give what appears to me to be not inappropriate. In 1874 my right hon. Friend, then Prime Minister, proposed the entire abolition of the Income Tax. He was again in Office in 1880, and brought forward Budgets in 1880, 1881, and succeeding years. Circumstances had changed, and the proposal to get rid of the Income Tax had entirely disappeared. I do not in the slightest degree blame my right hon. Friend for retaining the Income Tax under the circumstances; but I want to know what would have been the course of conduct of any politician or any body of politicians in this House who had in opposition to the financial proposals of my right hon. Friend in 1880 and 1881 brought forward an Amendment asserting the expediency of absolutely doing away with the Income Tax, and claiming the support of my right hon. Friend solely on the ground that he had in former years made the like proposal. My right hon. Friend puts upon myself and my friends the responsibility of maintaining what he describes as the gross inequalities of these charges, and of so maintaining them for an indefinite period, perhaps for ever. Why do we incur any such responsibility? The Government do not by rejecting this Resolution commit themselves to the perpetual maintenance of the inequalities of these taxes. I should be very much surprised to hear any Member of the Government assert that anomalies do not exist in the manner in which the Probate and Succession Duties are levied on personal and real property respectively; there is not the slightest doubt about that; and my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his financial proposals, is taking a step in the direction of redressing to a certain degree those anomalies. All that the Government say, as I understand, by rejecting this Resolution is that they decline in the present year and in their present Budget to undertake the reconstruction of this great and complicated subject, the Budget containing already so many points for criticism, and the time of the Session being already so fully occupied. Now my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in his Budget of 1881 dealt to a certain extent with the question of the Probate Duty, and in bringing it forward he said—I do not profess to give the actual quotation of his words—"Although they dealt to a certain extent with the Probate Duty in that year, they did not profess to bring forward a complete plan. Any such plan ought to be proposed by the Government with plenty of elbow room, plenty of force, and plenty of unoccupied space for discussion." The reasons which he gave were that the complication of the subject was such, the largeness and nicety of the interests involved were such, that the question could not be properly considered and dealt with by Parliament unless a liberal allowance of time was at the disposal of Parliament. I maintain, therefore, that the rejection of this Motion does not prevent any future Government, or even the present Government from dealing at a suitable time, and when it has sufficient elbow room and sufficient space for discussion at its disposal, with the inequalities which have been described by my right hon. Friend as existing in these taxes, or with any lesser inequalities which may be proved or admitted to exist. So far as I am concerned, therefore, and still more so far as those who act with me are concerned, I think I may say that we are perfectly unmoved by the charge which has been brought against us this evening, and that it is open to the Liberal Unionists to vote with perfect confidence against this Resolution, without in the slightest degree precluding themselves from advocating on any future occasion such changes in the incidence of the Death Duties as may be proved upon perfect inquiry to be desirable. Before a further examination of this subject I am not prepared to assert that the changes which were proposed in the Budget of 1885, to the extent to which they went, were changes which were altogether just and politic. My right hon Friend the Member for Mid Lothian will remember just as well as I do the circumstances in which that Budget was proposed. It was a question of providing fresh taxation, of increasing the Income Tax, of raising in some sort or another additional funds for the Public Service. But that was a very different position from the one in which we now find ourselves, when the Government have to dispose of a surplus, and when the time seems less appropriate for imposing new and very heavy taxation upon any class of property whatever. My right hon. Friend must remember the difficulties of every kind in which the Government were placed at the time to which I have referred. I do not think absolute unanimity prevailed among us upon the question of that Budget—I do not say in reference to this particular point, but in reference to the financial proposals of that year, when we were surrounded by difficulties of every kind in every quarter of the globe; and for myself, although I admit I am responsible and that my right hon. Friend is justified in holding me absolutely responsible for every detail of that Budget, yet it must be within his knowledge that my time, my attention, my thoughts were entirely absorbed by the very onerous duties in which I was engaged. I do not shrink from making the confession that it was absolutely impossible for me to pay that attention which no doubt ought to be always paid to the details of the financial proposals of that year. I have no hesitation in saying that, absorbed as I was in the difficulties in which we were engaged at that time in Egypt and the Soudan, I placed my financial conscience absolutely in the hands of my right hon. Friend; I regret that it is not in my power now to place my financial or any other conscience so absolutely at the disposal of my right hon. Friend. The circumstances which have caused that change are not, I think, altogether of my own creation. I do not deny that my right hon. Friend is perfectly justified as regards myself personally in making what advantage he thinks fit of what appears to have been a somewhat imprudent act on my part. Well, Sir, I will endeavour, as shortly as I can, to point out where I am not entirely able to follow the present policy of my right hon. Friend, and where I think he may have gone somewhat too far in the policy to which I was a party in 1885. I cannot go into the detailed figures of this question. It is not, I think, necessary for me to do so. I do not profess to any intimate acquaintance with or expertness in the manipulation of such intricate figures as are involved in this subject. I think my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade in his reply to my right hon. Friend showed that to a certain extent my right hon. Friend had exaggerated the disparity of these duties as between personal and real property, and I think he showed that he had understated to a very considerable extent the burdens which fall upon real property, irrespective of those entailed by the Death Duties, and, above all, I think he showed that my right hon. Friend had somewhat misled the House in describing the wrongs of personal property in comparison with the position of land rather than in comparison with the position of what he described as invisible property. I understood the great part of the argument of my right hon. Friend to be this—and it is a perfectly intelligible and fair argument—that now was the special time at which these inequalities ought to be redressed. He said, as I understood him, that the Government were engaged in re-adjusting the burdens of local taxation upon real or visible rateable property and personal property which is not rated, and he argued that this should be done completely, and that real and personal rateable property should bear precisely the same amount of public burdens. That appears to me an argument which has great weight; but it appears to me to bear the character of a counsel of perfection which is not entirely within the reach of the present or of any possible Government. I do not believe it possible for any Government to achieve such a complete re-adjustment of local burdens as to accomplish the absolute equality of which my right hon. Friend speaks. It is not possible for any Government to redress the inequality in local taxation further than it is in their power to do with the surplus at their command, or by imposing such taxation as can reasonably be borne by the remaining portion. The Government have succeeded to this extent; they have been compelled to supplement the surplus at their disposal by such taxes as the Wheel and Van Taxes, which are likely, as far as we can see, to make demands on the patience of such portion of the people as have to bear them. In these circumstances, we have no right to bind the Government to a position of perfect equality. I think we ought rather to look at their proposals from the point of view that they have done what they could with the means at their disposal, without being able to succeed, or professing to succeed, in establishing a complete, and I believe impossible, equality. I do not now intend to go into the question of what is the absolute amount of relief to which rateable property is entitled. My view is this—I fully admit that portions of the rates which are paid by real property, such as the poor-rate, are a hereditary burden on the land from which land has no right to be exempted. I admit, further, that a great portion of the rates which have been imposed in recent years have been municipal rates, which have had the effect of giving an improved value to property where those rates have been expended, and do not partake precisely of the character of taxation. But, at the same time, a large proportion of the additional rates which have been imposed of recent years, such as the school rate entirely, and sanitary rates to a great extent, have been imposed for services and public uses which are not the interest, and ought not to be the special care, of any class of the community, but which are, and ought to be, equally the interest of the community at large. The additional duty now imposed upon the ratepayers of the country amounts, as was pointed out the other night by my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), to one-ninth of the existing local taxation, and is an adequate contribution to the increased extent of public services which have been recently and rightly incurred almost entirely at the cost of the ratepayers. Now, I am not saying that, though the Government have not been able to effect that complete re-adjustment which my right hon. Friend thinks ought to be made, what they have done is so inadequate that there is any cause for re-opening the question at an early date; all I contend is that, although it is not so theoretically perfect as my right hon. Friend desires, it is not so inadequate as to warrant placing fresh burdens on the land at the present moment. The right hon. Gentleman has framed his Resolution in very sweeping terms. I do not believe that it is possible by any proposal to be brought forward for the consideration of this House completely to equalize the pressure of local taxation on land and on every description of rateable property, such as the capital invested in trade or industries liable to rates, and for this reason, that the larger proportion of the capital employed in farming consists of the value of the land which is tilled, every acre of which is marked for local taxation up to its own value more than can be the case in any other industry. No doubt you rate a millowner or an iron manufacturer on the land and buildings which he uses in his industry; you endeavour, no doubt, to estimate the value of his business, and to rate him in some degree in proportion; but I maintain that it is not possible to rate a manufacturer or a millowner, or other industrial employer, in the same way as an owner or occupier engaged in agriculture. Therefore, I believe that whatever re-adjustment may be made, it will be impossible for the land to escape from a larger share of taxation than that imposed on any other kind of rateable property in aid of local burdens. In considering these questions it is not possible to disregard the fact that the condition of the landed interest is worse than it was in 1853, when my right hon. Friend made the proposals which are the foundation of our present system. My right hon. Friend then pointed out that the net income was always much less than the gross income, and also that in heavily encumbered estates the margin was extremely small, and therefore the tax would bear with extreme severity upon landowners in such cases. My right hon. Friend on that occasion disclaimed altogether the intention, by means of taxation, of forcing land into the market and displacing the present owner. No doubt, since 1853 there has grown up an opinion that it is desirable that there should be a much greater distribution of land. But the point is that, in the first place, my right hon. Friend can hardly have changed his opinion which he so forcibly expressed at that time—that it would be extremely unjust and impolitic by means of a tax to force land into the market in circumstances such as he described. Such a measure as this, if it has the effect of forcing a great quantity of land into the market, will only very partially meet the views of land reformers. No doubt, it will meet their views in so far as it will lead to the compulsory sale of a considerable quantity of land, but it would not do anything to make the acquisition of that land more desirable to the small capitalist. Landed property, in whatever circumstances it may be held, is almost certainly sooner or later to become more or less encumbered, and there will always be inducements to raise money on real property. I want the land reformers to consider whether, if you adopt those proposals which are now advocated by my right hon. Friend, if you impose upon the succession of land a tax, as in the case where an estate is encumbered, you will, as was shown by my right hon. Friend in 1853, inevitably cause the alienation of that property. I want to know whether by that process you will afford to any capitalist, small or great, any inducement to acquire land, and whether you are holding out to him any inducement whatever to improve land? These are some of the reasons why I am not able to give a complete assent to the principle laid down by my right hon. Friend in this Resolution; but I acknowledge that the general considerations which apply to it weigh with me still more strongly. My right hon. Friend pointed out, I think upon two occasions, with considerable satisfaction, that this Resolution differs altogether from the ordinary hostile Resolution which is moved against the Budget of the Government. This Resolution is one not to withhold Supplies from the Government; it is a Resolution, on the other hand, rather for the purpose of pouring additional treasure into their coffers. But this treasure is to be poured into the Exchequer at the cost of principles which they are not prepared to accept; and therefore the Resolution, if passed, means that this additional treasure is to be poured into the Exchequer at the cost of the total reconstruction of their financial proposals for the year, and with it to cause the abandonment of the Local Government measure they have brought forward. Now, Sir, I admit that I am absolutely unable, for the purpose of supporting an assertion of a principle which, as I have indicated, in my opinion goes somewhat too far, to be a party to dealing a blow at a combination of measures which I believe are calculated to effect great and salutary reforms, and to redress grievances which have long been acknowledged, and which up to the present time no serious attempt has been made to redress.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I have no intention of addressing the House at any great length, or to do more than place before it, in a very few sentences, what appear to me to be the weak points in the answers which have been made to my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), and to fill up one or two blanks in the statement which has been placed before the House. The House will, therefore, forgive me if I pass by a good many of the statements on some matters which have been made by hon. Members in enlarging upon the principles they have put forward, while I confine myself strictly to those arguments which, I think, require refutation. But, first, as to the speech of my noble Friend the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington), who will excuse me for saying that the beginning of his speech and much of his subsequent argument was nothing but an elaborate *tu quoque.* He seems to think that in many of his statements he had done enough, in reference to the argument which my right hon. Friend addressed to him and others as to former votes and former policy on this subject, if he said that some of us who sit near him and my right hon. Friend had in past days voted in favour of or against certain proposals on totally different questions, and had now turned in a direction different from that which we then took. I do not think a *tu quoque* argument, with respect to general policy, is an answer to the statement of my right hon. Friend, and when I come to examine somewhat more minutely my noble Friend's speech, I think the House will agree that his *tu quoque* is of very little weight indeed. For my noble Friend began his speech with a statement which I can only characterize as a most extravagant one, as proceeding from him, and intended to be an answer to my right hon. Friend. He said that the Motion of my right hon. Friend, if adopted, would set aside the Budget and the Local Government Scheme altogether. I dispute that entirely. What would be the effect of the Motion of my right hon. Friend? In the Budget my right hon. Friend proposes to derive £60,000 from the change in the Succession Duties; but my right hon. Friend has shown clearly to the House that, instead of the £60,000 appearing in the present Budget, there might be £200,000 derived from the enlarged Succession Duties, and I ask if the additional sum of £140,000 is of such enormous importance as to set aside not only the Budget, but the Government Scheme of Local Government as well, the contributions to which will not be touched to the extent of one farthing if this Motion is agreed to? The statement appears to me extravagant, and it is one which I hardly expected from my noble Friend. My noble Friend then gave an illustration of what would be thought of the proposal in 1880 to abolish the Income Tax, because my right hon. Friend, in 1874, thought that the time had come for its abolition. Why, Sir, a proposal in 1880 to abolish the Income Tax would have been an impossibility. What did the Government do which in 1874 succeeded that of my right hon. Friend? They found a surplus of £6,000,000, and the whole of that sum might have been applied to the abolition of the Income Tax, and if that surplus had been so applied there would have been a tolerable surplus left which would probably have increased in the following year. The operation, whether right or wrong, of abolishing the Income Tax in 1874, was not only within the scope of practical politics, but it was one of two or three alternatives for the absorption of the surplus of £6,000,000. But in 1880 we had no surplus. The account for that year, as we received it from our Predecessors, if I remember rightly, showed a tendency in the other direction, and a proposal to abolish the Income Tax then would have been nothing short of madness. So that for the noble Lord to refer to this as an answer to the comparison of my right hon. Friend certainly struck me with surprise. But my noble Friend went further, because he seemed to think that it was in his power to anticipate what would be the course of the Government if we took the advice of my right hon. Friend on this Motion. He said that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) had taken a step towards redressing the anomalies of the Death Duties, and he alluded to what the Government might do if they had more elbow room than they had at present. He argued from that, that he could perfectly well vote against my right hon. Friend's proposal now and vote for it on a future occasion. Sir, it is not in my noble Friend's power to prophecy what the policy of the Government will be in future years, and, more than that, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has told us very plainly that the present plan is to be taken as a whole, and that, without entirely altering his financial scheme, it was not in his power to change what he proposed to do with reference to the Death Duties. It is, therefore, impossible for anyone to salve his conscience, so to speak, by saying that he is going to vote against the Motion now and for it hereafter, because we have the statement of the Government that their plan is one which must be treated as a whole, and that they are not prepared to alter it. But my noble Friend wound up this part of his address with the statement as to what took place in 1885, which I confess I was astonished to hear from him. If there was one thing which Ministers are silent about in Office, and subsequently in opposition, it is as to whether or not there has been any difference of opinion in the Cabinet, and what those differences of opinion may have been. But if I correctly understand my noble Friend, he justified himself for the line he is about to take by the admission that he was so absorbed in the business at the War Office in 1885 that he could not give all the attention he could have wished to the questions of taxation which came before the Cabinet in that year, and that he doubted whether the changes proposed to be made in 1885 were altogether wise. Such a statement as that, I think, has never before been made by a Member of a former Government. If there is one thing upon which all Members of Cabinets are agreed, it is that there should be no disclosure of any differences of opinion, great or small, without the Queen's leave, and it is impossible to appeal afterwards in justification of one's own conduct to such differences of opinion without taking a line—common enough in some countries, France and America for instance, but unknown here—which I regret that my noble Friend has found it necessary to follow.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I am very sorry that the right hon. Gentleman has misunderstood me. I did not assert that there was any difference of opinion on this question. If I referred to difference of opinion at all, it was only in one sense—namely, the circumstances of great difficulty in which the Government were placed. But I certainly did not shelter myself behind the fact that there was any difference of opinion in the Cabinet on this question; and I am not prepared to say that that was the case.

MR. CHILDERS: I think the House will be very glad to hear that from my noble Friend. But I did understand him to say that certain acts were taken which were not altogether wise in regard to this particular question, and any of us who heard my noble Friend would, I think, assume that he meant what I have mentiond. However, I have no reason to doubt the statement of my noble Friend. I should also like to say a few words with reference to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) earlier in the evening, and before I do so let me quote an expression used by him in the Debate on the Motion of Censure which the right hon. Gentleman moved on the Budget of that year. The House will recollect that the ground of censure was twofold; one part had reference to the duty on wine, the other to the equalization of Death Duties on real property, and it was particularly with reference to the latter that the right hon. Gentleman spoke. The right hon. Gentleman used these words, which, I think, ought to be remembered in connection with his opposition to the present Motion—

> "Equalize the taxation on these two classes of property by all means, if you like, but equalize it completely; and remember, above all, that the whole of the taxation borne by real property, as distinguished from personal property, is very far from being included in the Budget."—(3 *Hansard*, [298] 1431.)

Now that is exactly what my right hon. Friend says in this Motion. He says that the principle of equalization is not in this Budget, and he says also that we should be careful that the charge on land and personal property is equalized, so that the whole system may be in harmony. That was the meaning of his speech, and the same language was in his speech in 1875, and you cannot resist the conclusions to which they lead. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer is acting upon the latter part of his Colleague's advice, and therefore we are entitled to say, following that advice, that the two things must run together. If you only carry out a mutilated change you will not be obeying the canon laid down by the right hon. Gentleman, and you will have to come to Parliament hereafter with some proposal for further relief on one side and equalization on the other, and that, indeed, is what the right hon. Gentleman has said. Is this a conclusive solution? Yes, says the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer; it is intended to be a final settlement. But the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade says to-night—

> "Inequality between the entire charges on land and other property is not removed by the measure we are now submitting, but it remains as it was in 1853."

That is to say we have for 35 years endeavoured to settle this question. Parliament has passed certain Resolutions requiring that the Government shall discover a measure under which the charges on real estate for local bodies should be made less onerous, and that in some form or other they should receive contributions from Government, and now, when the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has told us that he has done that, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade says that the inequality of charge will not be removed by the measure now submitted to the House, but that it remains as it was before my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian introduced in 1853 the Succession Duty. But the right hon. Gentleman referred to other matters. In the first place, he said that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian did not propose to remedy the injustice on personal property, and he proceeded to state that the Budget of 1885 proposed to inflict injustice on realty. Therefore, personal property was left unredressed to the extent of the inequality of these charges. What has been for the last 20 or 30 years the cry which a number of hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House have raised and expressed by the appointment of Committees and the proposal of Resolutions? That real property was over-charged. But, on the other hand, invisible personal property has escaped too much. Accordingly, the idea always brought before Parliament has been that the Income Tax was an instrument by which personal property was heavily charged, and that it was even desirable to redress this inequality by altering the incidence of Schedule D, and in that way to place the three descriptions of property on a proper footing. If Schedule D has really been an instrument by which these three classes of property has had to bear an excessive amount of charge, surely it is not right to say that the imposition of the higher rate of Succession Duty is at all an injustice now. The fact is that what we proposed in 1885, and what is renewed in the present Motion, does put those three classes of property—visible personalty, other personalty, and real property—upon a fair footing, and until that is done you will have placed the charge upon personal property, partly through the working of the law and partly through the Income Tax, on an excessive scale as compared with real property; and therefore, in order to redress the inequality with reference to both classes of personal property, the present proposal of my right hon. Friend is necessary. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade then went into and discussed the figures of my right hon. Friend. I certainly shall not repeat those figures. My right hon. Friend said that, excluding the amount of charge on personal property which went under the Probate Duty arrangements to the Local Authorities, the revenue the Chancellor of the Exchequer would receive was at about three and a third times the same rate as would be received from real property, and six times as much if you included the amount going to Local Authorities. To what extent did the President of the Board of Trade modify that? He only altered the proportion from $3\frac{1}{3}$ to $2\frac{3}{4}$; he said besides the excessive assessment to Income Tax to which real property was liable, it paid a Land Tax of rather more than £1,000,000, and that if it was true that personalty was unequally charged in respect of Succession Duties, this amount must be set against such inequality. But, Sir, the Land Tax is known to be no tax at all; it is a mortgage which has been inherited from remote times by certain classes of real property, and not by the great mass of that property, and it cannot in any sense be called a tax, and I do not remember that any Minister or Chancellor of the Exchequer ever called it a tax. My right hon. Friend did not do so, when he very carefully elaborated his statement of the taxes which are placed on land. So that this charge in the sense in which the right hon. Gentleman referred to it—namely, as a tax—does not exist, and the fact remains, according to the admission of the Government, that personalty pays an excess of something like £2,000,000 a-year as compared with realty. It has been said that if land and personalty paid the same rate of Death Duty, it would be impossible to avoid very often the sale of parts of the estates as the undue sale of estates when they passed by death from one person to another. It is possible that the fact of imposing any tax may lead to some estates being sold, but is that any justification for giving them the advantage, the large advantage of a discriminating tax. Under the present law Death Duties upon real property, so far as Succession Duty was concerned, were paid in instalments. The instalments were spread over four years, and the value of that payment by instalments was reckoned by the Inland Revenue Department as being something like 11 per cent on the whole amount. All that it was necessary to do if you wanted to adjust the matter mathematically was to add 11 per cent to the tax, and allow it to be distributed over the year, and then you will have no reason for the compulsory sale of estates for the immediate payment of Succession Duty. Let me in one word come down from this general argument to the practical case before the House. My right hon. Friend the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) gave one or two illustrations when the House was much thinner than it is now, and I will give only one, but it is one which, I think, hon. Members will do well to remember. Suppose that anyone inherits personal property, say, in the shape of Consols or other securities of the value of £10,000. What does he pay if he inherits them from his father, I mean? He will pay £300 for that £10,000. Supposing that he inherits land, the net value of which, after making all allowances, not the fancy value, is £10,000, how much will he have to pay? He will have to pay for the amount £70 10*s*., including the additional $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, spread over eight instalments as my right hon. Friend proposes, the discount for present value being about the same as it is under the present law. How much then would be paid after allowing for the additional 10*s*. which the Bill proposes? Why £63. It is that inequality between £300 and £63 which it is absolutely necessary in our judgment should be redressed, and redressed as speedily as possible. I have now fulfilled my promise of only speaking for a few minutes, and speaking only on questions which have been definitely brought forward, and as to which I thought it necessary that some reply should be made. I certainly hope the House will adopt the Resolution of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I quite feel the difficulty which was felt by the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, that to deliver a speech at this late hour upon a very statistical and complicated subject is not a duty which has much charm about it. But I would entreat hon. Members on both sides of the House, and particularly those on this side, to give me a patient hearing, because we have not only to deal with the vote that will be given this evening, but with the fact that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian has made a speech which will be circulated through Liberal agencies in every part of the country. [*Opposition cheers.*] Yes, circulated without the answers that have been and will be made to it. The right hon. Gentleman challenged us to answer, not with generalties, but with facts and figures. I am prepared to answer with facts and figures; but the misfortune in this case is that our answer may not reach the same persons to whom the eloquent appeal of the right hon. Gentleman was made. My right hon. Friend spoke quite in the tone of a man who has rendered such immense financial services to the country, and he preserved his financial tone until he came to his last sentences. Then, if I may say so, he broke out in his later manner, and made an appeal to the masses, an appeal, however, which will have no effect, if the answer which we give reaches the people to whom that appeal is made. It is, therefore, important that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman should be fully answered. My right hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) who has just sat down said that millions were rather confusing, and that he would therefore bring the matter to the practical test of an individual case. I admit that millions are extremely confusing when they are treated with that conjectural power exercised by my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian. He threw his millions about and seemed to revel in them, but he afterwards said that he must admit that they were only founded on conjecture. The right hon. Member for Edinburgh said that he would give us an individual instance, and he gave us an exceptional and extraordinary instance totally different from the general and average case, and wishes us to found our judgment upon that. I trust that the House will refuse either to be convinced by the exceptional instance quoted by my right hon. Friend or to be confused by the millions of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian spoke of the few remarks that had been made by the President of the Board of Trade. Well, those few remarks contained a convincing argument against the figures of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. The right hon. Member for Edinburgh could not pull the figures of the President of the Board of Trade to pieces, and so he said that he would not follow him; but neither did he follow my right hon. Friend in the close reasoning by which he proved that real property pays an increased proportion to Imperial taxation, notwithstanding what it still bears in respect of local taxation. The right hon. Member for Edinburgh says he has never known the Land Tax to be included as taxation by previous Chancellors of the Exchequer. Evidently he has not read the older speeches of his Leader, the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. I have read them, and I have seen that, in arguing upon this very Succession Duty, the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian himself has described the Land Tax as taxation. Therefore, I do not think that it lies in the mouth of the right hon. Member for Edinburgh to demur to my inclusion of the Land Tax. Why should it not be included? Because it is a past burden——

Mr. CHILDERS: I said because it is a mortgage, and paid only by a small amount of property.

Mr. GOSCHEN: And why by a small amount of property only? Because a large amount of property has already exonerated itself, bearing, however, the interest upon the money which it raised to pay off the tax. We have to look at these matters as a whole. My right hon. Friend is perfectly right in saying that we have to look both to the Imperial taxation and the local taxation; but I wish to remind the House that no answer has been given by any speaker in explanation of the inequalities in Imperial taxation which have been pointed out by the President of the Board of Trade. There was an historical inaccuracy in the opening phrases of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian in moving this Resolution. He said—"The inequality in favour of realty is what has only been tolerated on the ground of contribution to the rates." That is not historically right. It has been one of the great reasons why it has been thought that real property need not contribute equally to the Death Duties; but it has only been one out of many reasons, another being that realty pays so much more to the Income Tax. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian pointed out that the Income Tax paid by land is 9*d.* in the pound, when the Income Tax paid upon other property is 7*d.* That makes the considerable difference of

1 per cent upon the Income Tax for every year. Accordingly, a landed property will pay 1 per cent more on its income over 14 years than personal property. It is all very well for you to say that you desire equality; but I think the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, his Friends, and the public will see that if you are going to equalize the Death Duties you should also deal with other inequalities under which real property has suffered, and abolish the system which charges Income Tax on real property, not on the net income, as in regard to other kinds of property, but on the gross income. It would not be fair to merely carry out the equalization which the right hon. Gentleman now proposes, unless, at the same time, he remedies the inequality under which real property suffers in the matter of Income Tax. It is worthy of notice that the present occasion, when we are asked to equalize the Death Duties, is an occasion when a step is being taken in that direction, and, as has been pointed out by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), though the right hon. Gentleman has been many years in Office, yet is only now—with the solitary exception of 1885—when we are making an actual movement in the direction of equalization, that he has attempted to remedy what he now calls a monstrous injustice, which is to be held up to the masses in order to stimulate them, and so make them believe that landed property is bearing much too little burden. We have chosen this time to make a movement in the direction of equalization, because now real property is being relieved to some extent of some of the burdens it has hitherto had to bear. We are making a contribution to rates in relief of real property. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the speech which I made in introducing the Budget, and said that our proposals must be taken as a whole. That is quite true. But our proposals do not involve an absolute equalization of the Death Duties, but only a step towards equalization such as we propose to take. If the Death Duties were equalized, then we should have to make further concessions in the direction of local taxation. Our position in this matter is based on the situation as a whole. Let me refer for a moment to the method pursued by the right hon. Gentleman of piling on the millions in his account of the value of landed property as compared with personalty. It is acknowledged that the statistics are very difficult to establish; but, whatever figure is fixed upon, it must be borne in mind that the rateable value of realty does not represent the clear value of the property of the landed class. You must deduct from that mortgages, annuities, and other charges placed on land. It is not fair to put the matter before the public as it has been put by the right hon. Gentleman. You must not only look at the total rateable value of the land, but at the real value of the land to the person who has to pay the Succession Duty. I would not attach an exaggerated importance to these aggregate statistics, and I understand that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh does not wish to rely on them. However, I shall follow the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in the figures he has laid before the House. In taking the sums paid under Schedule A and under Schedule B, the right hon. Gentleman made three mistakes. He made, first of all, a mistake of £8,000,000, which, however, he himself retracted. Another mistake he made was stating that one-third of the Succession Duty was paid by settled property. The right hon. Gentleman is not now present, but his Colleagues and the House will remember that he said one-third of the Succession Duty was paid by settled property. That is not so. The books of the Inland Revenue show that only one-fifth, and not one-third, is paid by settled property. This is not a matter of argument, but of fact. The third mistake that he made was one of £420,000, due to his calculating that Legacy Duty paid on annuities chargeable on realty was paid by personalty instead of by realty. He has omitted to give realty credit under this head, and he has charged too much to personalty. The consequence is that the elaborate superstructure which he has raised, based on these three fallacies, falls to the ground, with the exposure of the fallacies themselves. Now I will refer again to the figures used by my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade, which proved conclusively that if you add the Land Tax to the additional Income Tax which has been paid by realty as compared with

personalty, on account of its paying upon the gross instead of the net income, you find that realty really contributes as much to Imperial taxation as personal property does, and that the inequality in favour of realty which the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian says exists does not, in fact, exist at all. Now I come to the point raised by the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, and to the figures by which he sought to prove the existence of that inequality of three to one, but which as he stated them were really incorrect. We contest the accuracy of those figures by taking average individual instances, not such as were taken by the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) and by the right hon. Member for Edinburgh, who chose out certain special instances in order to show that injustices can occur —as no doubt they can and do occur, but which require to be carefully examined —but ordinary cases. If the ordinary cases are carefully examined it will be found that the only difference between the Death Tax as paid by personalty, as compared with that paid by realty after the duties have been put upon the same scale, is that under the Government proposal in the one case it is paid upon the life interest and in the other upon the whole interest. I quite admit that there is the further difference of discount. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian wishes to make out that the Succession Duty paid is less than one-half. But what are the facts? The ordinary average is 13½ years, and if you take 25 years' purchase—and no one will say that landed property is worth more than 25 years' purchase—the only advantage which is gained now is that they pay upon 13½ years instead of upon 25 years. You must take into consideration that, during the whole period between one succession and another, succession really is paying Income Tax at a higher rate, and that must be taken into account as tending to equalise the difference which otherwise would exist. In calculating the difference of these Death Taxes we must not forget the difference in the relief that will be afforded to the two classes of property. The right hon. Gentleman opposite in arguing this point has fallen into a fallacy which was avoided by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, and I am glad that he has afforded me an opportunity of showing how little yet of the effect of the Government proposal has sunk into his mind. We must also remember that realty has for the last 13 or more years paid a higher rate of Income Tax, and taking all these calculations together, we shall find that the total difference between the two death rates is not three to one, or even two to one, but is as four to three. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian said a great deal—I do not say that he said too much—about the injustice, which he said would still remain as between visible rateable personalty and invisible rateable property. I do not understand from the right hon. Gentleman who preceded me that those injustices would be rectified by the proposals which he made. The difficulty of dealing with this particular kind of personalty is that it is treated as personalty for the purposes of the Death Duties and as realty for rating purposes. No doubt grievances in reference to this matter do exist, and, indeed, it was acknowledged by my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade that they did exist and ought to be looked into. But to do this at the present moment would involve a reconsideration of many other anomalies which still exist in our financial system. But, as was pointed out by my right hon. Friend the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale, it would be impossible in a measure of the magnitude and complexity of that now before the House to have introduced a proposal that in itself would be sufficient to tax the energies of the House of Commons for a whole Session. We therefore do not think that we ought to have included in this measure a proposal for the rectification of many of the fiscal anomalies which we fully admit to exist. There was another point on which the right hon. Gentleman dwelt with considerable force. He asked us to whom would go that large relief of £4,000,000 which we propose to give to local taxation, and he made some ingenious analyses, conjectures and hypotheses as to the proportion that would go into the pockets of the landlords and the proportion that would go into the pockets of the occupier. He proceeded with an interesting but to my mind entirely fallacious calculation to analyze the effect of the increase of the rates upon urban sanitary districts, upon rural sanitary districts, and upon urban rural sanitary districts, and to place figures before the House. But he omitted to notice this—that the incidence of rates and of the increase of rates in a rural community is an infinitely more serious thing and weighs much more heavily on the income and industry of a rural community than does their incidence in a town. This matter cannot be made too clear. If you say, for instance, that the rates of the country have only increased 3*d.* or 6*d.*, and the rates of the town have increased 3*s.*, what does it mean? Why, every 1*d.* of increased rate on a farm means 2*d.* on the income of the farmer, because the rate is assumed to be twice the income of the farmer, therefore an increase of 1*d.* means an increase of 2*d.* on the income of the farmer. On the other hand, if you have an increase of 1*d.* on the house of a dweller in a town that means only one-eighth of a penny on his income. In other words an increase of 1*d.* in the rates weighs 16 times more heavily on the farmer than on the ordinary inhabitant of a town. That would, perhaps, not hold good on trade premises where a greater proportion of the business of a man is liable to rates, but it applies to a very large amount of the rates levied in towns, and again, it is levied upon what you may call the whole industry of a rural community, and though it is true, perhaps, that there is but a slighter increase of rates on agricultural districts, the actual increase falls as Income Tax infinitely more heavily on the rural population than on the urban population. We must look at it in this light. If the increase of rates we are endeavouring to remedy to a certain extent by our proposals has not been so great on paper in rural districts as in towns, nevertheless, owing to the circumstances that it is levied on the whole area of income in which it is levied, it is a heavier burden to the rural districts. Then the right hon. Gentleman took the aggregate amount we are going to distribute, and distributed it, not according to any calculation as to who would get it, but by some arbitrary method of his own, looking to the fact of what was visible personalty and what was real rateable property. We wish to distribute this amount, not according to any theoretical view of that kind, but upon certain *data* known to the House; and to lay down now that the greater portion of this sum is going into the pockets of the landlords is really a monstrous assertion, and an assertion which does not hold water for a moment. But the right hon. Gentleman was really very moderate when he told us that half of this relief is going into the pockets of the landlords, because I have already seen that many of his more enthusiastic supporters have been telling the country that the whole was going straight into the pockets of the landlords, and that these local taxation proposals of ours, which we have brought forward to give the ratepayers that relief which the House has decided ought to be given, are proposals to give relief to the landlord party, that it is a landlord's Budget, and that the relief will go straight into the pockets of the landlords. The right hon. Gentleman himself admits that only half will go into the landlord's pockets. But how did he prove that? He put before the House, in an ingenious and amusing manner, a special case, and said that if in that special case it was shown that the landlord would derive benefit from the reduction of the rates, we might argue that the whole of that portion would go into the pockets of the landlords. But the right hon. Gentleman forgot that there were such things as leases still existing, and that there are many arrangements where no change takes place. He must know himself that there is not going to be at once a thorough re-arrangement of rents by which the landlords will pocket this relief to the ratepayers which we at last have given after this long lapse of years. I protest most strongly against the view that this is a landlords' proposal we are making. I think it is unworthy of the right hon. Gentleman, after he has with great calmness and courtesy put his view before the House, that he should take this line of trying to point out, not to the propertied class, but to the masess, that the land is not paying its share, and that he should make a bitter personal attack upon the Unionist Party in order that they may be gibbeted by him before the constituents as the friends of the landlord, and therefore unmindful of the interest of the community at large. Mr. Speaker, I wish to place this before the House—that the figures of the right hon. Gentleman do not hold water; that those figures, when he divides properties into two great portions, are misleading if not actually incorrect, and are not analyzed as they ought to have been. I submit that, even if that were so, an analysis of totals would give no final and satisfactory results. I submit that if you take individual cases, if you take the ordinary averages at first sight, it will appear that through life interests the owner of realty will be paying one-half; but when you reduce that by Income Tax, when you reduce that by the Land Tax, the inequality is wiped out, and the land pays its full share of Imperial taxation. I add to that the fact that the local burdens have been so adjusted as to take into account not only what real property will continue to pay to local taxation, but it has taken this present attitude of the Government, as regards the Death Duties, into consideration. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down said, that he could not reconcile my statement that we had finally done all that could be done, with that of the President of the Board of Trade, that an inequality would still remain. We have not contended that there will not still be inequality. Of course there will still be inequality; of course real estate will continue to pay infinitely more than personalty to local taxation. The inequality exists, and the question is whether it ought to be remedied. After we have given £5,000,000 towards rateable property, real estate will still bear an enormous proportion of the local taxation of the country. The inequality still exists, and it exists, as has been frankly pointed out, because it is a portion of the hereditary burdens upon land. It is an inequality we do not seek to remedy so far as the hereditary burdens of the land are concerned. Even after what we have done, the inequality still remains in the Death Duties, and real estate will contribute enormously to the rates of the country beyond what is paid or will ever be paid by personal property, by labour, or by any form of wealth in the country. We have endeavoured to remedy certain inequalities so far as we thought they ought to be remedied; but so far as the Government is concerned, we show our whole hand, and say that we have no further proposals to make. I trust that what I have said may, at all events, remove the impression in some quarters that we are endeavouring unfairly to shift the burden from one shoulder to another. We have endeavoured to frame our Budget, not in the interests of one class, but in the interests of all classes. I admit that it is mainly a ratepayers' Budget. In making it so, we have endeavoured to adjust the burdens in accordance with the capacity of persons to bear them, and we submit our proposals, as a whole, with confidence to the judgment of the House and to the judgment of the country.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I shall not detain the House many minutes, and I shall not enter upon any financial aspect of the question. We are quite satisfied that this controversy should stand as it has been left by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. I should not have intervened if it had not been for the remarkable statement made by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale. I confess I saw in that statement something far more important than any theory of adjustment between personal and real property, however important that may be. It seemed to me that in what my noble Friend said to-night he struck, I will not say a fatal blow, but a great blow against the Constitutional principles of government in this country. [*Laughter.*] I would not advise Gentlemen opposite to laugh so much; it has hitherto been understood that the responsible government of this country was conducted by the Cabinet, and that it was not merely a collection of individuals who each held his own separate, independent opinions which he might avow to-day, and disavow to-morrow. [*Loud ironical cheers.*] Oh, yes; you are delighted to hear an apology for inconsistency from my noble Friend, and the white sheet becomes him so well, but that is not the point to which I wish to address myself. I say that clearly the responsible Government of this country is the collective Cabinet—the Cabinet as a collective body—because it is that which advises the Sovereign, Parliament, and the nation. The statement the noble Lord has made to-night is absolutely inconsistent with that. He has sat in the Cabinet, and he has declined to recognize the responsibility of that Cabinet. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] My noble Friend says—

> "Theoretically I was responsible, but as a fact I was so occupied with the business of my

Department that I am entitled now to say that I think that the advice given by the Cabinet was not wise advice."

Was not that to substitute departmental government for government by a responsible Cabinet? My noble Friend claims to be the representative of Whig principles, but is not that the doctrine against which the Whig Party contended under George III., who endeavoured to set up a number of separate individuals without any common responsibility for the government of the country? Is one of the right hon. Gentlemen who now sits on the Front Bench opposite to be allowed at some future time to get up and say—"True, I was a Member of the Government which proposed the Local Government Bill, but I was so occupied with the business of my Department that I am now free to say that I did not think it a wise proposal?" I say if language of that kind is to be admitted there is an end of responsible Government in this country. It is quite true that in a Government some men are more occupied in particular subjects than others, but they all honourably stand by one another, and if any differ in opinion they leave the Government. But that they should go on as Members of that Government on the faith of an honourable understanding, and then afterwards, when it suits a political purpose, turn round and say, "Oh, I was too busy to attend to it," that is a course which has never been taken in this country by any responsible politician. I take this, the earliest opportunity, of denouncing such conduct as absolutely inconsistent with all that has hitherto been understood to be the good faith of Members of a Cabinet. The noble Lord said—"I was very busy in 1885, and I agreed to equalize the burdens upon real and personal property. I am willing to vote against it in 1888 because another Government proposes something different." But he says—"Take care, I do not mean to pledge myself that some time hereafter I will not vote as I did in 1885." Surely, there never was a statesman more open to conviction. All I can say is that we have seen in other countries the mischiefs which have come of sections—the mischiefs which have come of attempts to overthrow the old Party government of the country. In fact we have been told on good authority the other day, that there is no Party left—no Liberal Party, no Tory Party; that is the doctrine of one great Unionist Liberal. But there is something else going to the wall besides Party Government, and that is the theory of responsible government, as shown in the case of the noble Lord to-night. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says it is a very fine thing for the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian to have pointed out that the land is too lightly taxed in this country. Why, the first person who demonstrated that in the past, he who most successfully demonstrated it, was the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself.

Mr. GOSCHEN: The circumstances were different in 1871.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: He says that was in 1871.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon; what I stated was that the circumstances of land and rates in 1871 were entirely different from what they are now.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Entirely different, because you did not give the relief which you have given now. ["Oh, oh!"] I will tell hon. Gentlemen where they will find an answer. The right hon. Gentleman says he would like to see how the land lay. Then he says that the land in England lies very comfortably. The right hon. Gentleman goes on to say—

> "I will now state the percentages paid by land only towards the total amount raised for Imperial taxation. In England it pays 5½ per cent; in Holland land pays 9 per cent; in Austria 17½ per cent; in France 18½ per cent; in Belgium 20½ per cent; and in Hungary 32½ per cent. What do these facts prove? They prove that as regards Imperial taxation the land of this country is in an infinitely better position than the land in any other European country."

Do you suppose that that is not a lesson which will be remembered by those who have studied the writings of the right hon. Gentleman? The question to-night is whether it is fair that land should enjoy in this country a special immunity and exemption which it does not enjoy in any other country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the rates are much more felt as a burden in the country than they are in the towns. I have the honour to represent a borough, and I do not think that the towns take that view of the question. Everybody knows that, especially in the Metropolis

—and the author of the Local Government Bill stated it—that there is no place in which the burden of the rates is heavier and more felt than in the poorer parts of the Metropolis. Yet here we have the Chancellor of the Exchequer pointing to this exceptional treatment of land, because he says that the rates are heavier and much more felt in the rural districts than they are in the populous districts of the towns.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I did not say that they were heavier. What I said was that they were more felt.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes; more felt. Well, I entirely deny that proposition. I believe that the burden of the rates is much heavier and much more felt in parts of this Metropolis than they are in any rural parish in England. I do not desire at this hour to delay the House longer. My right hon. Friend has raised a fair issue. The President of the Local Government Board spoke with great indignation of the Motion, which, he said, was injurious to the Government and to the Budget. The right hon. Gentleman himself made a Motion of exactly the same character in 1885, and, therefore, we do not accept his reproaches on that subject. We have laid before the House, and my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian has laid before the country, a very clear and a very distinct issue. He has said, and I conceive he has proved, that there is an exceptional treatment of real property as contrasted with personal property. We deny the justice of that, and, with respect to the Budget, we say that if you only place these taxations on an equal footing you might raise the money you want for Imperial and local purposes, and might dispense with these paltry and irritating taxes which you have proposed, and which we believe to be unnecessary and mischievous.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 310; Noes 217: Majority 93.

AYES.

Ainslie, W. G.
Aird, J.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, Sir G. S.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Banes, Major G. E.
Baring, T. C.
Barnes, A.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bartley, G. C. T.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bass, H.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Bazley-White, J.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Beaumont, H. F.
Beckett, W.
Bective, Earl of
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. de la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Biddulph, M.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Brown, A. H.
Burghley, Lord
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, J. A.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Chamberlain, R.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Compton, F.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, H. S.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon, G.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donkin, R. S.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Dugdale, J. S.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Ebrington, Viscount
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. J. F.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Elliot, G. W.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Elton, C. I.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Farquharson, H. R.
Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, A. E.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fielden, T.
Finch, G. H.
Finlay, R. B.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. H. W.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fry, L.
Fulton, J. F.
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Gedge, S.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Goldsworthy, Major General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Granby, Marquess of
Gray, C. W.
Green, Sir E.
Grimston, Viscount
Grotrian, F. B.
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, A. W.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hambro, Col. C. J. T.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, E.
Hardcastle, F.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.

Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hill, A. S.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holloway, G.
Hornby, W. H.
Howard, J.
Hubbard, hon. E.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hulse, E. H.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
James, rt. hon. Sir H.
Jardine, Sir R.
Jarvis, A. W.
Jeffreys, A. F.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenrick, W.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, L.
Kynoch, G.
Lafone, A.
Lambert, C.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lea, T.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lees, E.
Legh, T. W.
Leighton, S.
Lennox, Lord W. C. Gordon-
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lowther, J. W.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lymington, Viscount
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, rt. hon. J. H. A.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Madden, D. H.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Maple, J. B.
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Adml. R. C.
Mildmay, F. B.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
More, R. J.
Morgan, hon. F.
Morrison, W.
Moss, R.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T.
Newark, Viscount
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, hon. F.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Pomfret, W. P.
Powell, F. S.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Quilter, W. C.
Raikes, right hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Richardson, T.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, rt. hn. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, B.
Rollit, Sir A. K.
Ross, A. H.
Rothschild, Baron F. J. de
Round, J.
Royden, T. B.
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. M.
Sellar, A. C.
Selwin-Ibbetson, right hon. Sir H. J.
Selwyn, Captain C. W.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, right hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stephens, H. C
Stewart, M. J.
Stokes, G. G.
Sutherland, T.
Swetenham, E.
Talbot, J. G.
Tapling, T. K
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Thorburn, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Townsend, F.
Trotter, Col. H. J.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vincent, Col. C. E. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
Weymouth, Viscount
Wharton, J. L.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wiggin, H.
Wilson, Sir S.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P.
Yerburgh, R. A.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Asher, A.
Asquith, H. H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, J.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, Sir G.
Ballantine, W. H. W.
Barbour, W. B.
Barran, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Bolton, J. C.
Bolton, T. D.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, Jacob
Broadhurst, H.
Brown, A. L.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Buxton, S. C.
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carew, J. L.
Causton, R. K.
Cavan, Earl of
Channing, F. A.
Childers, rt. hon. H. C. E.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Colman, J. J.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Craig, J.
Crawford, D.
Crawford, W.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crossley, E.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Duff, R. W.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Finucane, J.
Firth, J. F. B.
Flower, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Foley, P. J.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Forster, Sir C.
Foster, Sir W. B.
Fowler, right hon. H. H.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Gane, J. L.
Gardner, H.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Grey, Sir E.
Grove, Sir T. F.
Haldane, R. B.
Hanbury-Tracy, hon. F. S. A.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Hingley, B.
Holden, I.
Howell, G.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, hon. W. H.
Joicey, J.
Jordan, J.

Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kennedy, E. J.
Kenny, C. S.
Kenny, J. E.
Kilbride, D.
Labouchere, H.
Lalor, R.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leahy, J.
Leake, R.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Lewis, T. P.
Lockwood, F.
Macdonald, W. A.
Mac Innes, M.
M‘Arthur, A.
M‘Arthur, W. A.
M‘Cartan, M.
M‘Carthy, J.
M‘Carthy, J. H.
M‘Donald, P.
M‘Donald, Dr. R.
M‘Ewan, W.
M‘Kenna, Sir J. N.
M‘Lagan, P.
M‘Laren, W. S. B.
Mahony, P.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Mayne, T.
Menzies, R. S.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Mundella, rt. hon. A. J.
Murphy, W. M.
Neville, R.
Newnes, G.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, J.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Doherty, J. E.
O'Hanlon, T.
Palmer, Sir C. M.
Parker, C. S.
Parnell, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Pease, A. E.
Pickard, B.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Playfair, right hon. Sir L.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Provand, A. D.
Pugh, D.
Quinn, T.
Randell, D.
Rathbone, W.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reid, R. T.
Reynolds, W. J.
Richard, H.
Roberts, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Robinson, T.
Roe, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, J.
Rowlands, W. B.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Schwann, C. E.
Sheehan, J. D.
Simon, Sir J.
Slagg, J.
Smith, S.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stansfeld, right hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stevenson, J. C.
Stewart, H.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, A.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Tanner, C. K.
Thomas, A.
Thomas, D. A.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Tuite, J.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Waddy, S. D.
Wallace, R.
Wardle, H.
Warmington, C. M.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Whitbread, S.
Will, J. S.
Williamson, J.
Williamson, S.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodall, W.
Woodhead, J.
Wright, C.

TELLERS.

Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Morley, A.

Main Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) said, he was quite aware that it would be out of Order for him to attempt to move any other Resolution, nor was he about to say anything upon the Resolution of which he had given Notice—he would take the opportunity of raising the questions he desired to raise on another occasion. But it did appear to him that it was a little awkward on that most important Bill that the House should be allowed to discuss on the second reading only one particular question. It would have been better had the debate been adjourned. There were a number of most important subjects in the Bill that ought to be discussed before going into Committee. To say nothing of the Tea Duty, there was the new Duty on Wines, new Stamp Duties, and a variety of other matters, some of them altogether novel, that ought to be discussed. Therefore, without detaining the House any further, and to give the House the opportunity of giving a decision on the subject, he would move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Picton.*)

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) hoped the House would not consent to an adjournment. The hon. Member (Mr. Picton) mentioned questions upon which he desired to address the House, and he (Mr. W. H. Smith) might remind the hon. Gentleman that the opportunity would be more usefully afforded as, clause by clause, the continuation of old duties or imposition of new duties came under view in Committee. This would be the natural opportunity for discussing such details as the hon. Member alluded to—the Tea Duty, the Wine Duty, and the new Stamp Duties; and such had been the practice of the House in relation to the Budget Bill. After the debate just closed—a debate of the length of which he could not complain—he hoped the House would close the second reading stage.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) hoped his hon. Friend (Mr. Picton) would not press his Motion. What the right hon. Gentleman said was perfectly correct, and all the points on which discussion was desired might be dealt with in Committee, whether in regard to duties that hon. Members thought should be lightened, or in reference to new duties proposed. The Committee would offer adequate opportunity for discussion.

Mr. PICTON said, in deference to what had been said, he would not press his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday.*

MOTION.

——o——

WATER PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On the Motion of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The Gas and Waterworks Facilities Act, 1870," relating to Herne Bay Water, Kettering Water, Mid Kent Water, and Wotton Estate Water, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 227.]

House adjourned at twenty minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 24th April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Copyright (Musical Compositions) (61); Tithe Rentcharge * (53); Tithe Rentcharge Recovery and Variation (54).

Report—Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment * (75).

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LIFE SAVING APPLIANCES) BILL.—(No. 43.)

(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill."—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

The Earl of RAVENSWORTH said, he appealed to the noble Earl in charge of the measure to postpone the Committee stage till he could place certain Amendments on the Paper. He represented the Shipowners' Association of Liverpool, which included all the great Atlantic lines of steamers and the Steam Shipowners' Associations of the Tyne and the Clyde. He had that morning only received from the Clyde a series of Amendments of an important character, suggesting an entirely different mode for the constitution of the Consultative Council. If further time were given he would place these Amendments on the Paper.

The SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (The Earl of Onslow) said, the remarks of the noble Earl had somewhat surprised him; the Bill was read a first time on the 16th of March, and a second time on the 22nd of March. On the day the House assembled after the Easter Recess, he put the Committee stage down for that day. Under those circumstances he thought their Lordships would agree with him that there had been ample time for any Amendments to the Bill to be formulated. He admitted that the noble Earl represented a powerful shipping interest, but he might say that, with the exception of one body, the Government had received no intimation that the shipping interest entertained any objection to the Bill. In deference, however, to the important interests represented by the noble Earl, he would accede to his request; but, looking to the importance of the Bill reaching the other House at an early date, he could not undertake to postpone the Committee stage beyond Monday next.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

Committee of the Whole House *put off* to *Monday* next.

COPYRIGHT (MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS) BILL.—(No. 61.)

(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (The Earl of Onslow), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it was not a Government measure, having been introduced into the other House of Parliament by a private Member. The Attorney General, however, made some modifications in and accepted it, and for that reason he was entrusted with the charge of it in their Lordships' House. It was a very short Bill, and was intended to remove what was now a very great abuse. Under the existing Law of Copyright the person owning the copyright of any musical composition might sue for the performance of it without his leave and permission, and was entitled to obtain a minimum penalty of 40*s.* and costs. That had been found to operate very harshly, more particularly in respect of copyright obtained under an old Act of Parliament. In former days the copyright of the piece was divorced from the right of performing that piece, the consequence of which had been that, where a person had parted with the copyright of his piece, he still retained the right of performing it. This right he might sell, and the purchaser might sue all over the country and obtain large costs, with 40*s.* damages at least, from any person performing the piece. He was informed that costs had been obtained not only against the persons who sung the song, but against the person who played the piano and the person who got up the concert. In one instance a penalty had been exacted from a child of 13, who had sung at a concert given in aid of a charity, and all the proceeds of the concert were absorbed in the costs of the prosecution. The Bill provided that in future the amount of damages to be awarded in respect of each unauthorized representation should be such a sum as in the opinion of the Court or Judge might be deemed reasonable, and he might award a smaller sum than £2, and the damages might be nominal. The 2nd clause left the costs of the action or proceedings in the absolute discretion of the Judge. The result would be to meet the justice of every case, and to prevent what had hitherto amounted to a gross system of blackmailing. The subject was dealt with by the Royal Commission on Copyright which sat in 1878, which recommended that the owner of the composition should only be entitled to recover damages or compensation according to the damage sustained, and that there should be no minimum penalty for an unauthorized performance. It was that recommendation which the Bill now sought to carry into effect.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

Lord BRAMWELL, in moving that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, that the object of the Bill was to confiscate certain rights which certain people now possessed. At the present time a man might compose a song and might retain the right of publishing it, or he might part with it; but in addition to that he had the exclusive right of representation, and anyone who represented or sang the song without the permission of the owner was liable to pay the owner a minimum amount of £2 for damages. Whoever had composed the song retained the exclusive right of representation, and whoever purchased that exclusive right could proceed against anyone who infringed it to recover the liquidated sum of £2 at least, and any further damages he could prove. In this Bill this £2 was called a penalty, but it was not. That was proved by the case of "Fitzball *v.* Brook" (6 Q. B., p. 873). It was incorrect to say that it was a penalty. It was a stipulated debt, which the owner of the right could recover from anyone who sang a song without his licence. If their Lordships would look at the Statute Book they would not find a word about a penalty mentioned in it. The case stood thus. Every man who had the right of representation, either because he had composed a song or purchased the right from the composer, was entitled to recover £2 every time the song was sung without his consent. He was to have, instead, a right to such damages as he could prove—an idle provision, for of course he could not prove that he was damaged by the song being sung. Why should his right be taken from him? If this Bill were only prospective the case would be different, but it was applicable to existing rights. He submitted that those rights ought not to be taken away, and that the Bill would establish a mischievous precedent. The Bill was wrong in taking away from people a right which they at present possessed and for which they had paid money. With regard to the cost of these proceedings, he should say that they ought to be like the costs of all other proceedings, and therefore it would be as well that some such provision as that contained in Section 2 of the Bill should exist. Again, the Bill provided that the proprietor of a place of entertainment should not be liable for the singing of a song unless it could be shown that he had wilfully caused it to be sung. He thought that was a very reasonable proposition, and, indeed, he doubted whether the Courts had not sometimes said that people were liable who ought not to have been made liable.

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months.")—(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, he thought the noble and learned Lord had rather argued against his own Motion, inasmuch as he admitted that two out of the four clauses in the Bill were very good clauses indeed.

LORD HERSCHELL said, that the changes embodied in the Bill were recommended by persons who had not the reputation of disregarding rights of property. Among the Members of the Royal Commission appointed to consider the subject were the Duke of Rutland, the Earl of Devon, the present Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Justice Stephen, and other highly-respectable persons, who certainly were not disposed to interfere with rights of property. He supported the provisions in this Bill, inasmuch as he was himself on the Commission which recommended the change in the law.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, he confessed that this was a matter in regard to which there was a divided opinion, and he thought it involved a greater principle than some noble Lords seemed to imagine. It raised the question whether property of this description was to be protected or not. It was not necessary for the Legislature absolutely to fix what the damages ought to be; the existence of a right to these damages ought to be treated as property. The product of a man's brain ought to be protected as much as any other kind of property, but under the general law it was left absolutely without protection. If without some such provisions as were contained in the Bill a man were to bring his action, it would be argued that it was idle to suppose that any damages had been suffered from the singing of a particular song on a particular occasion. In most cases it would be true. But it would be a different thing to say that this property should be left without any protection at all.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Lord KNUTSFORD) said, he did not care whether the 40*s.* fine was strictly recoverable as penalty or damages; but the right of copyright was preserved to the composer, and the Bill left it to the County Court Judge to decide what compensation should be given to the composer. Before the Royal Commission on Copyright, Sir Arthur Sullivan and other composers and publishers were unanimous that the existing Act required amendment. As regarded the question of damages, Sir Arthur Sullivan, and persons representing Messrs. Boosey, Messrs. Chappell, and Messrs. Novello, thought that the highest damages for singing a song might be assessed at 1*s.*, and it was even suggested that the amount should be fixed at 6*d.* If the noble and learned Lord opposite had taken the trouble to read the evidence given before the Commission, he would have seen that practically only one gentleman—a Mr. Wall, who represented a small association with a long name—"The Authors', Composers', and Artists' Copyright and Performing Right Protection Association"—opposed the Bill. This gentleman had three clients, and his plan was to watch the occasions on which these songs were sung, and then to pounce down on the giver of the entertainment or proprietor of the hall where the song was sung. It was very desirable that the depredations of this musical hawk should be stopped, and the Bill would effect that purpose. He hoped they would read it a second time, and that the Committee stage would be taken at an early date.

On Question whether the word ("now") shall stand part of the Motion, *resolved* in the *affirmative;* Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* next.

TITHE RENTCHARGE RECOVERY AND VARIATION BILL.—(No. 54.)

(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

EARL DE LA WARR said, he had a Petition to present from owners of land and other agriculturists praying for a re-adjustment of tithe rent-charge, and inviting attention to the opinions of a conference lately held at Reading, which was attended by representative agriculturists from 11 counties—namely, Berks, Oxon, Hants, Wilts, Surrey, Kent, Essex, Middlesex, Bucks, Bedfordshire, and Devonshire. The resolutions carried unanimously were to the effect that a re-valuation was necessary where tithe rent-charge bore an unfair ratio to the annual value of the land, and that no settlement of the tithe question would be satisfactory which did not free the land from a portion of the burden which was placed upon it in the days of Protection. He believed that this, to a great extent, represented the opinion of a large portion of the landowners and agriculturists, who desired to see the tithe question settled upon a fair basis, such as the altered circumstances of agriculture required. But the Bills of which the noble Marquess had moved the second reading did not touch this part of the question, save only as regarded the alteration of taking the corn averages of three years instead of seven, which seemed to him to be a change of doubtful operation. The real grievance would in no way be removed by these Bills. The grievance of the agriculturists was that while the value of the produce of the land, which was the basis of the rent-charge assessment, had decreased 30 per cent or more, no corresponding diminution had been made in the tithe rent-charge. It was true it varied slightly with the price of corn, but the basis upon which the tithe commutation was made—namely, the price of corn in 1836, remained unaltered. The price then was about 7*s.* a-bushel, whereas it was now about 4*s.* It was a re-adjustment of this and adaptation of the rent-charge to the present prices of agricultural produce which was required. The Bills before them, if they passed, would leave things much as they were. He could not see that relief would be afforded to any class, or that it would be in any way a settlement of a question which was becoming more and more a very serious one. The small occupier of his own land—and this was a very numerous class—would in no way be relieved. The tenant farmer would have to pay in additional rent what he before paid in tithe rent-charge, and the landowner, instead of being relieved, would have the unwelcome task imposed upon him of raising his rent to pay the tithe-owner. He believed the only course which would be a real and lasting remedy for a question which was one of increasing difficulty would be that Her Majesty's Government should offer such a mode of redeeming the tithe rent-charge as would enable the tithe-owner and the tithe-payer to make a reasonable and satisfactory arrangement.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said, he would remind the noble Earl that the object of the Bill was to provide, not for a re-adjustment of tithes, but a more expedient and speedy mode of recovering them than that which at present existed. Upon the whole, he preferred the method of last year as being more practicable, inasmuch as it substituted the owner for the occupier. Although the present Bill appeared to relieve the tithe-owner of the necessity of going to the tenant, the tenant was the person to whom application would have to be made after all. The tenant would find that the change which made the tithe part of the rent was not a practical relief from the state of things of which he now complained. It was true there would not still be the power to proceed by distress. There was one thing in the Bill which was distinctly unfair to the owners of property, and that was that the charge recovered under the order of the Court was to be thrown not only upon the land in question) but upon any other lands which might be held by the same occupier under the same landlord, or any land that he might hold in the same parish. Observe the effect of this. It would have the effect of charging lands with tithes which were not liable to tithes. That was a distinct violation of the rights of property, as it seemed to him, for there was no right whatever to levy tithe directly or indirectly on such lands, and to that part of the Bill he altogether objected. He greatly feared that the Bill would not succeed in its objects, but he should be glad if his objections were met. He did not desire, however, to offer any serious opposition to the Bill.

Lord ADDINGTON said, there had been a great deal of false argument raised upon the inevitable position which the tenant occupied with reference to this matter; but it was plain that the landlord could only discharge his obligation through an agent, and where could he find an agent more ready to his hand than the tenant, for this reason, that the tenant received the produce which paid the tithe? The more he examined and considered this question, the more thoroughly it appeared that the Act of 1836 was an exceedingly wise Act, and it never would have been found fault with but for the fanatical movement which had mixed up with the question of agricultural depression a number of other more irritating subjects. If they broke up the present system and took into account the present state of prices, they would have to consider the variations in the price of produce in different districts. The tenant farmers had nothing to do with the incidence of tithe. No doubt he now suffered, and suffered severely, as all connected with agriculture had suffered, from the fall of prices; but there was no way of benefiting either the tenant or the tithe-owner by any change in the law as to the collection of tithe. There was no stronger claim than that of the tithe-owner; it was also the most ancient, and took precedence of the land tax and all other charges. Such a claim the Government was bound to support. To do anything to impair it simply because it was inconvenient or unpleasant appeared to him to be a lowering of the dignity of the Government, and a shirking of the duties which the Government ought to discharge. It was not to be endured that because debtors did not like to pay, therefore creditors must take a commutation. If the Bill went into Committee he would take the opportunity of suggesting what, in his opinion, would be certain improvements in the Bill. In the meantime he submitted that the right and title of the tithe-owner were clear and unquestionable, and he deprecated any change which would inflict upon him a loss of income, which in the circumstances would be most serious and perfectly uncalled for.

Lord BRAMWELL said, he was of opinion that the Bill in various of its clauses, particularly Section 3 and Sub-section 2 of Clause 4, would require to be amended in Committee, in order to guard against its operating in an inequitable manner. With reference to the noble Marquess's other Bill, which he pointed out only applied to new tenancies, and therefore, as it stood, would have but a scanty operation indeed, he was of opinion that it would not be difficult by proper adjustment to provide for its application to existing tenancies.

The Archbishop of CANTERBURY (Dr. Benson) said, he should be ungrateful if he did not, on the part of the clergy, express their sense of the pains and personal labour and the desire to do justice to them which the noble Marquess had throughout shown in relation to this subject. The clergy had felt keenly the temporary hindrances to their spiritual work, and they were told that in order to remove these difficulties, and in order better to secure the incomes which would be left to them, they must make some concession, and that concession was understood to be one to the tithe-payer who was in difficulties. He thought that he need scarcely call the attention of their Lordships to the facts of the present position of the clergy. Many of them were already suffering very severely. It had been necessary to raise a very large fund, to be distributed with caution and delicacy, so as to avoid wounding the natural susceptibilities of a suddenly-formed class of sufferers from agricultural distress, and especially from the non-payment of tithe in those cases where the farmers and landowners were quite willing but unable to pay the tithe. The fund was not used for the purpose of rendering assistance in cases where debtors were quite able to pay tithe, and where there was simply a refusal to pay it. This fund was still being administered. Private help had also been given to clergymen, many of whom would not make their wants known; and still others were suffering who found it intolerable to apply to anyone. The suffering was very considerable from this one matter of tithe, and this Bill would inflict a further loss, which might be reckoned for two years at 8 per cent per annum, if present prices continued, by the substitution of triennial for septennial averages. Their Lordships, then, would hardly expect that the clergy could gladly welcome this Bill as a relief from their difficulties. They might accept it, but it was impossible that they should rejoice in a measure which, in coming to their assistance, nevertheless required that they should sacrifice 8 per cent at once. Strong representations had been made to him on the subject, and the Lower

House of Convocation had just passed a resolution in general approval and acceptance of the Bill, but suggesting a hope that some means might be found by which the loss under Clause 10 should not be so immediate and so high. But still the clergy accepted this proposed concession as an alternative to the concession of 5 per cent for ever, which was proposed in the Bill of last year. He understood that it was a necessary alternative, one which those who had most anxiously considered the question thought that it was fair to propose and to accept. The concession of 5 per cent proposed last year would have been most unfair upon a very large number of clergymen who had never had any difficulty in collecting their tithes, would have been most irregular in its operation, and also a lasting sacrifice of the property of the Church. Consequently they preserved the permanent interest of the Church in accepting this immediate loss, great as it was, instead of the perpetual loss of 5 per cent for ever. Looking at the Church as a permanent body with a continuous life, it was, of course, to the interest of the Church to accept this great immediate loss, and to try to do their best to lighten the blow it would inflict on individuals rather than transmit a loss which would be perpetual. With regard to this alteration from seven years' average to three years', it was only fair and candid to admit that if an improvement took place in the prices of agricultural produce the rise would be sooner felt. He only hoped that this might not hereafter be made the occasion of fresh alterations. This measure was felt to be an immediate relief to the landowners, or other tithe-payers, and the clergy desired to show their sympathy with the landowners as they expected sympathy to be shown to themselves. From the resolutions passed by the Lower House of Convocation, and as the result of a large number of conferences, it was evident that the clergy approved of the substitution, for the sake of the future interests of the Church, of the shorter for the longer average, although at much cost to themselves. They only wished to find some means of breaking the immediateness of the fall. A concession had been made by the clerical tithe-owners, and he hoped that it would be considered as the contribution of the clergy towards meeting the general depression of this particular time.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): I shall follow the example set in this debate in not making any observations with respect to the speech of the noble Earl (Earl De La Warr) who opened the debate, not from any want of respect to the noble Earl, but because the question of the re-adjustment of tithes is one of a very large and complicated character, which cannot be dealt with in a few sentences in which it would be very easy to give a false impression. My own view is that at present there is no ground for such a re-adjustment of tithes, nor are the Government prepared to undertake it. It is better, therefore, that we should not now discuss the question. With reference to the criticisms passed on the Bill, of which I cannot complain personally, I think they are to some extent due to a misunderstanding of the objects we have in view. The noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Kimberley) seeks to raise two main objections. One of them was that it was a great injustice to the rights of property to levy tithes, not only on the land from which it was due, but also on other land in the same parish held by the same owner and occupier; but that is the existing law. In Chapter 85 of the Act of 1836 the noble Earl will find it laid down that when any rent-charge shall be in arrear, land situated in that parish which shall be occupied by the same person, holding under the same landlord, shall be liable to be distrained upon. It is a very stringent provision, but we have not altered it. The noble Earl also objected that, after all, we came to the tenant as the man who must pay tithe. But consider what the situation is. The tenant, contrary to the policy of the Act of 1836, has promised in numberless instances to pay the tithe. We have just passed a Bill to make such promises impossible for the future; but promises have been made and fulfilled, and money has been collected from the tenant. There can be no question of discharging the tenant from his obligation; the only question is how you obtain the fulfilment of that obligation if he does not discharge it spontaneously. At present the clergyman can distrain, but we say that that is an objectionable method, causing great waste in costs and difficulty in the hands of the clergyman, and still more on account of the relations which exist between the clergyman and his flock, which were being seriously endangered. Our object is not to discharge the tenant from obligations voluntarily incurred, but to provide another means of enforcing it without putting the clergyman into this invidious and objectionable position. There are three persons who can obtain the tithe —the clergyman, the landowner, and the County Court Judge. The Bill of this year goes to work more directly than that of last year; and while the County Court Judge will have to be invoked at last, and although when the tenant is forced to pay it is only by execution that it could be forced, the Government place the duty of obtaining the tithe upon the landowner instead of on the clergyman. We say that no rent should be paid until this debt has been discharged, and the landlord will therefore, in his own interest, pay the debt and add it to the rent. It is not possible in the nature of things, unless you are going grossly to violate the sacredness of contract, to relieve the tenant from the promises he has made. All we do is to make the means of enforcing that obligation as little injurious to the peace and harmony of the parish and the effectiveness of the clergyman's administration as we can. That is the main principle of the Bill which I introduced. I understood that the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell) was rather indignant with us because we had not broken existing contracts, and said that from henceforth the landlord must pay, whatever the contract might have been. I confess I heard that opinion with great surprise; the noble and learned Lord is not the teacher from whom we expect such a doctrine. No doubt we should be very glad if we could, by one clause in an Act of Parliament, bring back that state of things in which the landlords should undertake the payment, but we cannot. The only other matter, I think, of importance which has been dealt with in the criticisms to which I have to reply is the 10th clause, changing the term of years over which the average is taken from seven years to three. That provision met with the most indignant remonstrance from the noble Lord below the Gangway. I do not admit that this clause does any injustice to anyone. No doubt the change from the use of the seven years' average to a three years' average may be injurious to the landlords on the one side, or to the tithe-owners on the other; but we cannot positively know to which side it will be injurious until we have experience of the prices of the next three or four years. All I can say is that the Government, in bringing forward this measure, are not consciously acting in favour of one side or of the other. Of course, it will be for your Lordships to consider whether or not it is expedient to adopt the proposed alteration. For my own part, I have no very strong opinion on the matter; but upon the whole I think that it would be expedient to sanction it, for the reason that a seven years' average is more likely to impose a high tithe upon the landowner when there is a fall in prices, and when, therefore, he is least able to pay it, than would be the case with a shorter average. Upon the whole, the provision appears to me to be a just one. I wish, however, to state frankly that I should not have put forward this proposal unless I had received from a very high quarter an intimation that it would be satisfactory to the clergy, and if they wish it to be withdrawn I will reconsider the subject. Upon the whole I think the proposed alteration a wise one, and one which is likely to be advantageous to all parties. Most of the other objections which have been made to the Bill are for discussion in Committee rather than upon the Motion for the second reading of the Bill.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Tuesday* the 8*th of May* next.

PROVISIONAL ORDERS, &c.

MOTION FOR A RETURN.

Moved, That there be laid before the House—

"Return of the several Acts of Parliament empowering the Home Office, the Privy Council, the Board of Trade, the Local Government Board, the Lord Lieutenant in Council, or other public departments, to grant provisional orders, certificates, provisional certificates, or schemes, which require to be sanctioned by Act of Parliament, or to be otherwise confirmed by Parliament; stating, in the case of each Act, whether it applies to

England, Scotland, Ireland, or the United Kingdom, the official designation of the commissioners or other officers upon whose report or inquiry the provisional order, &c. is granted by the department, whether any inquiry is held in the locality affected by the provisional order, &c., or where, and whether such inquiry is conducted in public meeting, in open court, or how otherwise."—(*The Lord Monk Bretton.*)

THE PAYMASTER GENERAL (Earl BROWNLOW) said, that some Returns upon this subject were promised last year, and were nearly ready, and if they should be considered sufficient they would save much labour and time.

LORD MONK BRETTON said, he would prefer to have a Return in the shape mentioned on the Paper, and which could be easily prepared. His object was to obtain a Return in a short and simple form.

EARL BROWNLOW said, that if a Return in a short and simple form would be considered sufficient, there would be no objection to making such a Return.

Motion *agreed to*.

Return ordered to be laid before the House.

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, to Thursday next a quarter past Ten o'clock,

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HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 24*th April*, 1888.

MINUTES.] — PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*) — *Second Reading*—Horse Guards Avenue.

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Lunacy Acts Amendment * [228].

Second Reading—Partnership * [206].

Considered as amended—*Third Reading*—Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment * [154], and *passed*.

Withdrawn — Limited Owners (Scotland) * [63]; Bankruptcy (Ireland) * [121].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

HORSE GUARDS AVENUE BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin): Perhaps the House will allow me to make one or two observations in regard to this Bill. It is a Bill for the construction of a road, to start opposite the Horse Guards from the site of what was Lord Carrington's house, and passing down by the Offices of the Board of Trade towards the Thames Embankment. The Bill contains power to the promoters to enter into agreements with the Office of Woods and Forests, and the Office of Works. Those agreements are not specified, and as they might involve certain charges on the Public Revenue I might have considered it my duty to make a special Report to the House on the matter; but the promoters of the Bill have pledged themselves to strike out altogether the powers of agreement contained in the Bill, so that the Bill will go before the Committee without them. It will then be in the form of the Westminster Improvement Bill of last Session to which I called the attention of the House, as a Bill which might involve a charge had not its promoters promised to strike out the powers of agreement in it. The House consented, on my representation, to allow the Bill to proceed with the clauses struck out. I accept the statement of the promoters in regard to the present measure, and, therefore, I do not intend to oppose the further progress of the Bill.

Motion *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed*.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE SALVATION ARMY AT TORQUAY.

MR. MALLOCK (Devon, Torquay) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he has received a letter from certain members of the Salvation Army, alleging that, having been sentenced at the Torquay Petty Sessions, on the 26th of March, to 14 days' imprisonment, they were not liberated until two days after the expiration of their sentence; and that, during the time they were detained in the police cells at Torquay, they were given an insufficient amount of food, and had neither bedding nor light; and, to what extent the said allegations are accurate?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The prisoners in question were sentenced at Torquay Petty Sessions on the 26th of March, but they did not reach Exeter Prison till the 27th; and, as the term of the imprisonment went, by law, from their reception in prison, they were not entitled to discharge till the 9th of April, when they were released. The reason of their detention in Torquay during the night of the 26th was that a noisy crowd of several hundred persons surrounded the Court House, seized the horses of the omnibus which was to convey the prisoners to the Railway Station, and endeavoured to upset the omnibus. This crowd remained, making a disturbance about the Court House till a late hour, and the authorities did not deem it prudent to remove the prisoners till the following morning, when the crowd had dispersed. The Chief Constable informs me that while in the police cells at Torquay the prisoners had sufficient food and light. They had the ordinary wooden cell beds and two blankets each.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION IN CO. LONDONDERRY.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can yet state when a Sub-Commission under the Land Act will sit in the County of Londonderry; and, how many cases await trial?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that the next sitting of a Sub-Commission in the County of Londonderry has not yet been fixed. The cases awaiting hearing number 622.

LAND COURT (IRELAND) — ESTATES AND TENANCIES UNDER THE COURT.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing the number of landed estates now under the control or jurisdiction of the Land Court of Ireland, and the number of their agricultural tenants; and showing also in what number of cases during the last two years abatements of arrears of rent have been made by orders of the Judges, and in what number of cases applications for such abatements have been refused by the Judges?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E), in reply, said, he was informed by the Land Judges that it was not practicable to give the Return asked for. To obtain the information it would be necessary to examine not only every statement in each estate, several thousand in number, but also each ruling therein. This could not be done without a great deal of trouble and inconvenience.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Can they furnish a Return showing the number of cases in which they have refused abatements?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I understand, in order to make any Return positive or negative, they would have to examine all the estates and the rulings in all the cases. As regards the Return asked for in relation to the number of estates now under the control of the Land Judges, that will be given in the Return ordered by the House of Lords, on the Motion of Lord Fitzgerald.

INLAND REVENUE — INCOME TAX—SCHEDULE (C)—RETURN.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he can lay upon the Table of the House a Return in continuation of that given on page 283 of the Report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue for 1884-5, giving the value of property assessed to Income Tax under Schedule (C) for all profits arising from annuities and dividends, distinguishing the amount assessed on dividends from British, Indian, Colonial, and Foreign Stocks for the year 1886-7, together with the duty chargeable thereon for those years?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (A LORD of the TREASURY) (Wigton) (who replied) said: The Tables to which my hon. Friend alludes have been referred to; and I observe that the information for which he asks is given in them for intervals of four or five years, the latest year being 1883-4. The information involves some trouble in collection, and cannot be given until a year after date. I therefore think that it need not be given for at least one year from the present time, which would bring it down to 1887-8, or four years from the date of the last Return.

FRANCE—MILITARY OPERATIONS IN AFRICA—COMPENSATION TO BRITISH SUBJECTS.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Messrs. Scicluna and Taylor, British subjects residing in Malta, have for some time been endeavouring to obtain from the French Government compensation for injuries to their property in Gabes, consequent on the operations of the French Military and Naval Forces; whether a French Commission awarded damages for similar injuries at Sfax for 7,000f., which was paid by the French Government; whether a French Commission assessed the damages for injuries at Gabes for 1,120f., but the case was ordered to be re-opened; whether the French Government now allege that the compensation awarded by the French Commission at Sfax was in excess of the damage done, and that the plaintiffs should be content not to press similar claims for similar injuries inflicted at Gabes; and, whether, as the question in dispute is not one of principle but of amount of damages, Her Majesty's Government will invite the French Government now to proceed to a final settlement by arbitration or other suitable means?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): The general facts of the case, as known to Her Majesty's Government, are in accordance with the Question of my hon. Friend, although the figures stated by him are not, as I believe, correct. Her Majesty's Government are not of opinion that the case is one which they could further press with propriety. I shall be happy to communicate its history to my hon. Friend; but it is too long to state on the present occasion.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—BENEFITS TO THE TAXPAYERS.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What steps he proposes to take in order to secure to the taxpayer the full benefit of the reduction about to be effected on the charge for the National Debt?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Whatever proposals I may ultimately make to the House as to the disposal of the sum saved by the reduction of the interest on the National Debt, the taxpayer will have the benefit of them, either in reduction of the National Debt or in some other way. But I am not prepared to pledge myself as to the disposal of the sum at present.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—THREATENED EVICTION AT RATHDRUM, CO. WICKLOW.

Mr. BYRNE (Wicklow, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the approaching visit of the Land Commissioners to fix fair rents in County Wicklow, a landlord named Littledale, on whose estate rents have been raised 800 per cent on the tenants' improvements, is about to evict a tenant named Mooney, of Newbawn, Rathdrum, whose case is pending a hearing by the Commissioners, and whose rent is double the valuation; whether notice of the eviction has been served on the Relieving Officer; and, whether the eviction of Mooney, his wife, and seven children, will have the support of the Irish Constabulary?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The County Inspector of Constabulary understands that the tenant referred to is shortly to be evicted for non-payment of three years' rent, amounting to £432. He also understands that the landlord has not only not raised the rents on any part of his property, but, on the contrary, has reduced them; and that, in the case of the tenant in question, he recently offered to reduce the rent from £144 a-year to £85 a-year, the Poor Law valuation being £81 a-year, and to accept £100 in lieu of the arrears. The tenant refused to accept this proposal. Notice has been served on the Relieving Officer. I am unable now to say whether the authorities responsible for the peace of the district and the due administration of the law will find it necessary to have police present should the proposed eviction be carried out. The County Inspector is not aware whether this tenant has made application to the Land Court. There is no power for the Court to stay eviction in this case, the valuation being over £50 a-year.

Mr. BYRNE said, he was informed—and he would be able to prove the statement—that the rents during six of the eight years had been increased to the extent stated.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he did not know there was any contradiction between the statement made by the hon. Gentleman and the statement he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had made to the House.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that when a tenant is served with a notice of eviction he is thereby deprived of the right to have a fair rent fixed unless he pays the whole of the rent due and the law costs included?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, that that was so.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—PRISONERS IN GALWAY GAOL.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If lately the prisoners under the Crimes Act in Galway Gaol have been permitted to take exercise twice a-day, in compliance with the usual custom in such cases?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he had already stated, in reply to a Question by the hon. Member for South Galway (Mr. Sheehy) that the Prison Rules made it absolute that prisoners should each receive two hours' exercise per day; but whether in one period of time or more was in the discretion of the Governor. As a matter of fact, however, it appeared from a Report received from the Governor of Galway Prison that all prisoners confined in that prison received their daily exercise at two periods of the day—morning and evening—until between 10th March and 7th April, when it was found necessary, in the interest of discipline in the prison, to have the exercise taken at one period of the day.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked the right hon. Gentleman, was he aware that the Prison Rules set forth that where it was possible and practicable prisoners should have their exercise every day in two portions, and not altogether at one time.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he had stated what he had believed to be the rule of the Prison Regulations.

POLICE FORCES SUPERANNUATION —LEGISLATION.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When he will introduce a Police Forces Superannuation Bill, and extend to other counties the promised provisions in respect of retirement after faithful public service accorded to the constabulary of the West Riding of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire by recent Parliamentary enac ments?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I cannot undertake to introduce a Police Superannuation Bill this Session. With the leave of the House I will state my reasons. The annual expenditure which would result from such a Bill would be large, and would, if the Local Government Bill now before the House becomes law, fall upon local rates. I do not feel justified in asking the House to pass a measure of such financial importance to ratepayers until the County Councils, which the Government propose to create, have had an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the matter. In the second place, the system of Civil Service superannuation is now under the consideration of the Royal Commission on the Civil Service. Until their Report is before Parliament it is inexpedient to introduce a large extension of the system of police superannuation.

THE RIVER THAMES—DEPOSIT OF RUBBISH IN THE ESTUARY.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the Report, stated by the right hon. Gentleman to be expected in a few days with reference to the deposit of rubbish on the fishing grounds of the Thames Estuary, is yet to hand; and, if he will say what course the Department propose to take in the matter?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.), in reply, said, that the Report had only just been sent in, and he had had no time as yet to consider the matter.

RIOTS (IRELAND)—DISTURBANCES AT TULLAMORE—MR. MERCER, R.M.

Dr. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr.

Mercer, R.M., ordered the police to attack a peaceable gathering of people at Tullamore on the 23rd ultimo; whether two men named Vickers and Byrne were injured so as to incapacitate them for work up to the present time; and, whether District Inspector Carter ordered the arrest of a young man named Burke, because he remonstrated with the police for attacking a young child?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Resident Magistrate reported that on the occasion in question three prisoners were being removed from the Railway Station to prison, when a large and disorderly crowd assembled, and endeavoured to force their way, along with the prisoners and their escort, into the prison inclosure. The Resident Magistrate thereupon directed the police to drive them back. The two men named appeared to have received some injury, though not of the serious nature alleged. District Inspector Carter did not order the arrest of Burke, nor was any attack made upon a young child.

DR. FOX: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the two men who were injured were confined for two weeks in the County Infirmary; and is it not a fact that he has received his Report from the very men incriminated.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman is aware that the only available information at the disposal of the Government is that furnished by their officers in Ireland; and it, therefore, hardly rests with the hon. Gentleman to object to these gentlemen.

DR. FOX: Considering that the statement read by the right hon. Gentleman has been contradicted by most respectable witnesses, will he grant an inquiry into the conduct of the police on that day?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will be happy to receive any statement the hon. Gentleman may put forward.

PRISONS (IRELAND) — TULLAMORE GAOL—MR. P. O'BRIEN, M.P., AND MR. HAYDEN.

DR. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Visiting Justices recommended that the hon. Member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien) and Mr. Hayden, now confined as first-class misdemeanants in Tullamore Gaol, be allowed to leave their cells for three hours out of the 24, and to use gas till 10 o'clock p.m.; and, whether they are now confined to their cells 22 out of the 24 hours, and are disallowed the use of gas after 8.30 o'clock p.m.; and, if so, why?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Visiting Justices made the recommendation stated in the Question, subject to the approval of the General Prisons Board. According to the Rules, however, these privileges could only be granted on medical grounds, which did not exist in this case. The prisoners were, however, taken out of their cells to receive visitors, and that made the period of their confinement considerably less than 22 out of the 24 hours.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS (INDIA)—REPEAL.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he has received by mail last week, as anticipated, the reply of the Government of India to the communications of the India Office on the subject of the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts in that country?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): Yes, Sir.

MR. JAMES STUART: Will the hon. Gentleman lay the Correspondence on the Table of the House?

SIR JOHN GORST asked for Notice of the Question.

INDIA—CANTONMENT LOCK HOSPITALS.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether there is at the India Office a Copy of a Circular Memorandum, No. 21, "Office of Quartermaster General in India," addressed to General Officers commanding Divisions and Districts, dated from the Army Headquarters, Simla, June 17, 1886, and signed by E. F. Chapman, Major General, Quartermaster General in India, on the subject of Cantonment Lock Hospitals; and whether he will lay that Circular Memorandum upon the Table of the House?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): No, Sir.

MR. JAMES STUART: Will the hon. Gentleman take steps to obtain the Return?

SIR JOHN GORST: I cannot possibly undertake to obtain a Return of the existence of which I have no knowledge.

MR. JAMES STUART: If I state that I have seen the Return, will the hon. Gentleman, under those circumstances, take steps to obtain it?

SIR JOHN GORST: I made a very full statement to the House some time ago, in which I said that the Secretary of State would not apply to the Government of India for any Reports and Papers on this subject until the full Report promised by the Government of India had been received, considered, and a decision founded thereon.

MR. JAMES STUART: Is the hon. Gentleman going to exclude all information outside that Report?

[No reply.]

MR. JAMES STUART: I have a right to an answer. The hon. Gentleman has refused to give the Return because he has no official knowledge of its existence; and then he says he will ask for no Papers until the Report of the Government of India has been received and a decision arrived at.

MR. SPEAKER: It is within the competence of a Minister to refuse to answer a Question.

MR. JAMES STUART: Do I understand that the hon. Gentleman refuses to answer?

SIR JOHN GORST: I have not refused to answer any Question. If the hon. Gentleman wishes for any further answers to those which I have given, I shall be much obliged if he will give the usual Notice.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): The reply of the hon. Gentleman in the first instance was yes. I think the House is entitled to know what is meant by that yes.

[No reply.]

PARKS (METROPOLIS)—THE BATTERSEA ESTATE AND WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What reason prevailed last year to depart from the arrangements proposed in 1884 to transfer to the Metropolitan Board with the Parks handed over last year the incomes of the Battersea Estate, £7,500, and the Westminster Bridge, £5,400.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (A LORD of the TREASURY) (Wigton) (who replied) said: I am afraid I do not quite understand the Question of the hon. Member. The transfer to the Metropolitan Board has been made on the terms laid down by the Act of last Session, which was considered and decided by a Select Committee of this House, whose decisions were accepted by Government.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE DISTURBANCES AT ENNIS—ACTION OF THE POLICE.

MR. LALOR (Queen's Co., Leix) said, that before he asked the Question which stood in his name, he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he could account for the discrepancy between his statement in the House on the 19th instant, that Colonel Turner's order to charge the people was given in consequence of stone throwing, and Colonel Turner's denial now that he gave any such order at all? His Question on the Paper was, Whether, considering that Colonel Turner himself, in his evidence before the Court in Ennis on the 20th instant, has denied that he ordered any charge of either police or military on the occasion of the meeting on the 8th instant; and, considering that Sergeant Cronin, who was in the yard at the time of the charge on the people, has also stated in his evidence that "he saw no stones thrown from the building," he is prepared to give any further explanation to the House of the action of the police and military on that occasion?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): With regard to the statement on the Paper, I see no reason to supplement the statement I made before. In regard to the Question of the hon. Gentleman, I am not aware that I made any such statement with regard to a charge. I do not believe I did. What I stated—and what I stated more than once—was that Colonel Turner ordered the police to clear the building by force. Whether I used the word charge or not I do not know; but I think I did not. I cannot answer for the military accuracy of every word I use.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) inquired, whether it was not a fact that, on the Motion for Adjournment on the 12th of April, the Chief Secretary distinctly stated in the House that Colonel Turner's orders to the police and military to "assault"—that was the exact expression—was in consequence of and after stone-throwing?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe that is what I did say.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS: Is not that emphatically denied by Colonel Turner?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Not to my knowledge.

Subsequently,

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): May I ask the Chief Secretary, arising out of his previous answer, as he has denied to-night in the House that Colonel Turner ordered the charge of the police, and as Colonel Turner has himself denied that he ordered the charge, under these circumstances may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is any longer prepared, if so, how is he prepared, to justify the charge of the police on that occasion?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware that I used the word "charge" in reference to the police, and what they were ordered to do upon the occasion in question. In reply to another hon. Gentleman, I have already denied that I used the word "charge." I am speaking from recollection; but I believe he will not find that I made use of that term. It is possible I may inadvertently have used the word "storm;" but I think he will find that I did not use the word "charge."

Mr. CLANCY: Considering that Colonel Turner has denied that he ordered any storming of the place either, how is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to justify the storming of the place under the circumstances?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —INCREASE OF THE CLERICAL STAFF.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether an application has been made to the Treasury for a large increase of clerical staff in the Post Office; if so, whether the greater part of this increase is necessitated by the requirements of the Savings Bank Department where the hours of service are six per day; whether there are nearly 300 Lower Division employed in that Department, whose scale of pay for seven hours' service is already fixed by Order in Council; and, whether the Treasury, instead of granting an increase of staff, will take steps to carry into effect the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments, that all offices should be placed on a seven hours' footing?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (A Lord of the Treasury) (Wigton) (who replied) said: No application has been made to the Treasury for any increase in the clerical staff of the Savings Bank, or any other branch of the Post Office. As to any recommendation which may be made by the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments, that question should be addressed to the Treasury.

BRITISH NORTH BORNEO AND THE ROYAL NIGER CHARTERED COMPANIES.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the two Chartered Companies —namely, the "British North Borneo" and the "Royal Niger," render Returns to Her Majesty's Government of the Revenue, Expenditure, and External Trade of the territories which they administer; and, whether he can inform the House as to the quantities of spirits imported during the last financial year into the territories, respectively, of the British North Borneo and the Royal Niger Companies?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): The Niger Company is bound, under Article 15 of its Charter, to furnish to the Secretary of State, periodically or otherwise, full accounts and particulars with regard to the Revenue produced by duties, and to obey his directions in respect of such duties. It is not bound to furnish Returns of its private trade. The exact amount of spirits shipped to the Niger is not known; but it may be stated that the import is being steadily reduced by the action of the Company. In 1885 the reduction was 25 per cent on the imports of 1884; in 1886, 50 per cent less than in 1884; in 1887 they were one-half of those of 1886. The British North Borneo Company does not render Returns to Her Majesty's Government of the Revenue, Expenditure, and External Trade of its territory; but Her Majesty's Government receive Reports upon the trade of the Company's ports from the Consular Agent, but have not received that for the last financial year. The value of spirits imported in 1885-6 was $14,478.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—CAPITATION GRANTS TO REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS

COLONEL DAWNAY (York, N.R., Thirsk) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, after the passing of the Local Government Bill, it is intended to continue the present Treasury capitation grants to reformatory and industrial schools, or whether the payment of such grants will in future devolve upon the County Councils, in addition to the contributions already made to such schools by Quarter Sessions; and, whether it is intended that, in the future, the Home Office will retain any power in the management and control of reformatory and industrial schools, or whether such management and control will devolve entirely on the County Councils?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The present powers of Quarter Sessions with regard to this matter are, under Clause 3 (1), VIII. of the Local Government Bill, to be transferred to the County Councils; but it is not intended either to discontinue the present grant in aid of the maintenance of children in such schools or to take away any of the jurisdiction of the Home Office in respect thereto.

RIVER WEAVER—CONTRIBUTION TO THE COUNTY FUND.

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) who had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that the Trust of the River Weaver, the largest inland navigation in the Kingdom, is a self-elected body; that its income is derived almost entirely from the salt trade; that its surplus funds have for more than 160 years been used to relieve the county rate; that the salt trade has in this way, and during that time, been taxed to the extent of more than £2,000,000 sterling; that the salt trade is, and has long been, in a deplorably depressed condition; that the sources of salt production have of late years been rapidly developed, and bear no corresponding tax for the benefit of any public authority, whilst they have greatly diminished the demand for Cheshire salt; that the salt manufacturers of Cheshire have since 1866 been taxed, in common with other ratepayers of the county, under the Cattle Plague Act; that the cost to the county of this Act is, for instalment of loan and interest, £14,227 15*s.* per annum; that this loan will be paid off in 1896; that under a recent Act the Trustees of the River Weaver contribute £15,000 a-year to the County Fund; and that the constitution of the Weaver Trust has been repeatedly condemned by the Board of Trade, on the ground that it imposed a tax upon trade; and whether he is prepared to recommend, for the management of the River Weaver, the constitution of a public Trust resembling the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, and that the payment from the Trust to the County Fund should cease at the date of the last payment on account of the Cattle Plague Loan in 1896, or at an earlier date? said, he wished to postpone it.

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.) in reply, said, that he was prepared to answer it at once.

MR. BRUNNER wished to afford the right hon. Gentleman full time to look into the matter, in order that he might give it his careful consideration.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS — LICENCE ON PEDLARS AND CHIMNEY SWEEPERS.

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will repeal or diminish the licence on pedlars and chimney sweepers?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The licences on pedlars and chimney sweepers are not Excise licences but police licences, and are imposed not for Revenue purposes, but for purposes of police. The Government do not propose to repeal or diminish them.

THE CONSULAR SERVICE—POSTAGE ON OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

MR. A. THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to an extract from a letter written by one of Her Majesty's Consular officers, and quoted in *The Shipping World* for April, in these words:—

> "I should have stated: I have no allowance made to me for postage in this Vice Consulate; and as my correspondence (especially answering interrogations of a similar nature to yours) is at times heavy, I am compelled to post unstamped those letters for which postage has not been enclosed;"

whether the Regulation of the Foreign Office that no fixed allowances are made to cover postages, but accounts of expenditure on account of official postage are sent in periodically, and are paid when passed, applies to postage on Consular answers to merchants, manufacturers, shipowners, and traders of this country; whether the Foreign Office is aware that allowance is made by the American Government to her Consular Representatives abroad to cover postages upon all correspondence arising out of the Consular appointment, and embracing answers to American merchants, manufacturers, shipowners, and traders; and, whether the Foreign Office, or the Board of Trade, will undertake that Her Majesty's Consular officers shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in postage upon correspondence with manufacturers, merchants, shipowners, traders, and others, arising out of their official appointment, and intended to benefit the trade and commerce of this country, and will issue a Circular to the Consular corps giving instructions accordingly?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Officers in the Consular career are allowed to charge in their accounts with the Foreign Office the cost of official postage on answers addressed by them in their Consular capacity to merchants, manufacturers, shipowners, and traders of this country; but trading Consular officers are only re-imbursed the postage on official letters or papers addressed to the Foreign Office or to their superintending Consuls on application being made by them for such reimbursements. Her Majesty's Government are not aware of the practice of the American Government in this respect; and the Secretary of State does not see any reason to alter the practice of this Service.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—ALLEGED INSURANCE FRAUDS AT BELFAST.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the serious criminal charges brought against several citizens of Belfast in connection with wholesale frauds alleged to have been committed against a certain Insurance Company there; whether serious charges have also been made in the Belfast Police Court against the Company; whether this Company is at present conducting the prosecution against two of its own officials, and also against one of its largest policy holders, who is a member of the Belfast Town Council; whether charges have been made that the Company sought to condone the alleged offence of this policy holder, by accepting surrender of the policies said to have been fraudulently obtained by him and by returning him the premiums which he had paid; and, whether, under the circumstances, it is the intention of the Government to take the conduct of the prosecution into its own hands, instead of leaving the conduct of the prosecution in the hands of a Company against which such charges have been made?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): I communicated with the Attorney General with reference to this Question. It is obviously a matter requiring ample consideration; and as the Question only appeared on the Paper this morning I must ask the hon. and learned Member to be good enough to postpone it.

MR. CLANCY: Until what day?

MR. MADDEN: Monday.

Subsequently,

MR. CLANCY: Since the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland asked me to postpone my Question until Monday, I have ascertained that it is possible that the trial may have concluded before that day—possibly by Thursday next. Under these circumstances, might I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether he can give an immediate answer to the Question?

MR. MADDEN: The only reason why I asked the hon. and learned Member to postpone the Question was, that it only appeared on the Paper this morning, and it was perfectly impossible to communicate in time and to receive an answer from the Attorney General, with whom the decision rests.

MR. CLANCY: What day then will the hon. and learned Gentleman be prepared to give an answer?

MR. MADDEN: On Thursday. The hon. and learned Member is, no doubt, aware that Questions are not usually put upon the Paper on Wednesday.

MR. CLANCY: Nevertheless, I will put the Question down for to-morrow.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) — GOVERNMENT BALANCES AT THE BANK OF ENGLAND.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the case that the Government are, during the current financial year, issuing Treasury Bills to the amount of £1,000,000 sterling, dated 4th May, 1888, and payable three or six months after date at the option of the persons tendering, notwithstanding that the Conversion Scheme is now practically assured, and that the balances at the credit of the various accounts of the Government with the Bank of England amounted in the aggregate on 18th instant to close on £8,000,000 sterling; and, whether it would not be possible, by means of legislation or otherwise, to draw upon the above balances at the credit of the Government, and to postpone the issue of Treasury Bills until these balances were very much reduced, thereby effecting a considerable saving to the Imperial taxpayer?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Treasury propose to renew £1,000,000 of the bills falling due on the 4th proximo, which amounted to £1,500,000. Therefore, £500,000 will be temporarily dropped. Regard being had to further issues which are about to be made out of the Exchequer to the National Debt Commissioners on account of last year's Old Sinking Fund, and the extraordinary requirements in respect of the payment of the bonus on Converted Consols and Reduced Threes, and of the quarter's dividend on Converted Consols, it would not be possible or prudent, according to the best forecasts that can be made, to lower the Exchequer balance still further. The House may rely on my keeping it as low as possible. At the same time, I may call attention to the fact that when money is extremely cheap—when, for instance, it can be borrowed at 1 per cent.—it is desirable often to secure what we are likely to want while the rate is low, rather than to have to pay more by postponing the borrowing till the last moment, when rates may have risen.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) ELECTIONS BILL—AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS IN WALES.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he is aware that the majority of agricultural labourers in Wales live in the homesteads of the farmers who employ them; and, whether he is prepared to amend the Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill, so as to enfranchise and enable them to take their share in local government?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am not aware of the circumstance referred to by the hon. Gentleman in his first Question. I would rather reserve my answer to his second Question until we are engaged in the discussion on the Bill.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—THE ENDOWED SCHOOLS OF WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the hon. Member for the Penrith Division, as a Charity Commissioner, Whether the Charity Commissioners have received replies to the inquiries directed during last Session to the Endowed Schools of Wales and Monmouthshire, as to the carrying out of the provisions made in the schemes of the Endowed Schools Commissioners for mensuration, navigation, land surveying, and other forms of technical instruction?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith), in reply, said, if the hon. Member would move for the information he desired, there would, as far as the Commission was concerned, be no objection to granting it in the form of a Return.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—SENTENCES ON —— FERRITER, A NEWSAGENT AT DINGLE.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a newsagent named Ferriter, residing at Dingle, was recently sentenced to three months' imprisonment, with hard labour, for selling *United Ireland;* and, whether that sentence was on last Saturday confirmed on appeal?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The man referred to appears to have been sentenced in March last to the term of imprisonment stated for selling *United Ireland* newspaper containing reports of illegal meetings. This sentence is stated to have been confirmed on appeal, after the refusal of the prisoner to give a promise that he would not repeat the offence.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD: May I ask whether, if such sentences can be passed and confirmed, it can any longer be affirmed with truth that freedom of the Press exists in Ireland?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid.); May I ask upon what principle persons are selected for prosecution for the selling of newspapers; and why any difference should be made between Ferriter and myself, I having often sold papers containing reports of suppressed meetings?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The only ground of difference as regards some persons is their unimportance.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether Ferriter is the only person under sentence for selling *United Ireland;* whether prosecutions have been stopped for that offence; and whether, under the circumstances, he can see his way to allowing the release of this man?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not quite catch the connection between the concluding part of the Question and that which preceded it. If the hon. Gentleman puts down a Question on the Paper, I will be able to tell him whether any other person besides Ferriter is in prison for this offence.

DR. TANNER: Arising out of the answer which the right hon. Gentleman gave to me, I wish to ask him if he makes such distinction between individuals, or between an humble person like myself, and a poor, honest fellow like Ferriter——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Subsequently,

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I desire, Sir, with your permission, to ask the Chief Secretary a Question with reference to the sentence on Ferriter, whether he is aware that Ferriter, who is now under sentence of three months' imprisonment for selling, five months ago, a copy of *United Ireland* containing a report of a meeting in the county of Clare, has been eight times prosecuted within the last year by the authorities for these offences, and in February, 1887, received a sentence of two months.

MR. SPEAKER: This is a Question that would require Notice, and to be put upon the Paper in the usual way.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: If you will allow me, Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to argue the question; but what I wish to submit are facts which are quite within the Chief Secretary's knowledge, and I simply wish to ask him whether, bearing in mind those facts, he does not consider that Ferriter has been already sufficiently punished? And, further, I would like to ask him whether the fact of there being prosecutions with a punishment of three months' imprisonment still in force, were in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman, and account for his pleasantry as to the importance of Ferriter.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Gentleman full information with regard to the previous career of Ferriter, although he appears to bear a bad character.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: He is an honest, respectable man.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the question of whether I think that he has been adequately punished, I would point out that that rests with the Judge and not with me.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin, Co., N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman repeat outside the House that Ferriter is a bad character?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. CLANCY: Mr. Speaker——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—THE DISTURBANCES AT SKIBBEREEN—ALTERATION OF QUESTION.

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory), who had on the Paper the following Question:—To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true, as stated in yesterday's *Daily News* that at Skibbereen, on Saturday, there was a serious conflict between the police and the people, in which several people were batoned; and, whether, on the same occasion, a sadler, named Kelly, whilst standing in his own doorway, in Townsend Street, received several violent baton blows on his head? said, that the Question as it appeared on the Paper had been so watered down that——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman will be good enough to put the Question as it appears on the Paper.

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD; Well, Sir, I refuse to put the Question as it stands on the Paper.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE FITZMAURICE FAMILY—SENTENCES ON TWO FARMERS.

Mr. W. A MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that, at a Crimes Act Court, held last Saturday, at Listowel, County Kerry, two farmers, named respectively Dooling and Gallivan, were sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour, for no graver offence than that they left the chapel at Lixnaw last Sunday, and induced others to do the same, at the moment when Nora Fitzmaurice, whose father was recently murdered, entered the building?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): Sir, the offence of which these persons were accused, and for which they have been sentenced by the Court of First Instance, was the dastardly one of intimidating a poor girl for aiding in bringing to justice her father's murderers. On the character of the evidence by which this charge was supported it would not be proper to say anything, as an appeal is pending.

BURMAH—THE RUBY MINES.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is the fact, that the Burmah Ruby Mines cannot be visited by Europeans except by special permission of the Government of India; whether the Government have recently granted such special permission to a representative of the firm of Messrs. Gillanders, Arbuthnot, and Co.; whether this firm were in negotiation with the Government for a concession of these mines, without competition, at two lakhs of rupees per annum; whether the negotiation for a concession upon such terms was defeated by the action of Messrs. Streeter, who urged the adoption of competition, and in such competition in April, 1886, sent in the highest tender, which was provisionally accepted, offering a price double of that previously offered by Messrs. Gillanders, Arbuthnot, and Co.; and, whether it is intended to afford the latter firm a renewed opportunity of obtaining a contract which they were thus prevented from securing without competition at an inadequate price, and for which, under fair competition, they were largely outbidden?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): (1) The permission of the Chief Commissioner is required. (2) It is granted to agents of all respectable firms, and if Messrs. Gillanders, Arbuthnot, and Co. have applied for leave, it has, no doubt, been granted. (3) Yes. (4) Messrs. Streeter offered four lakhs. The competition was between them and Messrs. Gillanders only. (5) Until the Report of the expert sent to the Mines has been made, no decision, as I have frequently stated, will be arrived at.

BURMAH—THE RUBY MINES.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the offer of Captain Pratten, on behalf of Messrs. Streeter, to take a lease of the Ruby Mines in Burmah under certain conditions as to the working and arrangements with the Natives, was formally accepted by the Indian Government; was this acceptance given with the full knowledge of Lord Kimberley; did the Messrs. Streeter fully undertake all the conditions required; and, upon what ground has the present Secretary of State for India repudiated these arrangements?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): (1) There was no such acceptance as to make a binding contract. (2) Lord Kimberley was aware of what took place. (3) I understand they were ready to do so. (4) The Secretary of State has not repudiated any arrangement which had become binding on the Government of India.

INDIA—STATE OF HYDERABAD—CONCESSION OF MINING RIGHTS.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If it is true that the concession of all the mining rights in the State of Hyderabad, granted to a syndicate, with the sanction of the Government of India, for £150,000, was immediately re-sold in London to a Company for £1,000,000; if, in order to force up the prices of this Company's shares, the Nizam was persuaded by his late Home Secretary, Abdul Hak, who had recommended the concession, to invest £150,000 in the purchase of shares at a premium; if it is the case, as stated by Sir Salar Jung, that—

> "A special Committee, composed of India Office officials, was appointed to watch Abdul Hak's proceedings, and give him advice during the course of his negotiations;"

if the India Office was cognisant of, and gave its sanction to, such an investment of money belonging to a Native Prince under its protection; and, if he will lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the Yellow Book published at Hyderabad, in which Abdul Hak gives a full account of these transactions?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The contract of January 7, 1886, between the Government of the Nizam and Messrs. Watson and Stewart for the grant of mining rights in Hyderabad was described by me, in reply to a Question in the House of Commons, on June 27, 1887. The contract itself, the negotiations which led to it, and the circumstances under which it was sanctioned by the Government of India and the Secretary of State, can be found in Papers laid before Parliament in September, 1887. For the subsequent transactions of Messrs. Watson and Stewart, of the Company formed, and of the Nizam's Government in relation thereto, the Secretary of State has no responsibility. A Committee of the Council of India had in 1883 the question of a grant of mining rights in connection with the proposed extension of the Nizam's State Railway under consideration. Their conclusions are to be found in the Papers above-mentioned, page 3, and were adverse to such grants. The matter was not again under the consideration of the Council, or any Committee thereof, till after the contract of January 7, 1886, had been executed, with the approval of the Government of India. On May 16, 1887, the Secretary of State received a telegram from the Government of India in these words—

> "Hyderabad mining operations promise well. Nizam's Government wishes to take shares in the Company. The Resident thinks this desirable, and recommends our raising no objection, while accepting no responsibility. We have agreed."

No action was taken on this telegram; and the Secretary of State was neither aware of the actual purchase of shares nor gave any assistance to Abdul Hak in relation thereto by appointment of a Special Committee or otherwise. If the hon. Member will move for the Yellow Book it will be laid on the Table.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN asked, whether the hon. Gentleman meant to say that the Government had no responsibility for this contract? How did it happen that the Government of India were consulted about the purchase of these shares, and then allowed a Native Prince to come into the London market without seeing that he was not shamefully robbed.

SIR JOHN GORST said, the Question was an argumentative one, and Notice of it ought to be given.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): How is the hon. Gentleman able to contend that the Secretary of State had no responsility for the action of the Goverment of India?

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked, will the hon. Gentleman state whether, when Colonel Marshall telegraphed to Abdul Hak in England as to the purchase of these shares that the purchase and the arrangements connected with them were satisfactory, he had no authority on the part of the Indian Government to do so, and that the Indian Government accepted no responsibility?

SIR JOHN GORST said, the hon. Member had better give Notice of the Question.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—SURTAX ON BOTTLED WINES.

MR. SEAGER HUNT (Marylebone, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the duty on wine has always been levied at an uniform rate per gallon; and, whether the new surtax on bottled wines amounts to 1*s*. 8*d*. per gallon if the wine be imported in Imperial quarts or pints, but to 2*s*. 6*d*. per gallon if in the ordinary bottles and half-bottles now mostly in use; and, if so, what is the object of such differential taxation of the same article?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, the duty had not always been levied at an uniform rate. The purport of the Question of the hon. Member was why Imperial quarts had been inserted in the Resolution instead of Reputed quarts. The fact was that the Imperial quart and its multiples were the only measures known to the law, and were invariable measures; whereas the Reputed quart was a variable measure. He admitted that, under the Resolution, if the importers of wine put it into Imperial quarts they would pay somewhat less of duty than they would otherwise pay.

ARMY (INDIA)—DEPUTY SURGEON GENERAL AND "HALF STAFF."

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is the case that an executive officer of the Medical Staff in India, who officiates for less than one month as Deputy Surgeon General, in the absence of the Deputy Surgeon General on sick leave or furlough, receives no allowances for the period, although he performs the duties in addition to his other duties; whether, in such an instance, the "half-staff" of the appointment reverts to the State; whether the acting officer would be held pecuniarily liable in the event of loss of stores or other mistakes; whether officers officiating on the Military (Combatant) Staff, in a similar way, would draw the "half-staff" for broken periods; and, why the difference is made in the case of the medical officers?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): If an officer were regularly appointed to officiate as Deputy Surgeon General, he would receive pay as such; but if merely appointed to take charge of the current routine clerical work of the Office, he does not receive any extra allowance for this temporary duty. (2) Yes. (3) The Government of India report that he would be liable, but only I imagine to the extent to which he is personally responsible. (4) There is no parallel between the two, as the one is an Administrative Department, the other an Executive one.

CEYLON—DEATH OF MR. GUNN, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been directed to certain statements in *The Ceylon Press* regarding the death of the late Mr. Gunn, an official of the Public Works Department, alleged to have been caused by the harsh treatment he had received; and, whether the Correspondence relating to this case will be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Mr. Gunn, after having a pension awarded to him in 1885, was re-appointed in 1886 as District Engineer; since which time there has been no Correspondence respecting him. Perhaps my hon. Friend will give me a reference to the newspaper notices to which he alludes, as I have not seen them.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE SUB-COMMISSION AT ANTRIM.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to his reply on the 12th instant, Whether he can now state at what time the next sitting of a Sub-Commission will be held to hear fair rent applications in the County of Antrim; whether, considering that nearly 4,000 applications remain unheard in the County of Down, it is still the intention of the Government to send to the County of Antrim after 1st May next the Sub-Commission at present sitting in the County of Down; and, whether he is aware that a large number of ejectment decrees have been obtained, and eviction notices served in the County of Down in respect of holdings where the old rents were demanded and sued for, notwithstanding that the tenants, having made their applications to have fair rents fixed before the 1st of November last, are entitled to the benefit of the reduced rents from the 1st of May last?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am sorry to say that, as the Question was only put on the Paper last night, I have not been able to get the necessary information. Perhaps, with regard to the last paragraph, the hon. Gentleman would define any case in which an ejectment decree having been applied for by the landlord, and the tenant applied for a stay of proceedings pending the fixing of a fair rent, the Court has refused to stay proceedings accordingly.

Mr. M'CARTAN: What course will the right hon. Gentleman adopt if I do so?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will give it my very best consideration.

Mr. M'CARTAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that at the present rate of progress it would take six years to fix fair rents for all the tenants who have applied in County Down, although they are entitled to a reduction since May last?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: However long it may take to hear the cases makes no matter. The tenant will be no pecuniary loser, because the landlord would have to disgorge. What I point out is that if the tenant on an ejectment being applied for were to raise an objection in Court it would be stayed.

Mr. M'CARTAN: But all the while the tenants are required to pay impossible rents. Will the right hon. Gentleman supply them with funds?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Gentleman will supply me with the case of any tenant who during the period of appeal has paid the full rent, or of any landlord who has asked him to do so, I will inquire into it.

Mr. M'CARTAN: I will supply the right hon. Gentleman with a number of cases of tenants who are unable to pay.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—WHEEL AND HORSE TAXES—EXTENSION TO SCOTLAND.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will take steps to ascertain the opinions of Scotch Members on the subject of the extension of the Wheel Tax and Horse Tax to Scotland; whether he is aware that there has been no general demand in Scotland of recent years for relief to local rates from Imperial Funds; and, whether he will, in the absence of such demand, abstain from imposing upon Scotland new and additional taxation? The hon. Gentleman complained that the Question did not appear on the Paper in the form in which he handed it in. He had based it upon a statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget Speech, quoting the words used; and without that basis his Question was hardly intelligible.

Mr. SPEAKER said, the Question had been altered under a known Rule of the House, for the purpose of avoiding controversy as to what had previously passed in the House.

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) asked, whether it was not the fact that the assessments of the Poor Law and School Board and other rates pressed very heavily upon people?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I will establish a basis for the Question of the hon. Member opposite by admitting and reminding the House, if necessary, that in my Budget Speech I alluded to the extension of the proposed Wheel and Horse Taxes to Scotland, and that I drew a distinction between England and Scotland, inasmuch as in Scotland there would this year be no reform of local government, and so the two countries did not stand on an entirely similar footing. And I said I would pay attention to Scotch opinion on the matter. I am not aware whether or not there has been as general a demand in Scotland as there has been in England for relief to local rates from Imperial funds. I gather, however, from the Question of the hon. Member who succeeded the hon. Member for West Edinburgh, that there certainly is some demand for local relief. I will confer with the Secretary for Scotland and the Lord Advocate on this question, and endeavour to ascertain the Scotch opinion; but if Scotch Members consider that this matter ought to be treated from the Scotch point of view, I hope they will not think it necessary to vote against a Resolution framed according to the English point of view, when English Members may be asked to decide the question as far as it affects themselves.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, the right hon. Gentleman had told them that the exemption of Scotland from the tax was a question for the opinion of Scotch ratepayers. How was an answer to that question to be ascertained except through the expressions of opinion of the Representatives of the Scotch ratepayers in this House?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he did not wish to tone down in any way the answer he had given. He should not give an answer to this Question without consultation with the Secretary for Scotland and the Lord Advocate. He would confer with them, and would communicate through them with Scotch Members on the subject.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF MAIN ROADS.

Mr. LEAKE (Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Will the contribution under the proposed Local Government Bill from the County Councils to District Councils for the maintenance and repair of main roads be the entire expenditure legalized by "The Highways and Locomotive Amendment Act, 1878," and not, as at present, the half of such expenditure?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): All main roads are to be wholly maintained and repaired by the County Council, except in the case of an Urban Authority which, in accordance with the provisions of the Bill, claim to retain under their own control the maintenance of main roads within their district. In that case, as I have previously stated in reply to Questions in this House, where a contribution from the County Council is to be made to the District Council, it will be based on the total expenditure for maintenance of the road. Under Clause 15 (3) of the Bill, the amount of this contribution is to be settled by agreement, or, in default of an agreement, by arbitration.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) NEWSPAPER ACT — REGISTRATION FOR POSTAGE — "WEST LONDON ADVERTISER."

Mr. FIRTH (Dundee) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that the Postal Authorities have recently refused to register *The West London Advertiser* as a newspaper, and refused to transmit many hundred copies of the paper through the halfpenny post; and, what is the explanation of this?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): In the case of the publication to which the hon. Member refers it was found that, in the absence of a sufficient quantity of news matter to meet the requirements laid down in the Newspaper Act, a portion of the Paper had been printed twice over. The attempted evasion was, indeed, admitted by the publisher. Under these circumstances, the paper was, of course, refused registration.

Mr. FIRTH asked, whether the refusal applied only to one issue of the paper?

Mr. RAIKES said, that he had understood the Question of the hon. Member as applying to one particular issue. If the requirements of the Newspaper Act were complied with in future, the publication would, of course, be treated accordingly.

CRIMINAL CASES—INCREASE OF SENTENCES ON APPEAL.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether there is any practice prevailing in Courts of Quarter Sessions in England to aggravate sentences in appeals in criminal cases, as is now being done in cases of appeal in Ireland?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight);

The Courts of Quarter Sessions in England have power to confirm, reverse or modify any sentence of the Court appealed from, and exercise any power which the Court of First Instance could have exercised. Whether this power has been exercised in any, and, if so, in how many cases, I am unable to say without communicating with the Clerks of the Peace; but there cannot properly be said to be any practice in the matter, as each case must depend upon its special circumstances.

WAR OFFICE—COURT MARTIAL ON MAJOR TEMPLER.

Colonel DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) asked the right hon. and learned Member for Brighton, What was the action of the Deputy Judge Advocate General in connection with the court martial of Major Templer?

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Sir William Marriott) (Brighton): I have received a letter from the Deputy Judge Advocate General, which I will read with the permission of the House—

"April 21, 1888.

"A misapprehension exists regarding my connection with the prosecution of Major Templer, and I think I may fairly ask to have it corrected in whatever manner you may think proper. I did not initiate, recommend, or in any way take part in that prosecution. My share in the matter consisted in little more than answering a Question as to whether certain conduct, if proved, would constitute any, and, if so, what, offence under the Army Act. The facts are shortly these:—On the 18th of January the case was sent to me by the Military Authorities for an opinion. It contained statements which appeared to me to show that Major Templer had brought himself within the penal sections of the Army Act. Of these statements some were made by officers, and some by persons who, though in a humble sphere of life, were not apparently unworthy of belief, and who, as far as could be judged, had no motive for falsehood in the matter. Upon the statements thus submitted to me, and, of course, upon the assumption that they could be substantiated, I gave an opinion in reply that there was, *primâ facie*, a case against Major Templer, and I indicated the form of charge that would apply. But I added that the evidence before me wanted strengthening in certain important respects, and that the prospect of a conviction would be affected by the ability or inability of the prosecution to show (even assuming the visits to Birmingham to be proved) that Major Templer had, in fact, disclosed secrets which it was his duty not to disclose. This opinion was sent to the Horse Guards on the 21st of January. Further than this it was not my duty to take any step, and I took no step whatever. The expediency of resorting to a court martial became a question for the Military Authorities, and the conduct of the case was for the Legal Department of the Treasury. Neither rested in the least degree with

"Yours very truly,

"J. C. O'Dowd.

"The Right Hon the Judge Advocate
"General."

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): May I ask why the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself did not advise in the matter?

Sir WILLIAM MARRIOTT: Because it is not the duty of the Judge Advocate General to advise in cases of courts martial until they are completed, and then his duty is to advise whether they have been carried on according to law; but the same Judge does not advise as to how they should be carried on.

Mr. CHILDERS: On that arises the question why that duty is thrown upon the Deputy? I can say that no such arrangement existed when I was at the War Office.

Sir WILLIAM MARRIOTT: I can explain. There were formerly two Deputy Military Judge Advocates, and it was their duty to answer such Questions. Two years ago the office of one of them was abolished; and, there being only one Military Deputy, the Deputy Judge Advocate had to take his turn with him. The Military Deputy could not be present, and the duty fell on Mr. O'Dowd.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): Are the duties different which are thrown upon the Legal Deputy Judge Advocate and the Military Deputy Judge Advocate respectively?

Sir WILLIAM MARRIOTT: Yes.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.—THE WRIT FOR THE ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN DIVISION OF DUBLIN.

Colonel WARING (Down, N.): I wish to ask the hon. Member for West Cavan, When he intends to move for a Writ for the election of a Member for the St. Stephen's Green Division of Dublin?

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): Mr. Speaker, I intend to move for the new Writ as soon as I get instructions from my Chief.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE, 1882—RULE 2 (ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE).

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—INCREASE OF SENTENCES ON APPEAL.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Londonderry) rose in his place, and asked for leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the departure from the long established practice in Irish County Courts by the new system of increasing sentences in Criminal Cases on Appeal, as in the instances of the Reverend Mr. M'Fadden, P.P., Mr. Blane, M.P., Mr. Flanagan, Messrs. Coffey, Kilmartin, and O'Higgins; and, also, to the different method of treating prisoners convicted of the same offence.

The pleasure of the House not having been signified—

Mr. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen:—

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said the question which he wished to bring under the notice of the House was really one of urgency, seeing that, so far as Ireland was concerned, it involved a new system of hearing appeals from convictions, under the Crimes Act, which had never prevailed in England. Certain County Court Judges in Ireland, upon hearing appeals, had not only confirmed the convictions, but increased the sentences. This was an entirely new departure, which would not be tolerated in England. Questions had been put to the Government on the subject, and the House was coldly told that there was no settled practice one way or the other. Surely if the course pursued in Ireland was a proper one, and was in conformity with the practice in England, it was surprising that in a House containing so many English lawyers, magistrates, and Chairmen of Quarter Sessions, no hon. Gentleman would get up to tell them of any cases in recent years in which the prisoners making an appeal for a remission of sentence were answered by having the penalty doubled. Although he was no lawyer, he had lived long enough in this country, and had watched the progress of affairs with sufficient attention, to know that it had never been the practice here. He wished to know, therefore, how it was that this new practice had suddenly sprung up in Ireland, and how it was that within a very few days there had been five, six, or seven striking examples of this new theory of British law in connection with Courts of Appeal? Within a very few days—and that was why he called it a matter of urgency—there had been numerous cases of appeal which had been heard by the County Court Judges and answered by an increase of sentence. He considered it was necessary for the House of Commons and the English public to know what was going on in Ireland, and whether it was right and Constitutional to make a criminal appeal like a game of double or quits. If that was to be the practice in future, he thought the House of Commons should distinctly understand it, and the English public have an opportunity of saying whether they approved of it. The first appeal to which he proposed to call attention was the case of Father M'Fadden—a model parish priest, a philanthropist of the purest kind—whose acquaintance he was proud to possess, and who was well known to many Englishmen. In the poor region in which he served as parish priest he had been the means of saving more lives than even the right hon. Gentleman's system of government had been the means of extinguishing. Well, Father M'Fadden made a speech—which he did not propose to read—which led to his arrest, and after the case was heard by the magistrates the rev. gentleman was sentenced to three months' imprisonment. He would not discuss whether that sentence was right or wrong. Father M'Fadden appealed to a higher court, presided over by that eminent lawyer and consistent politician—Dr. Webb. Dr. Webb, like other lawyers, had changed his opinions. He was not, however, going to find fault with the learned gentleman for that; it was not, perhaps, for the House of Commons to bear too heavily upon men who changed their opinions; but when Father M'Fadden was brought before Dr. Webb his appeal was answered by increasing the sentence from three to six months. He was unable to say what induced Dr. Webb to think that the original sentence was not heavy enough. To some extent the bitterness of the sentence was mitigated by allowing Father M'Fadden to be treated as a first-class misdemeanant; but the punishment was, nevertheless, increased from three months to six. The same Judge had before him his hon. Friend the Member for South Armagh (Mr. Blane). His hon. Friend had been sentenced to four months' imprisonment for a speech he had delivered. The learned Judge drew a distinction in that case. He considered his hon. Friend the greater criminal of the two, because he did not live in the precise region in which the speech was delivered; he was only an Ulster man. No doubt, the hon. Gentleman was speaking in an Ulster county, and was Member for a division of an Ulster county, but because the speech was not delivered in the actual division he represented, the learned Judge regarded him as a kind of intruder or invader of the district, and appeared unable to understand what concern an Ulster man could have for the well-being of any part of Ulster except that which he lived in himself. Dr. Webb accordingly increased the sentence from four months to six, with the additional stigma of not allowing the hon. Gentleman to be treated as a first-class misdemeanant, but regarded as an ordinary criminal. His hon. Friend was taken away in a third-class carriage, and thrust into a common gaol. He thought the House would admit that these were two remarkable cases. He came next to the case of John Kilmartin, Timothy Coffey, and Thomas O'Higgins, who had been sentenced by the magistrates to six weeks' imprisonment with hard labour for advocating the Plan of Campaign. They appealed against the sentence, and the appeal was heard in Galway, on Monday, by Recorder Henn. Mr. Henn wound up the case very briefly by increasing Coffey's sentence from six weeks to four months; Kilmartin's from six weeks to three months; and confirmed the judgment in O'Higgins' case, but relaxed the sentence by allowing the prisoner to be treated as a first-class misdemeanant. In none of these cases was there any new evidence whatever. No additional facts were imported into any of them to alter the complexion of the case from the day it was brought before the Minor Court and decided there. There was, also, an appeal the other day at Ennis, in the case of a man named Flanagan, who had been sentenced to three months' imprisonment for having refused to sell bread to a Boycotted person. He did not propose to enter into that case, nor to say whether the sentence was just or unjust. He would only make this remark—that, upon going through the case, he could find no evidence or suggestion that the prisoner, in his refusal to sell bread, had been acting in obedience to any kind of organized conspiracy, or in concert with anybody whatever. Whether rightly or wrongly, he seemed to have acted entirely on his own motion. Nevertheless, he was sentenced to three months' imprisonment for what he did, and the case was heard on appeal before Judge Hicks, who went through the evidence, and wound up by saying—

> "I will inflict upon you the full term the law can inflict, and I sentence you to six months' imprisonment with hard labour."

All these cases had occurred within a few days. In the same newspaper in which he found a record of these cases, he found that the Viceroy had intervened by one act of mercy in reference to a sentence, but it was only in a case where a man had murdered his wife—none of your unpardonable political offences. Then they had this fact before them—that this practice, which he pronounced to be, if not absolutely illegal, an entirely new system in Ireland, growing up with such frightful rapidity that six or seven cases had occurred within the last few days. He did not believe that the House of Commons had appreciated the extent to which this practice was carried, and he was quite certain that the English people knew little or nothing about it. If they did know, he was satisfied that the judgment of all the intelligent men and women in England would declare that this was not what was understood by the privilege of appeal. It had always been thought that a right of appeal was given to a prisoner so that the sentence might be submitted to a higher tribunal in the hope that the punishment might be mitigated; and he ventured to say if the English people knew that while this was undoubtedly the principle in England, minor and obscure Judges in Ireland were allowed to reverse that principle, and to make the right of a prisoner to appeal nothing more or less than a revolting game of double or quits, they would express a very strong opinion. Why did not the Crown appeal, and plead that the original sentence was too mild, and that justice required that it should be made heavier? If the Crown never did that, with what right and justice could it be urged that it should be within the principle and proper sphere of Irish County Court Judges to double the sentence of magisstrates upon prisoners? If this state of things were allowed to go on the whole spirit of the law would be perverted, and a bitterness of the worst kind would be aroused in the minds of the Irish people. He remembered, a great many years ago, hearing the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) denounce a certain change which had been made in the practice of the country as a gigantic innovation. Whether this was a gigantic innovation or not, it was a dangerous innovation, and one distinctly opposed to the spirit of the law. Those who represented the Irish people were anxious to maintain unchallenged the right of a prisoner to appeal. At any rate, they had still their right of appeal to the House of Commons, and it was for the purpose of testing in some way the opinion of Parliament, that he brought forward the Motion and asked the House to mark its objection to this new principle, which would not merely close the gates of mercy, but would open the gates of wanton and despotic action.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not see that the hon. Member has connected his observations with the latter part of his Motion, which refers to the different methods of treating prisoners convicted of the same offence, and does not afford sufficiently definite ground for moving the Adjournment of the House. If the hon. Gentleman will omit that part and confine the Motion to the first part he will be more in Order.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: I am quite prepared to do that, Mr. Speaker.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy.*)

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin Unisity) said, he would venture to submit that the only question raised by the speech of the hon. Gentleman which the House could for one moment entertain was the question whether or not the conduct of the Judges in Ireland, in the exercise of the jurisdiction recently conferred upon them, had put in force powers which had not been entrusted to them. It was in vain to ask the House to go into the details of the individual cases referred to by the hon. Member, and to ask the House, in the utter absence of any reliable material, to form an opinion as to whether the County Court Judge, in each individual case, assuming him to possess the power to increase the sentence, had exercised that power wisely and justly upon the evidence before him. He had observed in one portion of the speech of the hon. Member a suggestion which, he thought, afforded a clue that might enable the House to understand how the question presented itself to his mind. The hon. Member said that, to his mind, the privilege of appeal was one which a convicted person possessed of going to a higher tribunal in the hope of having his punishment mitigated. [Mr. Justin M'Carthy: Hear, hear!] The hon. Gentleman said "Hear, hear!" and he could quite understand how the question presented itself to the mind of the hon. Member if he understood the right of appeal in that sense. That was not, however, what the law understood by this right of appeal. The appeal granted under the Petty Sessions Act, which was incorporated in the Act of last year, was not an appeal in the ordinary sense, but was in reality a re-hearing. The case was re-heard upon evidence, some of which might be new. He had no means of knowing how much of the evidence in the cases brought before the County Court Judges referred to by the hon. Member was new; but he might inform the House that the entire evidence was taken *de novo*. The case was heard, not on an appeal, as the hon. Member understood the law, but as a re-hearing of the entire case, and it was the duty of the County County Judge, without regard to the decision originally given, to pronounce the sentence which, in his opinion, on the evidence before him ought to have been originally passed. He would remind the House that this provision of the Statute regulating appeals from summary convictions had been incorporated into the Act of last year. The hon. Member asked a question which might have some bearing on his own contention—namely, why the Crown did not appeal if the sentence was considered too light? By the Act of 1851 the right of appeal from the Justices to the Quarter Sessions was given to either party in civil cases, and to the party against whom the order should have been made in other cases. In the Act it was provided that it should be lawful for the Court of Quarter Sessions to entertain the appeal and confirm, vary, or reverse the order made by the Judges. The Act of last year conferred on the County Court Judges the jurisdiction in this respect possessed by Quarter Sessions, and it was the duty of the County Court Judge, upon the evidence brought before him, to exercise his discretion independently of the sentence which the Court below might have pronounced. If he was wrong in his law, and if the County Court Judge possessed no such jurisdiction, there was a very simple method in which the question could be tested very expeditiously and satisfactorily, seeing that it was open to any prisoner who had been illegally convicted to apply for a writ of *habeas corpus* and have the question tested. He had been asked yesterday, and it was some satisfaction to him that others had been asked the same question with the same result, to inform the House of the number and the proportion of cases in which sentences on appeal had been varied in the direction of an increase of the penalty. He had ventured to point out, and he would do so again, that that information could only be arrived at by going through the records of each Court and carefully examining them. Such knowledge did not exist at the present moment in the mind of any Officer of the Crown. There was no person who could be expected to possess information on the subject, and the information could only be obtained by examining the records of each Court, for the given period. But he could state from his own knowledge that where an appeal existed in the nature of a rehearing in civil cases in the Court of Appeal, it was a matter of frequent occurrence that what the hon. Member called "the game of double or quits" was played, and that the appellant sometimes obtained a more unfavourable decision. An appellant has sometimes found himself when he came to the Court of Appeal in the position of having a decision in his favour on some point reversed and a more unfavourable decision given. That was so now that appeals were re-hearings, but the same course could not have been pursued so long as the appeal continued to be an appeal in the sense understood by the hon. Member—namely, an application to a Higher Court to have a decision varied in favour of the appellant. Once they established the principle that the appeal was a general re-hearing of the case, then an appellant would always know that when he went to the Court of Appeal he ran the risk of having the decision varied adversely to himself. It was, as he had said, in the power and within the jurisdiction of the County Court Judge upon the evidence before him on appeal to pronounce the sentence which the Court below, assuming the same evidence to have been before it, ought to have pronounced. That was the duty of the County Court Judge under the Statute, and it was impossible for the House to go behind that principle and to deal with individual cases without proper materials to guide them in discussing whether that duty and that discretion had been properly performed and exercised.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, that as he had ventured to put a Question to the Home Secretary on this subject yesterday and to the Attorney General to-day, he hoped he might be allowed to intervene for a few moments in the discussion. It was impossible for anyone who had heard the Answers of the Home Secretary and the Attorney General to come to any other conclusion than that neither of those learned Gentlemen was able to adduce a single instance in which an appeal in England to a Court of Quarter Sessions had increased the sentence of the Court below. He was quite certain that if they could they would have done so. He had put the same question to persons inside and outside the House who had had a long experience of Quarter Sessions work, and he had received the same answer from all of them—namely, that in no case in a criminal appeal had the sentence of the Court been increased, and he was of opinion that no case of the kind could be adduced The Court of Quarter Sessions in England had the same power as the Solicitor General for

Ireland claimed for the County Courts in Ireland, but the sentence of the Court below in a criminal appeal had never been increased. Perhaps the reason why sentences were not increased at Quarter Sessions was because the law did not give the Crown the right of appeal. The appeal was only given to the accused, and he held, therefore, that it was an appeal given in the interest of prisoners who had been convicted. He believed that was the reason why the Court of Quarter Sessions had never exercised the power of increasing sentences. Under these circumstances, he thought the House ought to scrutinize very carefully the practice which had just been inaugurated in Ireland. He was told that the practice in Ireland formerly was the same as in England, and that no case could be adduced of the Court of Quarter Sessions or the County Court Judge increasing the sentence until within the last few days. But within the last few days they had found three County Court Judges increasing the sentences. The hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) had alluded to those cases, and he (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) did not propose to go into them at any length. It was, however, an extraordinary fact that three County Court Judges, almost on the same day, should for the first time have increased the sentences passed by the Court below upon certain prisoners. The first case mentioned was the Ennis case, where three men were prosecuted for refusing to supply food to Mrs. Maloney. They were sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment with hard labour by the Court below, but the sentences had been increased from six weeks to three months with hard labour. Now everybody knew that the question of Boycotting, or refusing to supply provisions, was a very doubtful matter in the Criminal Law. He believed he was right in saying that only in a very few cases had there been prosecutions of that kind under the Coercion Act. He had been unable to discover more than three cases under that Act, although Boycotting was a very common thing in Ireland. In each of these three cases the sentences inflicted were very small, not more than four or five weeks' imprisonment without hard labour, but in the Ennis case the sentence imposed by the County Court Judge was for the first time the full sentence given under the Act—namely, six months' imprisonment with hard labour. Yet the evidence was precisely the same as that which was given in the Court below, and there was no earthly reason, as he could perceive, for increasing the sentence. Next there was the case referred to by the hon. Member of Father M'Fadden and Mr. Blane. Now, everybody knew that Father M'Fadden was the most popular man in the North of Ireland, and had done more to save the lives of the tenantry in that district than any other person. It was a most serious matter that a man of that character should have his sentence increased by the County Court Judge from three months to six months. Then there was the case of Mr. Blane, who was charged with the same offence as Father M'Fadden. He did not propose to enter into the facts of the case, and he only alluded to it for the purpose of showing that in that case also the sentence was increased from four to six months, and it was not accompanied by the mitigation in Father M'Fadden's case, that the hon. Member was to be treated as a first class misdemeanant. He could not understand why the priest should be treated differently from a Member of Parliament for the same offence. He would not, however, pursue that matter, because he would be entering upon a subject which the Speaker had ruled out of Order. This practice of increasing the sentences was a serious innovation, and would tend to diminish the confidence of the people of Ireland in the administration of justice by the County Court Judges. In the discussion of the Coercion Act last year, no mention was ever made nor was it ever suggested that power should be given to the Court of Appeal to increase the sentences. As had already been pointed out, it had always been considered that the appeal was in the interests of the prisoner and not in the interests of the Crown, and although technically the Judge possessed the right to do so, it had never been the practice in any case he had been able to discover to increase the sentence. He thought the Government ought to give some explanation why this new practice had suddenly, at a moment's notice, sprung up in Ireland. It would point to the suggestion or suspicion that the new practice was in some manner due to a suggestion from headquarters. It was hardly possible that three Judges could at the same time have come to the conclusion that it was necessary to depart from the old established practice, without some such suggestion or hint.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he did not intend to deny that the Court to which the appeal was made had technically the power of doing what had been done in these cases. If it had not that technical power there would be no necessity to come before the House, as the hon. Member for Londonderry had done, with a Motion for Adjournment; but the men imprisoned would, by motion before the Supreme Court, take advantage of their rights. He believed that the technical power, as defined by the Statute, was contained in the words which were nearly, though not literally, the same in Ireland as in England. The Court of Appeal had the power—

"To confirm, to reverse, or to modify a decision, or to remit the matter to the magistrate who had made the decision."

Then there were words contained later, and which provided that the Court to which the appeal was made might exercise any power which the Court of Summary Jurisdiction might have exercised. But clearly the intention in allowing the appeal was to give the person who made the appeal the opportunity of having his sentence modified, reversed, or confirmed. If there had been any intention on the part of the Legislature to give to the Crown the power which was so often exercised in France, and which was part of their ordinary procedure, there would have been specific authority to aggravate and increase the sentence, just as there were express words allowing the sentence to be modified or reversed. The three things which were given to the Court of Appeal were the power to modify, to reverse, or to confirm; and, although in practice it might be necessary that the Court to which the appeal was made should possess every power which the Court of Summary Jurisdiction possessed against whose order the appeal was made—although it might be necessary that the Court should have that technical power, it had certainly never been intended that it should be exercised for the purpose of increasing the sentence. Nor had it been so considered in this country. He would not take upon himself to say, and it would be unwise to say, as he had not investigated every case of appeal, that there had been no case in which a sentence might not have been increased; but he felt quite sure that he was within limit, and would be confirmed by the Law Officers of the Crown, when he said that it was almost unknown for sentences to be increased which had been passed under summary jurisdiction by the Court to which the appeal had been made. Sentences had been reduced often, confirmed often, modified often, and men had been ordered to come up for judgment when called upon; but the cases in which sentences had been increased were so rare that he did not happen to know of any. There was a possibility that such power might have been exercised; but all the references he had been able to make went the other way. It was almost the invariable practice, if, indeed, it were not the invariable practice, to make the decision on the appeal a decision either in diminution of the sentence, or a quashing the conviction, or of sending it back to the magistrates, or confirming it. It was almost unknown that there should have been such an aggravation of the sentence as found in the circumstances quoted by the hon. Member for Londonderry. He would take the liberty of saying that in the opinion of the people with whom he had come in contact in this country that, as there had been some sentences which had been quashed, the Judges of Appeal, who were hostile to those appealing, had increased the sentences for the purpose of deterring men from going to the Court of Appeal in order to obtain a modification of sentence. He would suggest that if that opinion was well founded it was a terrible matter; and the mere existence of such opinion was a matter which the Government ought not to disregard. There were many matters connected with these appeals which the English public were beginning to notice. They noticed that the highest Court of Jurisdiction in Ireland had quashed some of the convictions on the ground that the magistrates did not possess the same confidence of the Irish people as the ordinary magistrates, because they were exceptionally appointed magistrates, giving decisions under exceptional circumstances, subject to exceptional influence, and in exceptional relation with the Executive authority, acting sometimes in a judicial capacity and sometimes in an administrative capacity. Rightly or wrongly, the English people fancied that there was a Party tendency in these prosecutions; that the Judges did not hold the scales of justice fairly—that was to say, that those Resident Magistrate Judges were looked upon with the greatest favour by the Administration themselves—namely, the present Castle Government in Ireland, who were more ready to insure a Party victory than to deal out even-handed justice. He hoped the Government would do him the justice to recognize that he had interfered very little in matters of controversy between them and the Irish Members who sat around him. There were, however, some subjects on which he considered it his duty to speak out, and it was because he had contended for the even-handed administration of justice in England that he felt doubly bound to speak out when he arrived at the conclusion that it was not justice but prosecution that was being meted out to the struggling people of Ireland.

Mr. DARLING (Deptford) said, he should not have intervened in the discussion if it had not so happened that he had gained some experience at Quarter Sessions. He thought hon. Members, when they complained that no precedent was to be found for the increase of a sentence where there had been an appeal from the conviction in England, had forgotten the extraordinary rarity of appeal from a conviction coming to Quarter Sessions. He had practised for more years than hon. Members might think at Quarter Sessions, and he had been frequently concerned in appeals against orders of affiliation, and in cases of the conviction of publicans for offences against the Licensing Laws; but he did not remember a case while he practised at Quarter Sessions in which there was an appeal from the conviction for theft, or in such cases as ordinarily came before a magistrate sitting in a Court of First Instance. It was, therefore, not remarkable that the Law Officer of the Crown for Ireland, when challenged, should not be able to put his hand on a group of cases in which the sentences had been increased. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members laughed as if they knew more upon the subject themselves. It would have surprised him, and probably would have surprised hon. Gentlemen opposite, if the Solicitor General for Ireland could have put his hand on many cases in which there had been an appeal against conviction at all, except for the offence of permitting drunkenness in licensed premises. He thought it was greatly to be deplored that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) should have delivered the speech to which the House had just listened. There could be no fair reason in his judgment for charging the Government with any kind of interference. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] That was his opinion at any rate, and when the hon. Member for Northampton said that those who sat round him held opposite opinions, his (Mr. Darling's) reply was that hon. Members who sat round him held opinions that were directly opposed to those of the hon. Member.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he had not spoken of the opinion of hon. Members sitting around him, but he had spoken of the English opinion with which he had been brought in contact outside the House.

Mr. DARLING said, that he too had come in contact with public opinion outside the House, although that opinion might by no means have been the same as that with which the hon. Member came in contact; but, perhaps, he and the hon. Member did not meet the same people. Certainly, it was not to the effect that the Government had given itself over to the persecution of any class of people, or had manifested any spirit of unfairness in carrying out the Act of last year. He maintained, in the presence of the Government, that hon. Members opposite had too readily admitted the state of the law. The right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) and the hon. Member for Northampton, who generally interfered in matters of law, although sometimes without much success—[*Cries of* "Question!"]—There could be no question about that. He thought they had too readily admitted that there was no doubt about the law in regard to this case. It might be true that a case could not be found, but it did not prove much to say that it was impossible to find convictions in any number. For his own part, he thought the question was more open to doubt than the right hon. Gentleman or the hon. Member for Northampton seemed to think. The hon. Member for Northampton had quoted words from the Act; but the Act he read was the English Act. The Irish Act 14 & 15 *Vict.* c. 19, s. 74, did not use the words "confirm, reverse, or modify," but the words used were "confirm, vary, or reverse" the sentence. If hon. Members would refer to that section of the Act they would notice that towards the end of it provision was made for carrying out the sentence of the Court, and they would see it was arguable that the man to be committed to prison in execution of a sentence was committed upon the conviction of a magistrate sitting in a Court of First Instance. If that were so, it was a conviction and order to carry out a particular sentence, and the prisoner could not possibly be sentenced for a longer period than that contained in the original sentence. Under these circumstances he was certainly surprised to hear hon. Gentlemen opposite admit that technically the law gave the County Court Judges power to increase sentences. Instead of hon. Members founding their arguments on a legal basis, they preferred—and this was the worst of these Irish questions—to rely upon arguments *ad misericordiam.* Now, where was the grievance? If an Englishman were wrongly convicted he appealed to the Courts of Law. What were the Courts of Law for? What was the Court of Queen's Bench for, unless it existed on the assumption that the Courts of First Instance and secondary Courts decided wrongly sometimes? In England it was admitted that they decided wrongly honestly. Why should not hon. Gentlemen opposite admit the same thing in regard to Ireland? If anything had been overlooked, if any power had been exercised which should not have been exercised by law, then Father M'Fadden and the other prisoners had only to go to the Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland and get as good justice as could be obtained in the Court of Queen's Bench in England. Instead of doing that hon. Gentlemen opposite said they thought the sentence was perfectly justified by the law; but they chose to say that the law should not prevail because Father M'Fadden was a philanthropist and one of the best men in Ireland. It was very unfortunate that everyone who got into trouble in Ireland turned out to be a philanthropist, and one of the best men in the country. What advantage was there for arguing upon such a basis as that; either the grievance was a legal grievance or it was no grievance at all? If in the Act of Parliament the word "vary" meant to have the right to increase the sentence, it was no grievance that that had not been done formerly, but had been done now. He did not suppose that persons in Ireland—rev. gentlemen of a philanthropic turn of mind, who committed crime, and were sentenced to three months' imprisonment, would be at all deterred because the sentence was increased to six months. Their grievance was a legal one, or no grievance at all, and, after all, it would much better become them to take their appeal to a Higher Court than for their friends to come to the House of Commons, and speak of them as philanthropists, who had been put into third-class carriages like pickpockets, as though no respectable people ever travelled in that way. If they had any grievance known to the law, it was better that they should bring it before a Higher Court, and have it redressed. If they could not do that, notwithstanding the remarks of the hon. Member for Northampton, the English people would come to the conclusion that Irish grievances were, like Irish action, outside the law, and because they were outside the law the English people would not sympathize with them.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I think the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down has shown that he entirely misapprehends the grounds on which this complaint is made. He has said—and no doubt it is a conception he has derived from Quarter Sessions, at which he told us he has principally practised—that either there is a legal grievance, or there is no grievance at all. That is not the complaint at all, nor do I think that that is the view the people of England will take of this question. I will not say whether the proceedings of the Court are legal or not. It is not necessary to determine that question here. The Solicitor General for Ireland has expressed a confident opinion that that is the true interpretation of the Statute. I think there might be good ground for raising such a doubt as that which the hon. and learned Member who has just spoken raised. But for this purpose that does not enter into the question. We are willing to assume that this jurisdiction exists in the Court, and may be assumed to exist in a similar Court in England. We know that there are a great number of unused powers in the law of England—rusty weapons of brutal tyranny, which, if they were brought out and used against the English people, the English people would not tolerate for one moment that they should be employed either by the Courts, or that the Executive Government should allow them to be carried out. There are many such powers as these; they undoubtedly exist, and the employment of unusual powers for the purpose of turning the Criminal Law into an engine of brutal and ferocious oppression, however legal it may be, is unconstitutional. The meaning of the word "unconstitutional" is this—that it is an unusual and unexampled use of a power that cannot be defined as being technically illegal. That is what unconstitutional action means. Unconstitutional action may be taken by the highest power in the Realm if powers that cannot be legally disputed are used in a manner that has passed into disuetude. That would be unconstitutional action on the part of the Crown. There might, I imagine, be unconstitutional action on the part of Parliament if it were to assume its powers and privileges that it was not in the habit of assuming. There might even be unconstitutional action on the part of the Courts, if, in the exercise of unusual powers, they used them in a manner in which they were never used before; and over that unconstitutional action of the Courts there would remain the power of the Minister to advise the Crown to remit sentences of that character. I venture to say that if any Quarter Sessions in England had used their power in a manner in which it had never been used before for the purpose of cruelly oppressing the subject, there is no Home Secretary in England who would not have remitted that sentence, and no House of Commons that would not, if necessary, have made him do it, if he refused. Why, Sir, over and over again the Executive Government in England, by the power of the Home Secretary, has restrained the action of magistrates and of Courts where it was thought their practice was falling into a system that was injurious to Society and to the community. I may be forgiven if I refer to a class of cases with which I was myself connected as Home Secretary. I found that magistrates, no doubt from not having sufficiently considered the matter, were sending children of tender age to prison by scores. I found to my horror and surprise that many children of eight were being sent to gaol, and were confined to a solitary cell. Well, what did I do? I remitted the sentences, and the practice soon disappeared without any change in the law by the action of the Executive, and a practice which everybody recognized as injurious to the community was practically restrained. I believe that at the Home Office the rule still continues, that no sentence of imprisonment on a child under 12 shall be carried out without being reported personally to the Home Secretary, and brought under his notice. Therefore I say it is perfectly idle now for the Executive to plead ignorance of, or that it has no connection with the introduction of these novel practices in the law. It is their business to take cognizance of them. It is for that very reason that they are armed with the power which the Crown has over sentences of this character, and they cannot refuse the responsibility which for that very reason attaches to them. No Home Secretary can be allowed to say he did not know of any practices of unexampled severity being introduced into the Criminal Law, and would not use the prerogative of the Crown placed in his hands to restrain their exercise. That is the view that we take of this matter, quite apart from the technical right of the Court to carry out these sentences. Can anybody doubt what the facts are? As to what the hon. and learned Gentleman who spoke last said about the rareness of appeals at Quarter Sessions, that is contrary to my experience, gained, not at Quarter Sessions, but at the Home Office. Certainly at the Home Office I became constantly acquainted with appeals in criminal cases, carried from the magistrates to the Courts of Quarter Sessions. I particularly remember cases connected with convictions under the Game Laws. Does anybody believe that when you find the Law Officers on the Front Bench opposite getting up one after another, and saying they do not know—they cannot be certain without having Returns prepared—do you believe that if such a case were known by anybody, the Attorney General would have known it, or, if not, would at least have been able to find it out by to-day? Do you suppose that the Solicitor General is so ignorant of the practice of his profession as not to be acquainted with such cases if they really existed? The truth is, that magistrates and Quarter Sessions in England would have been ashamed of such transactions. To suppose that you can introduce a novel practice of this sort without violating all the rules that ought to regulate the administration of criminal justice is a proposition which cannot be sustained. Then what is the conclusion? That you are introducing into Ireland, to whom you promised equal treatment, an exceptional system of cruel brutality in the administration of justice which has no paragon and no example in English practice. This question of appeal comes to us in a rather suspicious garb from the hands of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He began this policy of appeal by an act of deliberate bad faith with this House. He made a solemn pledge that he would give an appeal in every case. The pledge that he gave — he gave it personally to myself, and therefore, I recollect it—he broke. Sentences under the Coercion Act began to be passed in Ireland, and in some instances, in order to obtain a right of appeal, the accused persons asked that their sentences might be increased so that an appeal should be allowed. But the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary soon afterwards made a speech at Birmingham which contained very significant hints that it would be extremely convenient if sentences were of such a character as not to admit of an appeal. It was a curious circumstance —I do not say there was any connection between the two things—but immediately the sentences conformed to the Birmingham speech, and we have seen how the appeals have been worked in Ireland. There were some Judges, of course, who were more merciful than others. That will always happen. Appeals were taken to Judges who were in the habit of remitting or lowering the sentences. But you can quite conceive that it would be a convenient thing to make people afraid of appeals, even in cases where appeals were to be given; and what could be more convenient than to introduce a new practice into your criminal procedure? To tell a man who wished to appeal that if he appealed he would very likely get his sentence doubled would deter him from appealing, because it would depend very likely on the person before whom he was brought as to whether the sentence was diminished by one-half or doubled. There was every probability that a practice of that kind would be a very wholesome deterrent against any man daring to appeal against a sentence imposed on him in Ireland. In such a state of things, do you believe that the Irish people are likely to have confidence in the administration of your law? I say they will not, and they ought not. It is an administration of the law which is contrary to all the principles and sentiments which are known to the humanity of the law as it is practised in England. I say you are doing, by conduct of this character, everything you possibly can to shake the belief in the administration of the law both in Ireland and in England, and all you can do to prevent the restoration of that peace and order of which you are constantly talking, but which, it seems to me, your system of administration is undermining and destroying for ever. I am endeavouring to explain to the hon. and learned Member for Deptford (Mr. Darling) that the question is a very different one from the technical and Quarter Sessions view. It is a question which touches much higher principles than that; it touches the belief in the justice, the humanity, and the equality of the administration of the law as it is dealt out to the Irish people and to the English people. It is because we think that this practice which is carried out in Ireland is wholly alien and repugnant to the sentiments which are entertained in this country, that we protest against its being applied to Ireland as an additional instance of the inequality of the treatment which you mete out there.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am one of the admirers of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) who have watched with considerable regret his decline and fall ever since the unhappy day when, at a moment's notice, he changed the opinions of a lifetime. I noticed with regret—I have long noticed with regret—that he has thought fit, in adopting the opinions of his new allies, also to adopt their morality. I noticed with further regret, in the speech he has just delivered, that he has not only adopted their morality, but also their style. I never heard a happier, a more felicitous, a more perfect imitation of the style of *United Ireland* than that which I have heard in certain parts of the speech which the right hon. Gentleman has just thought fit to deliver to the House. The right hon. Gentleman has thought fit to repeat an accusation which has been a thousand times refuted. I shall not think of occupying the time of the House with any subject so absolutely irrelevant to the question before us. But I must say a word, not in defence of myself, but in defence of those other individuals whom the right hon. Gentleman has coupled with me in his violent and unscrupulous attack—[Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT dissented]—yes, in his violent and unscrupulous attack. The right hon. Gentleman has insinuated, and more than insinuated—following in this the unfortunate example of the right hon. Gentleman who sits near him on the Front Opposition Bench—the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre)—that the action of the County Court Judges in Ireland is, in some obscure and insidious way, receiving inspiration from Dublin Castle. That insinuation is a foul libel upon an honourable, an able, a learned, and a most independent class of men. On the Bench opposite me, I see more than one right hon. Gentleman who has held the Office of Irish Chief Secretary. I see one right hon. Gentleman, at least, who has given public testimony to the independence of County Court Judges in Ireland. Will one of those right hon. Gentlemen get up and say that, since they left Office, men whom they were proud to defend when they were in Office have sunk to the level which was suggested by the right hon. Gentleman? County Court Judges in Ireland are absolutely and in every possible respect now, as they have always been, independent of the Government of Ireland. Their independence and their learning have been recognized by successive Chief Secretaries belonging to different Parties in the State, and I reject, as a foul libel and aspersion on their character, the insinuations which have just been made by two right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench. Now, the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down made some allusion to the legal aspect of this question. I have noticed that the right hon. Gentleman is not always fortunate in his legal allusions. He talked of the increase of sentences, or the power rather under which the County Court Judges have increased the sentences, as being the use of a rusty and disused weapon.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I did not say so. I said there were many rusty, disused weapons in the English law; but I did not say that this was one.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Under those circumstances, I think, if Mr. Speaker had seen that the right hon. Gentleman was straying so far from the point as to be so totally and absolutely irrelevant, he would have called him to Order. If the right hon. Gentleman did not think that this power was a rusty and disused weapon, in what connection did he use the epithet? What relevance had it to the question? I now accept the statement of the right hon. Gentleman as indicating that the use of this power is the use of a weapon which is not rusty, but which is still bright. You reject the first alternative; allow me to pin you to the second. This is a power which the right hon. Gentleman frankly admits has been given to County Court Judges, or, rather, to the Court of Quarter Sessions.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I said I was ready, for the purpose of the present argument, to assume it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understood the right hon. Gentleman to admit it. It was specifically admitted by the right hon. Gentleman who sits near him, and I think it would be well that they should come to an agreement on their law, as they have with regard to the line of attack which they have adopted on this question. This power, as the right hon. Gentleman himself owns, has been given to the Judges by Statutes which are in no sense antiquated. The Statute in England under which this power is given dates no further back than 1879; it is not more than 10 years old, and the powers given under it have been given in language so specific and so precise that it is perfectly impossible to suppose for a moment that the Legislature was not cognizant of what it was doing when it gave these powers to the County Court Judges. But allow me to point out that there is a difference between an appeal given in Ireland and an appeal given in England. In England appeal is given to a tribunal not necessarily learned in the law. It is from magistrates not learned in the law to a tribunal which is not learned in the law. In Ireland the case is different under the Crimes Act, because the Legislature has rightly decided that that appeal shall not lie to Quarter Sessions generally, or to any tribunal composed of laymen, but that it shall be tried solely by competent lawyers, who, by virtue of their office, are absolutely independent of the Executive in any shape or form. The right hon. Gentleman has thought fit to describe the action of a learned Judge as "brutal, savage, and furiously oppressive," and as "cruelly oppressive." In my opinion, this House is never worse occupied than when it is attempting to act the part of a Court of Law. It never, in my opinion, is making a worse use of the vast powers entrusted to it, than when it attempts to discuss, without the evidence or the safeguards attached to a Court of Law, the sentences passed by the Judges of the Courts of Law, and surely the abuse of that power was never grosser than in the case of a man who has held the Office of Home Secretary, and who describes, so far as I know, without any knowledge of the facts of the case, without any examination of witnesses, or any documents before him to enable him to judge of the case—who describes the action of a competent, independent, and learned lawyer, as being "savage, brutal, and furiously oppressive." I shall not imitate the action of the right hon. Gentleman; I will only say, so far as I am cognizant of the case, of the circumstances in which the offence was committed, and the character of the offence, and the character of the action of those who committed it, that I absolutely and totally differ from the conclusion to which the right hon. Gentleman has arrived. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman has larger means of information on this subject than I have; but I think that before he, acting as a Court of Appeal in this House, without any knowledge of the facts, so far as we know, wishes to and pronounces this censure on the Judges in this particular case, he might recollect that he speaks, not from his own character, but from his position he speaks with some authority in this House, and that he is setting an extremely bad example. If it be true, as is not denied by any lawyer in the House, that the County Court Judges in Ireland have thrown upon them a statutory obligation to rehear cases; if they find themselves dealing with cases about which a vast amount of political and Party excitement has been aroused in Ireland, and has been attempted to be aroused in England; if they find that the Court of First Instance, whose decision they have got to revise, consists of gentlemen who have been subject to the most violent and monstrous attacks, not only in their own country, not only in their own Press, but in England, by English politicians, and by English newspapers; if they find themselves, in these circumstances, obliged to re-hear the cases of men who have committed offences of the gravest kind, are we to refuse them the power—when we compel them to rehear the cases—can we say that they are doing any more than their duty if they modify the sentences in certain cases and increase those that have been given? So far as I can understand the duties which are imposed upon those Judges, they would be absolutely failing in the obligation imposed upon them if they did not approach the consideration of these important cases with minds perfectly unbiassed by the decision in the Court below; they would be failing in their duty if they did not devote themselves simply to the evidence brought before them, and if they did not pass sentences on the offenders proportionate to the offence committed. It is not only for this reason; it is also because I think that this House is entering upon a most dangerous course in erecting itself, under the impartial presidency of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, into a Court of Appeal for revising sentences passed by perfectly competent Judges, not only upon that, but upon the particular ground that those Judges would have been failing in their duty if they had not approached these cases with perfectly open minds, that I ask the House to reject unequivocally, and by a large majority, the Motion for Adjournment.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I quite agree with those who may hold that we ought to do anything rather than desire that the time of this House should be occupied in considering the proceedings of Courts of Justice in an adverse or critical sense. This may be an evil, but there are greater evils, and one greater evil is when the proceedings of Courts of Justice are conducted not in the spirit of justice but in a spirit requiring the exercise of the high functions of this House as a Grand Court and inquest of the nation, before whom every man's grievance may be brought, and where no man's grievance is to be sent away unheard. We have had the advantage of the intervention in this debate of the hon. and learned Member for Deptford (Mr. Darling), who informed us, in the first place, that it was no wonder that examples of the aggravation or enlargement of criminal sentences were not to be had in England, because there were no such appeals.

MR. DARLING: I did not say there were no such appeals. I said they were very rare, and so rare that I could not recollect one.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I believe the hon. and learned Gentleman said that he practised largely before Quarter Sessions, that he had superior knowledge in these cases, that he was well informed as to the practice before Quarter Sessions, and that there were no such appeals within his knowledge. There are Quarter Sessions all over the country, and, as is well known, especially in some districts, there are cases under the Game Laws which come before Quarter Sessions. Then it is most extraordinary, if the hon. and learned Member thinks that there are cases of such appeals, although rare, and if we have the positive testimony of my right hon. Friend who was connected with such appeals as Home Secretary, that, if such appeals exist, there cannot be produced, by the whole wisdom and knowledge of Gentlemen opposite, one single case in which the Court of Quarter Sessions has enlarged the sentences of the Court below. The hon. and learned Gentleman, who says, as a lawyer, he feels extremely diffident in the consideration of this question, proceeded to give us some principles of law, and his principle of law was that either in this case there is a legal grievance or there is no grievance at all. How am I to interpret those words? Is the hon. and learned Gentleman prepared to pledge himself to that principle. Courts have a discretionary power in certain cases to inflict a minimum penalty, which is a very small term of imprisonment, or a maximum penalty, which is very large, and where a Court has exercised its undoubted power to inflict maximum penalties in all cases, according to the hon. and learned Gentleman, with his legal knowledge and from the high position in which he looks down upon the ignorance of us laymen, there can be no grievance at all. The question we have to argue is quite serious enough without arguing that point. When no instance can be produced by the united ingenuity and knowledge of the whole Party opposite and the Law Officers of the Crown, when no single instance in the wide range of judicial practice is deduced from England or Scotland of the enlargement of criminal sentences on appeal, are you, who say you are advocates of equality of law and equality of right as well as of equality of administration between England and Ireland, prepared to stand up in your places and defend this remarkable practice, which, for the first time within our knowledge, has been introduced? The Solicitor General for Ireland says that these are cases of re-hearing; but is not an appeal to Quarter Sessions a re-hearing? [Mr. MADDEN assented.] Yes, it is. Therefore the powers of a Court of Appeal in England are as wide as the powers of a Court of Appeal in Ireland. The practice of the Courts of Appeal in England has been uniform and under no consideration to enlarge the criminal sentences of the Court below; but in Ireland, in the relations in which we stand to her, and when you are agreed in saying that the proper mode of governing Ireland is not to give her a Legislature of her own for the management of her internal affairs, but to govern her from Westminster so equitably and mildly and generously and equally that she shall have no reason to complain—it is now in this matter of criminal justice that you introduce this violent and odious inequality without one single instance from the whole of your knowledge of British practice to support it. The Solicitor General for Ireland says—"You are acting in the absence of knowledge of what took place in these cases; there may have been new evidence." Is there any new evidence? If there had been new evidence he would have known it. He did not assert it, because he could not assert it. Had there been, the Solicitor General for Ireland would have told us, and therefore we conclude that there is no evidence in the case, and the suggestion that there might have been new evidence is an idle and empty pretext, with no bearing whatever upon the subject. The hon. Member who moved this Motion did so in terms of singular moderation, and I, for my part, should be very glad if we could look to the enormously important principle which is involved in this question rather than upon the question whether the particular exercise of the discretion was in each case justly and well exercised; but when we are told by the Irish Solicitor General that we have not got the evidence before us, we reply, if it is in his power to do so, let him place that evidence before us. And when the Chief Secretary for Ireland says he shall be glad to place before us a full account of the proceedings in the case of Mr. Blunt, let us encourage the Government to take that course, and let them place before us that evidence which will remove the ground of complaint. The Solicitor General for Ireland quoted the Act under which this power is exercised in Ireland. He quoted very fairly from that Act the provision which gives the power of appeal exclusively to that party to the issue on whom the sentence has been passed. Is there no light thrown upon the intention of Parliament by the provision of that enactment; does not the exclusive grant of the power of appeal to the person on whom sentence has been passed clearly show that it was a power of appeal intended to be exercised in favour of that party, and to be exercised, of course, in the maintenance of justice, but in favour of that party if justice had miscarried, and not exercised in the aggravation of that sentence? When Parliament granted this power, if it was intended that there should be a practice of enlarging these criminal sentences, is it not plain that the power of appeal, as it was where the parties stand on an equality, would have been given likewise to the Crown? The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has been criticizing, as he generally does, the morality of my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt). Morality is the text of almost every sermon delivered by the right hon. Gentleman in this House, and he has taken upon himself, almost since his official infancy began, the business of teaching morality to those who were here long before he was. His assumption may be very graceful and appropriate, but I wish to see how it is applied. He says we have adopted a new morality, and evidently, in his sense, a debased morality which we have borrowed more or less from the Nationalist Members representing Ireland. Well, I ask what kind of morality is that which treats the maintenance and breach of faith as matters of such indifference as to require no reference in this House?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I said it was irrelevant to a question of this kind—a question which has been discussed *ad nauseam.*

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: As far as my memory serves me, the right hon. Gentleman did not speak of it as irrelevant to this question.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I beg pardon; I went so far as to accuse the right hon. Gentleman of being out of Order in introducing it.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: As I understood the right hon. Gentleman he did not say that, and if he did I humbly contest the question, with regard to my right hon. Friend's reference to a breach of faith in respect of the power of appeal in Ireland; and I say that in discussing that question it cannot be doubted that we have the right, and are bound to allude to the history of this right of appeal. My right hon. Friend charged the Chief Secretary—and has rightly charged him—with a breach of faith.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I rise to Order, Mr. Speaker. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether it is relevant to the Motion before the House to discuss the action taken by the Government in connection with the Bill passed last Session?

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is raised as to whether the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) has observed some promise which he made on the subject of appeal, and therefore the allusion which has been made seems to me to be relevant to the subject now before the House.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: The subject, I know, is disagreeable. I leave it to the right hon. Gentleman's own reflections. But I am compelled, in considering the use made of the power of appeal on this occasion and under this Statute, to refer to the history of this power. Now, it has been set up that there is to be a re-hearing, quite irrespective of the position of the party sentenced by the Court below. I ask whether there is the smallest doubt—at any rate in this House, and in this particular case—that the power of appeal which has been given was given entirely in the interest of the person who received the sentence? It was asked in his behalf, and it was given as a concession to him, and it is stamped upon it that Parliament intended it to be given to him, whereas it has now been wantonly and cruelly used against him. The promise was given as my right hon. Friend has stated, without exception; when the power was conferred, it was given with exception, and we claim that the reservation put upon that promise was a breach of faith with this House. The right hon. Gentleman thinks, forsooth, that that is irrelevant to the question before the House; but it is a vital and essential point when we are considering this power of appeal. Well, Sir, the power was given with exception. And what do we find? We find in Ireland that the first attempt was made to evade and nullify this power of appeal by accumulated sentences—a trick of the meanest character—the dishonour and discredit of which I will not attempt to divide between the Government and the authorities in Ireland, for I know not how to divide it; but I say, in looking at the transaction, that anything more mean and miserable, more worthy of the contempt of every honest man; nay, of almost every dishonest man who would not have descended to such a trick as that—cannot be conceived. That power was given as I have described, and when it is exercised two sentences are passed together of one month each, so that the person shall be imprisoned for two months, and yet not have the right of appeal. This is irrelevant in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman. Sir, it is part of the melancholy history of this Statute and of its administration, and of what has been done since. I admit frankly that I do not desire the intervention of this House in matters such as these; but this intervention, unfortunately, in such Acts, and in the administration of the law carried on as it is now in Ireland, has become a matter of necessity. The cumulative sentence passed in order to invalidate and nullify the right of appeal was made the subject of special notice in this House, and I rejoice to say that it has not been made in vain. The Government saw that this method of procedure, at all events, would not do, so another has been devised, I do not say by the County Court Judge—I am persuaded that the great body of those gentlemen are fair-minded, impartial, and independent—I do not say by whom; but I say, translating this into English, the meaning is that the Government say, first of all, we promise you appeal, then, without right or title, we restrain the promise we have given; when the power is passed in its limited form we endeavour to escape from and invalidate it by the accumulation of sentences; we have drawn down public indignation against that practice; but our resources are not yet exhausted, for we possess another power—namely, the power of enlarging sentences in Courts of Law, which will make you think twice and think thrice before you resort to the use of this power in future. My right hon. Friend, according to the Chief Secretary, complained of this as a disused power. Sir, he never complained of it as a disued power; he complained of it as a power which has never been used at all, and one which has now for the first time come into action. But I think that the effect of this intervention of the hon. Member for Derry (Mr. M'Carthy), and the public attention which will be given to this practice in consequence of the present discussion, or in consequence of future discussion, will be this—that the hon. Member for Derry has, I believe, struck a death blow at this probably not illegal, but this outrageous action—outrageous in defiance of practice, of policy, and precedent, and totally impossible in England or in Scotland, but good enough, you think, for Ireland, so long as the people of England are disposed to tolerate it. Had we received information that the practice prevailed in this country, I quite admit that the basis upon which we proceed would have been entirely altered; but there has been a total failure to produce anything of the kind. The Attorney General is going to speak. He said to-night there is no practice established one way or the other. If there is no practice one way or the other, it must mean that there are cases both ways. But has he a case in which the Quarter Sessions in this country have enlarged a criminal sentence on appeal? If he has not, if there is no such case, I say there is an established practice. Until it can be shown that the practice varies, that it is in this direction at one time and in that direction at another time, the practice is established. The practice is that there is no such power exercised in England; and, there being no such power exercised in England, it ought not to be exercised in Ireland, unless, indeed, you wish to exhibit what Mr. Disraeli used to call "an organized hypocrisy"—a pretence that anything in the nature of equality of right or treatment is to be accorded to the people of the Sister Isle.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): Mr. Speaker, I am not sorry that the speech to which we have just listened has been delivered in this House, but I confess it is very difficult for anybody to control his language when he has to reply to such a speech, in which, as I will show, innuendo, accusation, and insinuation has been hurled without foundation against everybody who is responsible for the government of Ireland and for the administration of law and justice in that country. There have been three or four very serious charges made—three or four charges so serious that the right hon. Gentleman has thought fit to sum them up by characterizing the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in this matter as nothing better than organized hypocrisy. Let us consider for a few minutes whether there is a shadow of foundation for the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman—a suggestion which the right hon. Gentleman is not now entitled to withdraw. I take up those charges, and, although I cannot approach, and never shall be able to approach, the right hon. Gentleman in power of language, I venture, in my poor way, to throw back those charges upon him, and to say there is no foundation for them. A charge which he introduced for the first time, and which, from one point of view, may be regarded as the most serious he has made, is the charge connected with the fact that cumulative sentences have been inflicted. It is suggested that a sentence was passed for one month and another sentence for another month, and that this has been done with a view of depriving the person sentenced of the right of appeal; and the right hon. Gentleman has thought fit to say in this House, with all the responsibility of his years and experience, that this is "a trick of the meanest order"—[*Cheers*]—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) cheers—and that every honest, and even every dishonest, man would have contempt for it.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Almost every dishonest man.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: Almost every dishonest man: I will accept the correction. What dees the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) think of that statement? In this House not many weeks ago—I can scarcely think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has forgotten the fact—we produced chapter and verse to show that on more than one occasion, under the Crimes Act of 1882, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division, being then Chief Secretary for Ireland, exactly the same course was taken as that to which the right hon. Gentleman refers. Is the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division an honest man or a dishonest man? I did not notice he cheered when we heard the vociferous cheers from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The fact is this—if I may have the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian—[Mr. Gladstone was conversing with Sir George Trevelyan]—I am entitled to it——

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I am obliged to attend to the charge.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: The fact is, it is only by imputing the basest and meanest motives without foundation that the right hon. Gentleman is in a position to make charges against us. I am not one of those who care to look back on the past and simply talk about change of mind, but I say that when a Gentleman in the position of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian seeks from his great height to wither with contempt everybody, especially a lawyer, who has thought fit to urge his opinion from this side of the House—when the right hon. Gentleman ventures to make accusations against men who regard their honour and their conduct as conscientiously as he does his, he should at least be careful, lest his Government, the Government of which he was the head, lest his Irish Secretary has been guilty of the same mean and contemptible conduct with which he charges us. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division will not misunderstand me. I impute no such motives to him. I am perfectly certain he would have scorned and repudiated the suggestion that he had winked at, or been a party to, or connived at, any judgment being given by a Judge in Ireland for the purpose of depriving any person of a right of appeal which he would otherwise possess. But with regard to this charge, I say again—it may be very convenient for the right hon. Gentleman to hold a conversation—[Mr. GLADSTONE was conversing with Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN]—but it cannot be necessary that there should be so much conversation—with regard to this charge I say, and I will repeat it later on, that there is not a shadow of suggestion that either the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland or any Member of the Government moved hand or foot, or interfered directly or indirectly with the action of the persons who inflicted these sentences. On the contrary, in the speech made in the House a few weeks ago and in the speech made at Birmingham to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) referred, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland distinctly repudiated the suggestion, and no one ever attempted to say the right hon. Gentleman spoke untruthfully. There is nobody who is so anxious to cast a veil over what he has said in the past as the right hon. Member for Derby, and therefore it is singular to find him returning to a charge which has been proved on two previous occasions to be unfounded. The right hon. Gentleman said the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was guilty of a breach of faith—that he broke the pledge he gave as to the right of appeal when the Crimes Bill was before the House. I believe I know as much about the passing of the Crimes Act as any Member of the House, and I say—I have said it before—there is not the slightest foundation for the charge of breach of faith —[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"]—accusations, at any rate, in Courts of Justice are not established by cries of "Oh!" But we do not regard the House of Commons for this purpose as a Court of Justice—in fact, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has admitted as much; he considers it a place where every grievance may be aired. Now, what is this particular grievance? Early in the discussion on the Crimes Bill the question of appeal arose, and the question then came up whether there should be special provisions as to appeal inserted in the Bill, or whether the ordinary law of Ireland in regard to appeal should be applied. I assert, and I can prove it by *Hansard*, that what was stated was this—that there should be given the appeal which is now in the Bill—[*Cries of* "No!"]—well, I am perfectly willing to be answered. But let the House observe that this has nothing to do with the special case before the House to-night. No one pretends to say, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian does not suggest, there was any pledge that there should be any other than a re-hearing. I assert that the law applicable to cases of re-hearing is perfectly well-known. It was enunciated by Mr. Justice Blackburn many years ago in a well-known case; it was law at the time the Crimes Act was passed, and so much is the law known that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) was obliged to open his observations to-night by saying he could not dispute the right of the tribunal to increase the sentence. But if there is anything in the charge of breach of faith it must be put in this way, that, whereas it was intended there should not be a re-hearing, if re-hearing involved this power, the Crimes Act has been framed and then worked so that the Court of Appeal should have this power which was not given to it.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: The hon. and learned Gentleman does not appear to have understood me. The breach of faith of which I spoke was this: that the Chief Secretary for Ireland undertook upon my invitation, and upon my pointing out the difficulty of cases like those of combination and so on, to give the right of appeal. The right hon. Gentleman said—"I admit the truth of that argument, and I will give an appeal to the County Court Judge in every case, whether the sentence is for a month or more than a month." Afterwards that promise was withdrawn, and no appeal was given when the sentence was for under a month.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: The House is perfectly aware that was not in the least the point of my argument. This sentence was a three months' sentence. The right hon Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian said—"You have been guilty of a breach of faith, and you have worked this Act in a monstrous and outrageous way." I have already repudiated the statement that there has been a breach of faith on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in the matter of including or excluding any particular case for appeal. I had passed from that, and I was referring to what was said as to the way in which the Court of Appeal was to exercise its power. Not only was there no suggestion of breach of faith, but there never had been any discussion on the matter. We imported into the Bill the provisions of the Act which I think is called the Petty Sessions (Ireland) Act. I mention this because it is so easy to make accusation; but charges of this kind ought to be founded on facts, and not on statements and innuendoes. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian says that when it was found that one method would not do, another was devised. He does not say by whom? [Mr. W. E. Gladstone: Hear, hear!] The right hon. Gentleman cheers that. Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to suggest now that he did not mean to charge Her Majesty's Government with influencing the County Court Judges in the course of their conduct?

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I said nothing of the kind—not a word. ["No, no!"] The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate says "Oh!" Let me tell him——

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I said "No," not "Oh."

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I took the acts and I translated them into words without endeavouring to inquire whose acts they were, and I adhere to that translation.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: I leave the House and the country to judge. The County Court Judge has been guilty, according to the right hon. Gentleman, of disgraceful conduct.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I did not say that.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: The speech at Birmingham has been referred to. It has been suggested that that speech amounted to a nod which was understood. Now, just let the House remember the right hon. Gentleman's words:—"They found that method would not do." Who found it would not do? The Executive Government? What did the right hon. Gentleman mean when he said "they found it would not do?" Did he mean the County Court Judges or the Executive Government? He is impaled on the horns of a dilemma. What did he mean by saying—"I will not say by whom?" Why did he not say by whom?

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Because I do not know.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: He says "Because I do not know." Why has not the right hon. Gentleman the common honesty to get up and say by whom? He said, with that shrug of the shoulders, which we so well understand, that the great majority of the County Court Judges in Ireland are still as honest and as independent as they used to be. Did he mean to found his accusation against the residue of the County Court Judges? [Mr. W. E. Gladstone: No.] No: he repudiates that. There are only two parties to this transaction, and as it is not the County Court Judge it must be the abandoned and corrupt Executive. But it ill becomes those who have had to administer similar Acts, under circumstances which may not have been as trying, or which may have been more trying, who have been guilty of identically the same conduct, to have the audacity to charge the

Executive Government with corrupt practices. At any rate, if they do, they should do so straightforwardly, and not by insinuating that "another method was found out, we do not know by whom." Mr. Speaker, we must be pardoned for saying that we do not allow these accusations, when once made, to be merely withdrawn. We require them to be proved, or else we expect that right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite will admit that they made them without very substantial foundation. But there is a third charge, and a very serious one, made by the right hon Gentleman. He said there were greater evils than questions of law, and here, I think, I may encourage my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Deptford (Mr. Darling) that he need not heed the very sarcastic and somewhat ungenerous criticism of the right hon. Gentleman. Every lawyer on this side of the House has suffered from that at some time or other. Lawyers on the right hon. Gentleman's own side are angels of light and mercy, but lawyers who are opposed to the right hon. Gentleman are unfortunate men whose arguments are legal quibbles. I suffered from that sort of criticism before I had been long in the House, but I have learned to disregard it. What is the right hon Gentleman's charge? There are greater evils, he says, than the proceedings of Courts called Courts of Justice. May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to give me his attention—I am entitled to his attention —[Mr. GLADSTONE was conversing with Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN]. The greater evils are when proceedings in Courts called Courts of Justice are conducted otherwise than in a spirit of justice. What is the meaning of the suggestion "called Courts of Justice?" Why was that delicately turned expression "called Courts of Justice" used? Because the right hon. Gentleman meant to say they were falsely called Courts of Justice: that they are Courts of Justice in name only. —[*Cheers from the Irish Members.*]—I have never asked hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway to do otherwise than express their opinions freely; but we do expect an ex-Prime Minister of England, we do expect one who has had much to do with the Government of Ireland to be able, if he charges a body of men for whom in one breath he expresses respect, with acting on principles which are contrary to the principles of justice, to bring forward the facts on which he makes the accusation. Now, the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Justin M'Carthy), in a speech the moderation of which I admit, which spirit of moderation has not been followed by any of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite, did not allege or suggest that the County Court Judges had been guilty of personal injustice. I did not understand him to suggest that they had acted corruptly or improperly. The charge that the Judges had been advised by other persons—meaning, of course, the Chief Secretary for Ireland—has come from the Front Opposition Bench, and not even from the Mover of the Motion for the adjournment of the House. Sir, I assert that there is not a shadow of foundation for the suggestion that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or any Member of the Government, has interfered with the action of the County Court Judges. It is a foul slander upon as honourable a body of men as ever administered justice, and it is a foul slander upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and I say that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, when he charges Her Majesty's Government with indirectly devising this new method of hideous oppression, and with introducing odious inequalities, should, at least, produce some facts if he wishes the House to believe him. I have dealt in strong language, I admit, with the three charges made. I repudiate them one and all. I say there is not the slightest shadow of foundation for the House coming to the conclusion that the Executive have interfered with the judicial action of a single one of the magistrates or Judges in Ireland; and I say, further, that this House, until it sees it has grave and substantial ground on which it can impeach their conduct, ought to support the men who have the obligation and duty and responsibility of carrying out the law, and ought to do its utmost to see that their authority and impartiality are neither impugned nor impaired. Whatever may be the result of the Division, of which we have no fear, I am satisfied that the Motion will fail in its object, which can only be to make those who are called upon to administer justice in Ireland fear that if they carry out the law fearlessly and without restraint they may be subject to this kind of animadversion in the House of Commons. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite have thought fit to suggest or insinuate that the practices complained of had been advised by the Government. That we indignantly repudiate; and we say again to right hon. Gentlemen—"If you mean to make this charge, make it in plain and straightforward language; do not hide your own responsibility under the suggestion that you do not know who has been guilty of the practices which you are only too glad to condemn, while, at the same time, you dare not charge them against the Government."

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.): It is matter of regret that my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) was not able in the course of his speech of half an hour's duration to devote even one minute to the consideration of the question before the House. My hon. and learned Friend's mind seems to have been so completely possessed with the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian that he had no time for the consideration of other topics. He seemed to have been so completely mastered by the passion of indignation at the charges of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian that—

"One master passion in his breast,
Like Aaron's serpent, swallowed all the rest."

The subject of the Motion is the departure of the Irish County Courts, by a course of doubtful legality, from the established practice by increasing the sentences in criminal appeals. Has my hon. and learned Friend ventured to deny that that was a departure from the long established practice? Has he ventured to deny that the system of increasing sentences in criminal cases on appeal is a new system? The whole substance and strength of the argument addressed to the House in support of the Motion remained altogether untouched, unmoved, and unanswered by anything said by my hon. and learned Friend. It stands conceded that the elaborate researches of the Attorney General and those acting with him have been powerless to produce one single case in which, where the right of appeal has been exercised by the convicted person, that appeal has been made the means of increasing the original sentence. Whatever may be said about the general practice, the special history of this Act gives abundant point to the complaint which we make. The charge made against the Chief Secretary is, that having given a pledge he broke that pledge. The Chief Secretary distinctly pledged himself that an appeal should be given to those convicted under the Act, an appeal such as existed in England. In that I am corroborated by the recollection of the right hon. Member for Derby, who remembers the Chief Secretary, as I also remember him, in answer to a question, saying that there would be an appeal in every case from the exercise of the summary jurisdiction under the Act. Upon referring to *Hansard* I find that on the 17th of May last, the Chief Secretary pointed out that in the Bill as drawn, the Act of 1882 had been closely followed, so that there was no appeal unless a sentence of above a month's imprisonment was passed, and added—"We propose to give an appeal in every case." That is unmistakeable language, because the context shows that he had in his mind the fact that under the pre-existing Act there would not have been an appeal unless the sentence exceeded a month. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) interjected these words interrogatively, "Without any cumulative sentences?" and the Chief Secretary answered, "There will be an appeal in every case to the County Court Judge." The pledge was given, but it was not carried out. The provision that was actually inserted was this—

"A person prosecuted before a Court of summary jurisdiction shall be liable to six months' imprisonment, and shall have the same right of appeal as he would have had under the Summary Jurisdiction Act."

That Act does not give an appeal in every case, and is more restricted than the corresponding English Act. I say this is a very grave matter, but I cannot follow my hon. and learned Friend in his appeals to passion. We have established the grounds on which the Motion is based—namely, that this is a departure from long established usage not merely in Ireland, but I believe, in Scotland, in England, and in Wales, and I say that it is particularly important in the present state of Ireland, when the administration of the law is odious to the majority of its people and is opposed by the majority of its Representatives—by such a majority as I do not think can be equalled in the history of any legislative question in this country—in such a state of things as that it is especially desirable that there shall be no additional grounds of grievance and complaint, and that there shall not be added fuel to that flame of discontent in the form of distrust and hatred of the law which your odious Act and your disreputable administration of it have brought about.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: If the House will allow me, Sir, I desire to say a word or two in answer to the appeal made to me by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite. He said, with great truth, that I had on a former occasion stigmatized a particular proceeding in a Court of Justice in Ireland as a very mean trick.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: You said so also to-night.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Quite so; the hon. and learned Gentleman also says that I repeated the charge to-night. It is quite true I listened to the answer of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on that occasion, and it did not appear to me then to at all touch the point; but, looking to his speech as reported, it appears to me that the report has been considerably enlarged and made much clearer than as I thought I heard the speech. However, that may have been my fault. All I wish to say now is, that I cannot profess to change my opinion of an Act, whether done by our Government or by any other Government; but I entirely agree that if there was a similar act done during our Government, I, personally, am completely put out of court, and can have no right to make any charge against the present Government. That I beg to say in the most explicit manner.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): It is, I think, necessary that I should make a few observations after what appears to me to be the very well-judged and well-conceived words that have fallen from my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). The first I have heard of the case which was referred to by the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) was a month ago from the mouth of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I do not complain in the least of the manner in which the Attorney General brought the case forward. As far as I am concerned, he acquitted me of all sinister intentions. The first time I heard of the case was this Session. If at the time it actually occurred, an Irish Representative had got up in the House and stated his case with the moderation of the hon. Member for Derry (Mr. McCarthy), and had urged the Government to acknowledge that that was an abuse of the strict letter of the law, I should not have waited for any words from the opposite side of the House in attack, or from my own side of the House in defence. I should have got up at once and stated that if the thing had been done, it was wrongly done, and should not be done again. What is the state of the case now? Why, not only once or twice, or at long intervals, but in as many as six cases, in three or four consecutive days, this power of increasing sentences has been used in what I cannot but consider a barbarous manner. I should have imagined that the only course for the Chief Secretary to take would have been to do at once what he has not done—to prove that the exercise of this power was to the public advantage, or, failing that, to get up at the desk and say that what had been done was indefensible, and that it should not occur again. If it is not indefensible, the Chief Secretary ought to have offered a valid defence for it. I listened to every word of the Chief Secretary, and I could only find one sentence in which he defended it. That sentence was long, wordy, and eloquent. But I took down accurately a line and a-half, and I understood him to say that these County Court Judges had been abused most cruelly by the English Press and by English politicians, as well as by the Irish Press and by Irish politicians; that when men to whom this had happened found themselves in the position of Judges of appeal, because they had been abused as he described, they ought to inquire most carefully into the case, to re-hear it from beginning to end, and then to attach to the crime the punishment they thought it ought to bear.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The persons I said had been abused were not the County Court Judges, but the Resident Magistrates.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: I will only offer this observation, that I think it is unfortunate in dealing with these judicial matters to say anything about abuse, either in England or in Ireland. When a case like that of the hon. Member for Derry is put before the House quietly, it ought to be met with a powerful defence, a defence which would clearly prove to the satisfaction of the House that it was for the public advantage that in Ireland, of all countries, the Court of Appeal, when appealed to by criminals, should raise their sentences, instead of either keeping them as they were or diminishing them. If ever there were sentences which ought not to be increased, they are these sentences in Ireland. I know something about them. Take the case of the hon. Member for South Armagh (Mr. Blane). The other day I was in the Library, writing a letter, when I saw a young man standing near me. He looked so pale and ill that I said to him—"Well, when are you going to have your Easter holidays, and what are you going to do?" He said to me—"That is a matter that does not concern me, because I am going to Ireland to serve my four months." He went on to tell me that last year he had brought a charge against a Resident Magistrate in his executive capacity, as well as I can remember, for not using due precautions to protect the Catholics and Nationalists at the time of a riot. I think he said—though of that I am not certain—that he moved in Committee of Supply to reduce his salary for that. Well, it was before this very magistrate that he was sent for trial. He already had had, he told me, 11 days in prison on remand; he was going back to serve his four months; and now on the top of that he has got two more months, and is to be treated as a common misdemeanant. Now, I cannot sit down without begging Members of Parliament to remember what sort of men these Resident Magistrates are, and what sort of men their Colleagues in Parliament are. They are men with like feelings with ourselves, and with like tastes with ourselves. Let hon. Gentleman remember what six months of hard labour—six months as a common misdemeanant—is to anybody, and let them remember what it is to an educated man, whose whole crime is that he has asked men to belong to the National League. When, in old days, I defended Irish Judges, I took care that they were Judges who had not been appointed by my own Government to the County Court as strong political partizans, or to the High Court of Justice as strong Orange partizans—as was the case with Judge Holmes. I spoke of them highly, because I felt that our hands were clean in these appointments. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General has brought up against me one single case of accumulative sentence that occurred in my time. That is a specimen of the sort of arguments with which Lord Spencer and I are assailed. Here, out of many thousands of cases, one only is cited. When I remonstrate against imprisoning Members of Parliament, and against their sentences being increased on appeal in this arbitrary and wholesale manner, I am told—"But you imprisoned Members of Parliament." Well, Sir, we reduced crime in Ireland in six months from 3,000 cases to 500, and we imprisoned one Member of Parliament—not under a Crimes Act. That may have been right or it may have been wrong. The present Government, however, have in six months reduced 380 cases to 280, and, in that time, they have imprisoned one-sixth of the Representatives of Ireland. And what we ask today is that the sentences on these Members of Parliament and on the humbler men who follow in their train ought not, in defiance of all precedents and legal practices, to be increased by the arbitrary will of a County Court Judge.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I desire to say very few words with reference to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Sir George Trevelyan) He has made a statement as to what he would have done had he been aware of certain circumstances when he was Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. I am sure the House will gladly accept his statement of what, to his mind, would have been his duty five years ago had he been aware of the facts. We accept the statement in the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman thought fit to make it. But the facts were known—there was no question about them. We knew what had occurred in those cases which were charged against the officers of the law in Ireland and against the Resident Magistrates, under precisely the same circumstances as these cases which have occurred recently, and with regard to which such unfortunate, such marked, and, as I venture to think, such unjustifiable language has been used. Now, what is the aim and purpose of this debate? It is to discredit the law by all the authority of the names of men who formerly were bound to maintain and administer that law. Their object is, as we have said, by innuendo to suggest that the Judges are actuated by corrupt and improper motives. ["Hear, hear!"] That is cheered by hon. Members opposite. I understand that cheering. Hon. Members below the Gangway on the opposite side desire to discredit the administrators of the law by every possible means. It is part of the object of their existence. They also desire by every possible means to intimidate the Judges in the discharge of their duties. [*Cries of* "Order!" *from the Irish Members.*] They wish to prevent the Judges from discharging plain, simple duties—from dealing with sentences on appeal, and matters which come before them in the ordinary course of their work according to the light of their own consciences. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite laugh at all allusions to conscience. I am not blind to the facts. I am well aware that any allusion to absolute conscientious duty on the part of those who have to administer the law is always received with derision in that quarter. But let me ask, is this House of Commons prepared, when it is in possession of only the slightest materials, to censure the action of Judges, the great majority of whom, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has said, are men of probity with the highest sense of duty—men with the highest sense of personal obligation to their country and their Queen? But the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow says:—"Oh, yes; all those whom we appointed as Judges were men who deserved the confidence of the country and of Parliament, and their judgments certainly ought not to be impugned by this House or any other tribunal, but you—the Executive Government of this country—make appointments which may be questioned, and the action of these gentlemen may fitly and properly be questioned because they were appointed from corrupt and improper motives." That, I think, is the first time that any Executive Government in this country has been charged with appointing to judicial posts men who are not actuated by the highest sense of duty and of obligation. Men are taken out of this House—from both sides of the House—and are put upon the Bench; Governments in succession appoint them, and for the first time we hear it charged, and that by right hon. Gentlemen opposite, that the nominees of the Government, those they have placed on the Bench, are guilty of corruption, impropriety, partiality, and incapacity to discharge their duties. I trust the House will by a sufficient majority repudiate such suggestions as these, and will vindicate the ancient tradition of Parliament to maintain the independence of the Judges of the land.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 165; Noes 219: Majority 54.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, C. T. D.
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Asher, A.
Asquith, H. H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, J.
Balfour, Sir G.
Barbour, W. B.
Barran, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Bolton, J. C.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, Jacob
Broadhurst, H.
Brown, A. L.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Byrne, G. M.
Caldwell, J.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carew, J. L.
Causton, R. K.
Cavan, Earl of
Channing, F. A.
Childers, right hon. H. C. E.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Craig, J.
Crawford, D.
Crawford, W.
Crilly, D.
Crossley, E.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Duff, R. W.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Finucane, J.
Firth, J. F. B.
Flower, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Foley, P. J.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Foster, Sir W. B.
Fowler, rt. hon. H. H.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Gardner, H.
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, right hon. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Grey, Sir E.
Grove, Sir T. F.
Hanbury-Tracy, hon. F. S. A.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Holden, I.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.

Illingworth, A.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, hon. W. H.
Joicey, J.
Jordan, J.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
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Kenny, C. S.
Kenny, J. E.
Kilbride, D.
Lalor, R.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leahy, J.
Leake, R.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Lewis, T. P.
Lyell, L.
Macdonald, W. A.
Mackintosh, C. F.
M‘Arthur, A.
M‘Cartan, M.
M‘Carthy, J.
M‘Carthy, J. H.
M‘Donald, P.
M‘Donald, Dr. R.
M‘Laren, W. S. B.
Mahony, P.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Mayne, T.
Menzies, R. S.
Morgan, right hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Mundella, right hon. A. J.
Murphy, W. M.
Neville, R.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, J.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Doherty, J. E.
O'Hanlon, T.
Palmer, Sir C. M.
Pease, A. E.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reynolds, W. J.
Roberts, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Robinson, T.
Roe, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, J.
Rowlands, W. B.
Rowntree, J.
Schwann, C. E.
Sheehan, J. D.
Simon, Sir J.
Smith, S.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stewart, H.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, A.
Tanner, C. K.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Tuite, J.
Wardle, H.
Warmington, C. M.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Whitbread, S.
Will, J. S.
Williamson, J.
Wilson, H. J.

TELLERS.

Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Morley, A.

NOES.

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Bailey, Sir J. R.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
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Barnes, A.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bartley, G. C. T.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beadel, W. J.
Beaumont, H. F.
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Bentinck, W. G. C.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
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Bonsor, H. C. O.
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Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, R. F. F.
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Cavendish, Lord E.
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Cooke, C. W. R.
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Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
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Cross, H. S.
Darling, C. J.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
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Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donkin, R. S.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Dugdale, J. S.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
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Egerton, hon. A. J. F.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, G. W.
Elton, C. I.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Farquharson, H. R.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fielden, T.
Finch, G. H.
Finlay, R. B.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
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Fowler, Sir R. N.
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Gedge, S.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
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Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, right hon. G. J.
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Green, Sir E.
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Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
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Hornby, W. H.
Howard, J.
Hubbard, hon. E.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
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Hunter, Sir W. G.
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Jackson, W. L.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenrick, W.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lea, T.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lees, E.
Legh, T. W.
Lennox, Lord W. C. Gordon-
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewis, Sir C. E.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Lowther, J. W.
Lymington, Viscount
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Maclean, J. M.
Madden, D. H.
Maple, J. B.
Marriott, right hon. W. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Matthews, right hon. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Mildmay, F. B.
Milvain, T.
More, R. J.
Morrison, W.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Norris, E. S.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Parker, hon. F.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.

Powell, F. S.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Quilter, W. C.
Rankin, J.
Richardson, T.
Ritchie, right hon. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Round, J.
Royden, T. B.
Russell, Sir G.
Sandys, Lieut-Col. T. M.
Saunderson, Colonel E. J.
Selwin - Ibbetson, rt. hon. Sir H. J.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stephens, H. C.
Stewart, M. J.
Sutherland, T.
Swetenham, E.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Thorburn, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Townsend, F.
Trotter, Colonel H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vincent, Col. C. E. H.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Weymouth, Viscount
Wharton, J. L.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Williams, J. Powell-
Wilson, Sir S.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P.
Yerburgh, R. A.

TELLERS.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (BRITISH DEPENDENCIES).—RESOLUTION.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR (Leicester), in rising to call attention to the evils of the liquor traffic among the Native races inhabiting the British Dependencies, or subject to the control or influence of the British Government; and to move—

> "That this House, having regard to the disastrous physical and moral effects of the liquor traffic among uncivilized races, as well as the injury it inflicts on legitimate commerce, is of opinion that Her Majesty's Government should take steps to suppress the traffic with Natives in all Native Territories under its influence or control, and that whenever self-governing powers are granted to Crown Colonies, stipulations should be made for the effectual protection of the Natives against the sale of strong drink,"

said: I have been induced to direct attention to this question in consequence of numerous communications from various parts of Her Majesty's Dominions, and especially from the Islands of the Western Pacific, South and West Africa, and several of the Crown Colonies, complaining of the terrible injuries inflicted by the unrestricted traffic in spirituous liquors, and praying for some means to mitigate and, if possible, prevent them. We know something, though, perhaps, not as much as we should know, of the baneful effect of intemperance in this country, and of the poverty, destitution, and misery which it occasions; how it greatly increases our rates and taxes by filling our workhouses, gaols, and lunatic asylums; how it greatly wrongs women and children, and consigns vast multitudes every year to premature and too often dishonourable graves. If we require proof of that, we have it in abundance. It is stated that 60,000 drunkards die every year. Many of our most eminent surgeons and physicians have used strong language respecting the injurious effects of spirituous liquors when too freely indulged in, and one of our Judges had described the crime of drunkenness as a crime leading to all other crimes—a crime which we might well say leads to 19-20ths of the crimes of this country. Bad as things are here, however, there is some protection afforded by the Adulteration Acts, which prohibit the addition of deleterious drugs to alcoholic drinks, and render them less pernicious than they would otherwise be. But in warm countries, inhabited by coloured and savage races unaccustomed to such liquors, the Natives seem to have, with the exception of Madagascar, no protection whatever, there is no supervision, no examination; and the consequence is that the drink sold to them is so horribly bad, so utterly ruinous to health, that it speedily demoralizes, degrades, and destroys those who indulge in it. Indeed, it is said to be so bad that Europeans will not drink it, and it has been called the "death drink" by the Natives in some places. The readiness with which Natives succumb to the influence of strong drink is well known, as well as the impossibility of expecting men in an uncivilized state to exercise self-control. Take, for example, the Native inhabitants of the Pacific Islands. They have adopted, to a great extent, the habits and customs of civilized life, and they consume large quantities of British-manufactured goods, which is, of course, a benefit to this country; but legitimate trade is being ruined, and we are told, in the admirable Report in the Blue Book upon the Western Pacific, presented to both Houses of Parliament in September last—

> "That many traders minister to the basest passions of the Natives, and, instead of developing a useful trade in national products in ex-

> change for useful merchandise, they, on account of the increased profit and more rapid gains, thrust guns, gunpowder, and alcohol upon the Natives, and bring about the wholesale murders that are monthly enacted in or upon the innumerable islands forming a continuous chain over 3,000 miles in length, and extending from Fiji to the Eastern shores of New Guinea."

Again, it was pointed out that Commanders of Her Majesty's ships have repeatedly urged the prohibition of the drink traffic. Captain Maxwell, Commodore Wilson, Captain Bridge, and many others, all condemn it. We have also the high authority of Sir John Thurston, the present, and Sir William Des Vœux, the late, High Commissioner in the Western Pacific, who have stated that the sale of arms, ammunition, and alcoholic drink is demoralizing the Natives of the Pacific, and bringing about their rapid extinction. We might naturally suppose that civilized nations worthy of the name would cordially unite to stop this iniquitous traffic, and it is gratifying to know that this country has taken the initiative in an effort to try and induce the various Powers to agree to put an end to the sale of arms, ammunition, alcohol, and dynamite in the Islands. Acting upon the suggestion and advice of the High Commissioner referred to, Lord Granville in 1884 forwarded to the Great Powers and the United States an International Agreement to prevent the supply of arms, ammunition, dynamite, and alcohol to the Natives of the Pacific Islands. The Governments of France, Russia, and Austria sent favourable answers on certain conditions to Lord Granville's Circular. I am not certain whether Germany has yet given a definite reply, but it is understood that that Power is favourably disposed. The American Government, however, declined to enter into the proposed arrangement. But it is to be hoped that, as the facts of the case become better known, the people of the United States will bring such pressure to bear upon the Government as will compel them to join the other Powers in the proposed arrangement. If we turn to South Africa, we find the picture as dark as it is in the Pacific, and that in the Cape Colony the consumption of spirituous liquors by the Natives is increasing, and the consequences are most deplorable. A Proclamation was issued in 1885 by the Cape Government, authorizing the unrestricted sale of liquor to Chiefs, petty Chiefs, and Councillors, and empowering magistrates to issue permits to common Natives for the purchase of definite quantities of spirits in the Transkeian territories. The Natives held a public meeting at Butterworth, and made a solemn protest against the action of the Government in enforcing strong drink upon an unwilling people. I may also mention that at a numerously attended breakfast meeting, held a few weeks ago at the Westminster Palace Hotel, Lord Stanley of Alderley in the chair, Mr. Hutton, Member of the Legislative Assembly, and late Treasurer General of the Cape Colony, who has had upwards of 40 years' experience in South Africa, said that a Liquor Law was some years ago introduced by Sir Thomas Scanlan, which contained clauses known as "Local Option" clauses, and also empowered or authorized the Government to proclaim areas, wherever they thought proper, within which the sale of intoxicating liquor should be prohibited; and under that law many such areas were proclaimed, after the law had been some time in operation. It was, however, alleged that in some of those areas, especially in one or two near King Williamstown—liquors circulated more freely than ever, because, owing to the nearness of King Williamstown, the Natives resident in those areas go there and purchase brandy by the bottle, and that drunkenness was thereby increased instead of diminished. In consequence of those allegations—whether true or false—the prohibition as regards those areas has been withdrawn, and that first retrogressive step is greatly to be deplored, as it is certain to be followed by still further withdrawals of similar prohibitions. A Native paper says the Natives ask that the sale of "firewater" shall be treated precisely in the same way as gunpowder, which they are not allowed to purchase, and they would not object to having the country from the Fish River to Umzanqulu proclaimed an area in which the liquid fire should not be sold to them. Surely that is not an unreasonable request, and we might suppose it would meet with the approval of those who desire to deal honestly and fairly with the Natives. But if we are rightly informed, not only has a deaf ear been turned to their appeal, but all the restrictions have been removed, and even the

Licence Duties have been repealed—involving a loss of revenue—and railway freights have been reduced to satisfy the demands of the winegrowers and distillers. I am also aware that the Cape Colony enjoys responsible local government, and it is questionable how far Her Majesty's Government may feel it right to interfere with their internal arrangements. But we may presume that the opinion of this House and of the country would have some influence with those who are at the helm of affairs in the Colony, and induce them to adopt such measures as may save and not destroy the Natives who are dependent upon them. There are, however, other portions of Africa over which we can have complete control, or can exert very powerful influence, and yet I regret to say that I fear things are almost as bad and disgraceful as in the Cape Colony. We have many sad proofs of death and disease occasioned by drink, of which I could give several personal instances of a deplorable character. We are told that it is difficult, if not impossible, to prevent the sale of alcoholic drinks to Native Tribes. I do not admit the correctness of the assertion, because we have satisfactory proof to the contrary. I have it upon the authority of a Member of this House who has been to Africa that when Sir Charles Warren was in command there he made a clean sweep of the ruffianly traders who were feeding upon the vitals of the unfortunate Natives, and cleared them out in a week or two. And that could be done again. It is stated that the curse of drink has been one of the greatest hindrances to civilization and the spread of Christianity in heathen lands. I believe we are morally bound to protect the Natives over whom we rule, and to promote their welfare by every means in our power. But I believe self-interest—even if we had no higher motive—should induce us to do so. We are a manufacturing and commercial country, and it is of the utmost importance to us that we should have wide fields and numerous customers for our goods. These Native Tribes and Nations, if properly cared for, would be valuable customers. I recollect hearing the late venerable Dr. Moffat, who laboured so long and so successfully in Africa, state on one occasion that when he first went to Bechuanaland there was not £5 worth of British manufactured goods sold in that district; but, before he left, tens of thousands of pounds worth were sold annually. And this is the case wherever Christian civilization extends. It is, therefore, suicidal folly to allow the Native races to be exterminated. It is like killing the goose that, properly cared for, would lay many golden eggs. I am glad to find that the Royal Niger Company are alive to the importance of this fact, and that—influenced, I doubt not, by humane, Christian motives, but also by proper financial considerations—they have endeavoured to restrict the sale of liquor as much as practicable. There was a reduction of 25 per cent in 1885, whilst in 1886 the reduction was not less than half the import of 1884. In April, 1886, the Council prohibited by regulation the importation of spirituous liquors into certain regions forming about one-third of the Company's territories. I understand they are anxious to do the same with another third of the territory. On May 19 the Council made a further regulation imposing penalties on the payment of wages in spirits throughout the whole of these territories, and they point out that, in following that course, they have not been guided solely by administrative or humanitarian motives, but have acted in the true commercial interest of the shareholders, which accepts as an axiom that the permanent success of the Company's extensive operations in Central Africa depends upon general and progressive trade, and that cannot be built up on the liquor traffic. I may also point out, that whilst we incur the disgrace and bear the injury which results from encouraging this iniquitous traffic, other countries, and especially Germany, enjoy the lion's share of profit. I find that during 1885 more than 10,000,000 gallons of the cheapest and vilest spirit ever manufactured were sent to Africa, chiefly into the Congo Free State and the basin of the Niger. Of that quantity, England sent 311,384 gallons; Germany not less than 7,823,042 gallons; the Netherlands, 1,000,009 gallons; the United States, France, and Portugal in smaller quantities. I am well aware that this is a difficult question to deal with, as we shall probably be told by the Under Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs and the Colonies. I also know that we must take other countries into account, and deal fairly with them; but I contend that we have no right to allow any country to poison and exterminate Her Majesty's subjects, or those placed under her protection, to serve their own sordid and selfish purposes. We boast that we have paid £20,000,000 sterling for the abolition of Slavery, and we still expend large sums in endeavouring to suppress that villainous traffic in other parts of the world. Is it not, therefore, highly inconsistent for us to encourage, or, at all events, permit, if we can prevent it, a trade which, we are told on high authority, is even more destructive than the Slave Trade? In the words of the late lamented Duke of Albany—"Drink is the only enemy England has to fear." It is equally true that it is by far the most deadly enemy the Native races have to fear. Sir, I think the facts I have brought before the House prove, beyond all doubt, the greatness of the evil and the necessity for prompt and energetic action to save the Native races from being exterminated, and to prevent the destruction of our commercial interests, which, as I have said, is of the utmost importance to us as a manufacturing country. I therefore appeal for help and sympathy on behalf of those who are, by means of this great evil, being destroyed and hurried to an early and ignominious grave; and I am happy to say that I appeal with confidence, because I believe the noble Lord who so ably discharges the duties of Secretary of State for the Colonies sympathizes with the views which I have endeavoured to express. I hope I may say the same respecting the Under Secretaries of State for Foreign and Colonial Affairs, and, indeed, of every Member of Her Hajesty's Government. I therefore appeal to them with confidence to do everything in their power to stem this torrent of iniquity, and to prevent the degradation, demoralization, and destruction of the Colonial races who are under our control and over whom we exert a powerful influence. I therefore move the Resolution standing in my name.

Sir JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton) said, that in attempting to show the extent of this evil in order that they might have the means of grappling with it, his hon. Friend had taken them over a large extent of the earth, inhabited by races which, although savage, were possessed of noble qualities and great capabilities, so that if the influences of civilization and the teachings of Christianity were brought to bear upon them they would be well fitted to take their part in the great brotherhood of Nations. Englishmen had come in contact with these races, sent forth by the love of adventure, the desire of gain, the strong pressure exerted by a crowded population and the spirit of philanthropy, and we had succeeded in establishing an Empire such as the world had never seen, and placing ourselves high among nations mainly through our Colonies and our commerce. We were fond of talking about the beneficent mission of our commerce, the onward march of civilization, and of the glorious character of our missionary enterprize, and had persuaded ourselves that the contact between European and Native races must necessarily result in benefit to the latter. It ought to be so; and, if the right influences were brought to bear, it would be so. But we very often defeated our own objects by bringing upon these races that which was not for their good, but for their hurt. The African more especially had a tendency towards carousing; he was able to make large quantities of his favourite drink, called *tembe*, and from time to time to fall into intoxication. But the European merchant had done a great deal more than that for the Native by the importation of rum and gin, the taste for which generally grew upon him like wild-fire; he became careless of everything else, had no money to purchase goods from Manchester, and cared little for the arts of civilization, the result being that his last condition was worse than at first. Mr. James Thomson, in a lecture before the Manchester Geographical Society, said that he had travelled and suffered much for the negro race, with the idea of doing them good and opening up lines of commerce and civilization; but that when he had seen the results of these vast importations of liquor his satisfaction was blighted; he thought the little work that had been done had better have remained undone, and that Africa had better have continued a dark country, if the end of it was such as he had seen. Sir Richard Burton said that Africa had gone back to its old state under the Slave Trade; that he would rather see its people given up to slavery than given to the habits to which he had seen the people given over. He (Sir John Kennaway) thought the hon. Members had very little idea of the extent to which the importation of spirits went on the West Coast of Africa. Mr. Irvine, in a letter to the Rev. Thomas Waller, said it was impossible to get at the actual shipments; but he did not over estimate them by saying that the importation to the Niger district was 60,000 hogsheads of 50 gallons each, and that there was the consumption on that 200 miles of coast of the cargoes of 20 ships. Another gentleman who had just returned, Mr. H. Allen, Vicar of Bermondsey, said that 60,000 cases of gin, besides an enormous quantity of rum, passed through the country. This country was only beginning to realize the extent of the evil, and what should be done to meet it. They admitted that there were great difficulties in the way, but great difficulties had not stood in the way of Wilberforce when he attempted, with all his might, to overthrow the Slave Trade against the vast interests arrayed against him. Nor did difficulties appal Buxton, when he set himself to persuade this country that it was a crying sin that any country over which the flag of England waved should be held in slavery; and who had succeeded to the extent that the country made a sacrifice of £20,000,000 sterling to compensate for its abolition. We had to recognize that the traffic complained of was largely carried on by ourselves and in our Colonies over which we had no power; and it had been found, when it was sought to found an international agreement in regard to the importation duties to be levied on spirits, that the Cape Government were unwilling to enter into such agreement. The Colony of Natal, moreover, which stood out in contrast with other self-governed Colonies by its wise determination not to allow liquor to be supplied to the Natives, preferred to make its own arrangements. But though we had no power to force, yet he believed that the Colonies were so justly sensitive to the good opinion of England, that they could undoubtedly exercise an influence upon them for good. There were other difficulties with regard to the Crown Colonies. In the case of Sierra Leone, he found that half the revenue of the Colony was derived from the duty on spirits. All these facts had to be looked in the face; nevertheless, he was satisfied that good in some way or other could be achieved, if the people of this country went to work with a determination to do that which was right. It did not, however, depend entirely upon our individual action. Great Britain did not hold a tenth of the coast line of Africa. There were German, French, and Portuguese settlements, and there were some parts of the coast altogether destitute of civilized Government. It was necessary that we should awaken the conscience of Europe, get them to realize the evil, and by uniting with England deal with this question in some way or other. But this was no easy matter. Foreign Governments had their own concerns to attend to. France, for instance, did not long retain its Colonial Ministers; her people were, besides, our rivals in commerce, and he did not think they had yet begun to be alive to the evil sought to be dealt with. An agreement had been arrived at with regard to the prevention of the liquor traffic with the inhabitants of the Islands in the West Pacific; but, for some reason or other, the United States had not favoured the agreement, and that which had been so well conceived and nearly so well carried out was utterly useless. Exactly the same thing had occurred in the case of Zanzibar, when England and Germany agreed for a duty of 20 per cent on spirits, and the French insisted on their privilege of having 5 per cent duty, the consequence being that the cargoes were at once transferred and imported under the French Flag. We had every reason to be proud of the effort made by our Envoy at Berlin in the Conference on the affairs of Central Africa held four years ago, when our Representative boldly put forward this question, and sought to obtain the sanction of the Conference to a proposal that the transit of spirituous liquors should be prohibited along the Coast of the Niger; but there was one delegate who wished the initiative to be taken by the Local Governments; he objected to the matter being dealt with by the Conference, and they were obliged to be satisfied with the expression of a wish that an agreement could be established between the Governments to regulate the traffic in a manner which would reconcile the claims of humanity with the interests of commerce, although he was afraid that that wish would not prevent the importation of liquor into the Colonies in question. There was, however, mention made of a further Convention and united action which he hoped the Government would not lose sight of. They had received great encouragement from a Conference held a little time ago with regard to the liquor traffic in the North Sea, when Germany, Great Britain, Belgium, Denmark, France, and Holland were able to come to an agreement, whereby an evil, great in itself, but not great in extent as compared with that to which they had been referring that evening, was put a stop to by the united action of those six Powers. There was a strong feeling upon the subject springing up in our Colonies. In South Africa the Party which represented that feeling was no doubt in a minority; but in Sierra Leone a very strong Committee had been formed, and at the inaugural meeting it was shown that the agents of the French, African, and Belgian Steamship Companies were in sympathy with the object of the Committee. He thought that the example of the Niger Company could not be too much made known, showing, as it did, that the result of their adoption of a policy of restriction was that the importation of spirits was reduced in that district 75 per cent in the last four years, and where it was possible the prohibition of the sale of drink to the Natives had been enforced. The Company had also put down their foot firmly against the payment of wages in spirituous liquor which was prevalent in the country, and was a most objectionable practice. They all thought that the Government was fully alive to the question, and the statement made in "another place" by the noble Lord the Colonial Secretary showed not only what they had done, but what they would do if they were able. He and his hon. Friends wanted by this debate to strengthen the hands of the Government, and to make them feel that they had public opinion behind them which would encourage them to persevere in the course they had begun. In Zululand, Bechuanaland, and Basutoland the most stringent rules had been made against the sale of liquor to the Natives, which rules had been very successfully enforced; so that, unless an importation of liquor should take place by railway from the Transvaal, in a way which could not be controlled, a very great and excellent result had already been secured. This question was one which, now that public opinion had been aroused, would not be allowed to go to sleep. He hoped next year that they might have an humble Address to Her Majesty, if the Government had not already taken it in hand, praying that measures might be taken to call together a Convention which might succeed in obtaining the united action of the Powers of Europe in this matter. He ventured to second the Motion, as being one which was in accord with the highest commercial interests of the country, and for the honour of this nation as well as for the sake of humanity. He thought that it might not be out of place on that occasion also to urge upon the House the expediency of the proposal on behalf of the great Missionary Societies which had done so much in the cause of Christianity and civilization. The Church Missionary Society, with which he had the honour more especially to be connected, had always been in the fore front in dealing with Africa. It had spent there a large portion of its treasure; it had sent out the best and noblest of its sons, very many of whom, as real martyrs, had laid their bones in Africa, and it would be its honour for all time to have been the means of raising up many Native Churches. There was present that evening one who himself, once a slave, had been educated, ordained, and had finally become an honoured and trusted Bishop of the Church. The Church Missionary Society was only one amongst many which had come forward; there was the Propagation Society, the Universities Mission to Central Africa, the Scotch and Baptist Missions, and others, whose one object was to civilize and Christianize Africa. Amongst England's great men who lay under the shadow of Westminster Abbey there was David Livingstone, not the least of her heroes, and graven on the stones that covered him were the words—

> "Pray that the nation's richest blessing may rest on him, be he English, be he American, or be he Turk, who shall do his best to remove this open sore of the world."

They had in that drink traffic to deal with a sore as open as the Slave Trade, and their's might be the blessing invoked by David Livingstone, if by their means the wound was staunched, and the sick man made whole.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That this House, having regard to the disastrous physical and moral effects of the liquor traffic among uncivilized races, as well as the injury it inflicts on legitimate commerce, is of opinion that Her Majesty's Government should take steps to suppress the traffic with Natives in all Native Territories under its influence or control, and that whenever self-governing powers are granted to Crown Colonies, stipulations should be made for the effectual protection of the Natives against the sale of strong drink.—(*Mr. Alexander M'Arthur.*)

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) said, he wished to say a few words on this subject, because it was one with which he had had to deal practically. The wording of the Resolution implied that the Government had not as yet taken any steps to suppress the liquor traffic with Natives; but he was sure that his hon. Friend the Member for Leicester did not intend that that signification should be put upon the words of his Motion.

Mr. A. M'ARTHUR said, that he had no such intention.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL said, he was glad to hear that observation. The idea was largely prevalent among the public that our self-governing Colonies had not taken any steps to suppress the traffic. He had in his possession a Report of a Committee which met to settle this question, and he found that the Government were recommended to inquire specially concerning the liquor traffic with Natives in several countries under Colonial Governments. Among those countries he found Tasmania and Canada. He happened to be in Tasmania in 1870, immediately after the death of the last Native there, and yet in 1888 they were told that they were to inquire into the spread of the liquor traffic among the Natives. In Tasmania there were no Natives. That was another sign of the prevailing misapprehension. Then, again, anybody who had been in Canada would bear him out in saying that there never was so admirable a system inaugurated in any country as the system which was to be found in Canada for preventing the sale of liquor to the Natives. In Queensland and the other Colonies, with the exception of one, where there were Natives, the Colonial Governments had earnestly and energetically taken measures to prevent the sale of intoxicating liquor to the Natives.

Mr. A. M'ARTHUR said, that he confined his remarks specially to the Western Pacific and to South and West Africa.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL said, that he was coming to that point; but he wished to emphasize the fact that the Governments of self-governed Colonies were cordially assisting the Imperial Government in carrying out the policy which his hon. Friend supported. In the other Crown Colonies more immediately under the Colonial Office that policy was not so effectually carried out; but he knew that the authorities in Downing Street were certainly not behind any Members of that House in desiring to see a successful policy carried through in this matter. At the same time, he did say, having some personal knowledge of the subject, that in those countries, especially where we exercised influence, though not political control, there was very great room for improvement. When he was in Bechuanaland with Sir Charles Warren, they succeeded in turning out of that country all dealers in intoxicating liquors; but until they got rid of the system of dual control in Zululand, Bechuanaland, and Pondoland, they would not be able to control effectually those Native districts. His experience in Basutoland showed him how Imperial control undeterred could succeed in accomplishing the purpose which they had in view. When he was there in 1885 most of the chiefs were known to be habitual drunkards, and the people had suffered enormously from the drink traffic. But the very energetic Administrator there, who worked under the control of the Imperial Government, had by degrees brought about an enormous change in that country. He had done that, however, with the aid and assistance of the Natives themselves. The Natives, as he knew from personal experience, had set themselves against their chiefs on the question of the drink traffic, and they had made up their minds to make Basutoland a sober country. There were other districts which were outside the sphere of the actual political influence of this country, over which the Imperial Government should assume a more active control. As had been observed in the course of the debate, in dealing with these districts the Government had to associate with foreign Powers, and it had been found that such association was not absolutely impossible—indeed, it had been successful. They had been told, for instance, that the arrangement made in the Pacific had been utterly useless. He traversed that statement, because he knew that the Germans in New Guinea had carried out their share in the guarantee. Then the great English Company on the Niger had certainly effectually checked the liquor traffic in that district. But he thought that there was a very grave and difficult task before them on the West and East Coasts of Africa. As to the effect which the drink traffic had upon trade, he might say that the traders were in earnest in desiring to see it abolished. The traders desired a wholesome and remunerative traffic in ordinary goods, and they knew that that would be put an end to directly drink was admitted. He did not wish to move an Amendment to the Resolution of his hon. Friend, but he thought that a Motion in general terms, calling attention to the evil effects of the liquor traffic, and stating that the House would cordially support the Imperial and Colonial Governments in their endeavours to suppress it, would be more in accordance with the real facts of the case.

Mr. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, that appeared to be one of the debates which should not be prolonged, because they were all of one mind. Whether Liberal, Radical, Tory, or Conservative, they were all of opinion that some action of the nature of that proposed by his hon. Friend (Mr. A. M'Arthur) ought to be adopted. As a question of words, it might be the Government would find it desirable to alter the Resolution in some way or other. He hoped some Member of the Government would rise immediately to tell them what alteration the Government thought it desirable to make in the wording of the Resolution, and thus bring the matter to an end, and enable them to pass on to the next Business. They all recognized thoroughly the very grave difficulties which had been suggested. The hon. Baronet (Sir John Kennaway) who seconded the Resolution, said that, although we were the greatest colonizers in the world, we could not compel other people to do what we wished. No; but we could do a great deal to bring about the improvement which was desired. We had sent out missionaries and introduced English customs and habits into many heathen countries, yet the wretched fact confronted us, that while we had been trying to do those countries good, people had been going side by side and almost in company with our missionaries, endeavouring to do harm. Those men, for the very worst reasons, had enticed and led the Natives into mischief, until really the poor creatures had died in large numbers, as though they were swept away with the breath of the destroying angel. The time had come when something should be done. If it were worth while to prolong the discussion, he could not help thinking that a reference to the case of the Island of Fiji would show what good things could be done by proper attention to the very principle which was laid down in the Resolution. He was extremely anxious they should at once hear what was to be said on the subject by the Government, and for that reason he would curtail any remarks of his own.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Baron Henry de Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth) said, that that was not a question which was in any way within the range of Party politics, but it was one on which men on both sides of the House were agreed. As far as principle was concerned, Her Majesty's Government could accept the Resolution entirely. He also thought hon. Members would agree with him when he said that both the present Government and also the preceding Government had done their utmost, as far as laid in their power, to prevent extension of this pernicious and dangerous drink traffic among half-civilized or savage races. The hon. Member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool (Sir George Baden-Powell) had mentioned the cases of Chiefs who had sought protection against the inroads of traders bringing spirits into their territories. Such cases had come lately under the notice of the Secretary of State, and when they were submitted the Government took immediate steps to assist those Chiefs who were naturally and legitimately anxious to prevent the ruin of their people by the introduction of drink. This question of the introduction of drink among Native races had occupied the attention of successive Governments for a long time. At the request of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. A. M'Arthur) a Circular was sent out in January last to all our Colonial Governments, asking them to send copies of laws and ordinances regulating the introduction of liquors into the Colonies and Native territories. The replies had not yet come to hand; when they were received the Government would be in a better position to form an opinion as to what steps should be taken to prevent the sale of intoxicants to Natives than it was at present. Meanwhile he might refer his hon. Friend the Member for Leicester to a speech which had been made by his noble Friend the Secretary of State on March 5 last, and, as regarded the Western Pacific, to a Parliamentary Paper issued in September last. In many cases the Government had gone further than the hon. Member for Leicester himself, for they had been anxious not only to prevent the sale of intoxicants, but also to prevent the sale of arms and ammunition. If they stopped one trade, they ought to endeavour to stop the other. While these endeavours had been to a certain extent successful, it could not be disguised that one great difficulty had been the absence of perfect co-operation on the part of foreign Governments, without which the restrictions of the British Government only hampered British enterprize without benefiting Natives. This was shown by a Report which had been received from Rear Admiral Tryon, dated the 21st of January last, in which he said—

> "The action of the Pacific Islands Acts and the Memoranda and Regulations, framed as they were with the desire that their action should be beneficial to the Native race, have in far too many instances failed in their effect. To some degree, in a few places, they may have checked the supply of what is prohibited as an article of trade; but, on the whole, their action has only affected the sources of supply. All that is forbidden to be done is done with impunity by foreigners, or by unscrupulous Englishmen, who change their nationality to evade the law. Foreign agencies act as a police against Englishmen only, to enforce against them alone the Pacific Islands Acts. During this cruise a German, an American, and a Swede reported and obtained the punishment of their English rivals for doing that which, if done by themselves, would have been lawful. It appears to me that, however desirous we may be to secure fair play for the Natives, the actual and unexpected result of what has so far been done is to drive the trade from the hands of the larger English firms, from those who naturally would be interested in the maintenance and increase of trade, and whose action could be easily supervised, and, moreover, whose local position favoured their trading operations; while, on the other hand, it favours foreigners and small traders, hailing from anywhere, and favours the adventurers and the unscrupulous who under our noses do what we do not permit those to do who retain the name of being Englishmen."

In that extract were embodied the difficulties of the position. They could make regulations for themselves, and endeavour to see they were carried out, but they were altogether unable to prevent the action of unscrupulous foreigners without the co-operation of the other Powers by conventions. It had been mentioned what had been effected by a little co-operation with regard to the floating drink shops in the North Sea Fisheries. Their trade had been to a great extent suppressed, and he trusted it would be totally suppressed by a little co-operation between the Powers concerned. But so long as co-operation was lacking in the Colonies, and especially in the Western Pacific, so long would existing difficulties baffle our efforts. However, it was not because there were difficulties that nothing should be done. On the contrary, the greater should be the energy displayed in the effort to overcome them. One Government which stood aloof from an international agreement was that of the United States. They had not yet seen their way to change the view expressed in a despatch from Mr. Bayard, received by Mr. Sackville West, our Representative at Washington, in April, 1885, in which Mr. Bayard said—

> "While recognizing and highly approving the moral force and general propriety of the proposed regulations, and the responsibility of conducting such traffic under proper and careful restrictions, the Government of the United States does not feel entirely prepared to join in the international understanding proposed, and will, therefore, for the present restrain its action to the employment, in the direction outlined by the suggested arrangement, of a sound discretion in permitting traffic between its own citizens in the articles referred to and the Natives of the Western Pacific Islands."

He (Baron Henry de Worms) much regretted the position thus taken by the United States in 1885; and the Government would be unceasing in their efforts to bring about, if it were possible, a better understanding, and to induce the United States Government to adopt the views of Great Britain, and to enter into a Conference or Convention which should enable the two Governments to co-operate in stopping the liquor traffic in the Western Pacific. The late Government took those steps, and the present Government would continue in the same direction; and wherever the Government had been able to act independently of foreign Powers, they had invariably endeavoured to restrain the drink traffic. In Fiji stringent regulations had been enforced, and been found beneficial. With respect to New Guinea, the Queensland Act for its administration provides as follows:—

> "Trading with the Natives in arms, ammunition, explosives, and intoxicants to be prohibited, except under ordinances reserved for Her Majesty's assent, and assented to by Her Majesty. The foregoing articles to be embodied in the Letters Patent as part of the Constitution of the territory."

In Western Australia, in dealing with the question of responsible government, the Secretary of State had expressed his concurrence with the Governor in his opinion that some measure would be necessary for placing the aboriginal inhabitants of the Colony under the care of a body independent of the Parliament of the day. With respect to Africa, in 1886, upon representations by the London Chamber of Commerce, some correspondence took place as to regulating the importation of alcohol into South Africa by means of a uniform and high duty. The late Government, however, determined to wait for the result of the Western Pacific negotiations before taking further steps. In 1887, the opinion of the Colonial Governments in South and West Africa was invited. The views of the Cape and Natal were not favourable. They were briefly as follow:—The Cape Ministers pointed out that, an excise duty being placed on corn-made brandy and not on spirits produced from grapes, a higher import duty would only increase local manufacture. They were of opinion that the traffic should be regulated rather by internal regulations than by import duties, and they finally declined to take part in the proposed international agreement. The Natal Government stated that if the Cape and Portuguese Governments discontinued the facilities they now give for passing spirits beyond their frontiers, they would impose higher transit duties and raise the import duties to the rate agreed upon by the others. But they pointed to the stringency of the law in Natal for preventing the sale of liquor to the Natives, and they considered that the question would best be solved by adopting similar arrangements elsewhere. By the Natal law the penalty for so supplying liquor was, for the first offence, a fine not exceeding £10, or three months' imprisonment; for the second, £15, or six months; for the third, £20, or nine months, with a provision for cancelling licences. In the territories immediately under British rule there were stringent regulations, as follow:—In Zululand a penalty was imposed, and in default of payment imprisonment, upon any one, licensed or unlicensed, who should sell, exchange, or, for any valuable consideration, give to or procure for any Native in Zululand any wine, or spirituous, or partly spirituous liquor in any quantity, unless it was proved that the liquor was supplied for medicinal purposes. Caffre beer might be sold by the Native producer thereof, but not mixed with wine or spirits. In Bechuanaland the same provisions were in force. In Basutoland the rule of 1877 prohibited absolutely the sale of wines, beer, and spirituous liquors, and the bringing into Basutoland of wine, beer, or spirituous liquors without permission in writing of the Governor, agent, or resident magistrate of the district. The last Report for the year ending June 30, 1887, was "The drink traffic has ceased to exist." As to West Africa, in 1887 the Royal Niger Company pressed on the Government the importance of checking importation, and suggested an arrangement with France and Germany to levy a uniform rate. An important communication had been just received from the King of the Belgians, showing his desire to co-operate with Her Majesty's Government. By a decree of the Congo Free State of the 17th of December, 1887, every person trafficking in spirituous liquors with the Natives must be licensed and pay an annual licence fee of 2,000f. for each establishment, and 5,000f. for each boat used for the traffic. Stringent provisions to guard against abuse were also inserted in the licence, a disregard of which would be followed by forfeiture. The penalty for selling without a licence in a building was 20,000f.; in a boat, 50,000f. The West African Colonies were also consulted, but only Lagos replied; but it was feared that the project was impracticable, as the coast line was not at present completely under the control of civilized Governments. Those were the details which he was at present able to give to the House; but when further Returns were received they would, of course, be presented to Parliament, and would contain a much more complete statement than he was able to give. He trusted that the hon. Member would be satisfied with the knowledge that the Government was doing its best to suppress the nefarious traffic; for while they might permit the use, they could not permit the abuse of the traffic with Native races. He, therefore, hoped the hon. Member would not press his Motion, as it would scarcely be accepted as it stood. But the Government were quite willing to accept it, and if the hon. Member in charge of it wanted something stronger, they would agree to substitute for the words after "commerce," the following words—

> "Will cordially support the Imperial and Colonial Governments in their endeavours to suppress the traffic in spirituous liquors with Natives in all the Native territories under their influence and control."

It was the duty of the Government, and a duty which they would certainly not neglect, to spread the benign influence of religion and civilization wherever British power or influence extended; and they were fully alive to the special duty which devolved upon them of protecting those who could not protect themselves, and of averting the terrible evils which, unfortunately, civilization too often brought in its train upon uncivilized races, and which so largely in this country did so much to swell the long roll of pauperism and crime. He would again assure the hon. Member that Her Majesty's Government would do their utmost to protect the Native races against that danger.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said, he had listened with great interest and admiration to the concluding words of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Baron Henry de Worms). That hon. Gentleman had made a very excellent and satisfactory speech, but apparently he had cut it short in one particular—he had not said what he was going to do in the way of compensation to these traders. He (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was sure this was an oversight, because he knew the Government meant to deal fairly and impartially with all classes of traders, and he hoped that, before the termination of the discussion, the author of the Local Government Bill (Mr. Ritchie) would get up and say what compensation it was proposed to give to the unhappy dealers. Meanwhile, let him (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) congratulate the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. A. M'Arthur) on having found an opportunity for bringing this matter before the House, on having brought it before the House in such an able manner, and on having met with such a satisfactory greeting for it from the Government. He understood from the Government that they were all of one mind on this subject. Yes; all of one mind as to suppressing the liquor traffic—as to suppressing the liquor traffic everywhere except in England. That was, certainly, a most satisfactory state of things. Now, what was this Motion? It was one branch of the attack which was being made on alcohol and the great evil of intemperance, and he was glad that, in the course of the debate, they had heard nothing to the effect that it was adulteration, and not alcohol itself, which was pernicious and was doing all the harm. If they looked at the Returns bearing upon the subject in England, they would find that hardly anybody was convicted of adulteration. The fact was gradually being admitted, that it was alcohol, and alcohol alone, which was doing all the mischief. He would not go at length into all the horrors which this trade produced. He had been struck by what an hon. Member—he thought the hon. Baronet opposite—had stated as the declaration of a certain Native Chief with regard to the introduction of alcohol amongst the Natives—namely, that the traffic in it inflicted more harm upon them than slavery. A statement such as that should have gone to the heart of the Bishop of Peterborough, who had once said that "he would rather see England free than England sober." No one had understood what the right rev. Prelate meant, for no one knew of any divergence between insobriety and slavery;

but such were the words of that Bishop. How differently that Native Chief talked, and no wonder that the Bishop of Peterborough was regarded in some quarters as the patron saint of the publicans of England. He was glad his hon. Friend (Mr. M'Arthur) had quoted what he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) himself had quoted the other day—namely, the statement of Sir William Gull, that alcohol was the most destructive agent in England. Of course, it was the most destructive agent. It filled our gaols, our workhouses, and our lunatic asylums. It was king of the country. Drink was king of England, there was no doubt. As *The Times* said the other day, "Every other institution flounders in difficulty; the public-house alone holds its triumphant course in this country." The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) knew that very well when he brought in his Bill with the Compensation Clauses. The question was, whether the Legislature of this country would not be justified, after due consideration, in placing the welfare of the people above the claims of the trade. That night they were deciding that the claims of Native populations should be put above those of the trade; but so far as our own country was concerned, they had not got so far as that. The hon. Baronet opposite had said—"Their duty was to awaken the conscience of Europe." Why not awaken their own consciences, he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) should like to know? Why should they be so benevolent and kind in this matter towards the people of Africa and of the Fiji Islands, and of all other parts of the world, and yet be without regard for the interests of their fellow-citizens at home? He should have thought they would have had some pity left for the unhappy Native races of these Northern seas, but that was evidently not the case. What did they do? Why, instead of making an attack upon the people who were carrying on this pernicious and dangerous trade, if they had carried it on sufficiently long, and the quantities of liquor they had sold were large enough, they made Peers of them. And they were now taking a new departure. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, not satisfied with making Peers of them, in cases where the quantity of liquor they sold became smaller, proposed to give them pensions. And so they went on. But he hoped the people of the country would become like the Basutos, whom the House had heard about that night. Those people got wiser than their Chiefs, and he trusted that in the course of time the people of this country would get wiser than their pastors and their masters on the drink traffic question. He sincerely hoped they would. It was said that charity began at home, and he hoped that the people of this country would have regard to that proverb as respected the drink question. It would seem, however, that charity began in the Fiji Islands, and had not reached here yet. He was glad, however, to see that it had made a beginning anywhere. A great beginning had been made, and no doubt this debate would be read with delight by hundreds of thousands of people, who would see in it only a forecast of those declarations which would be made when Parliament had become more enlightened upon the question. For his own part, he pitied his fellow-countrymen in connection with this question as much as he did the Natives of Africa; and he failed to see why the interests of the inhabitants of the basin of the Thames should not be looked after quite as carefully as those of the inhabitants of the basin of the Congo. He believed the people at home were quite as worthy of our help and wise legislation as were the Natives of a savage State. What had Sir Charles Warren done; he who was one of the strongest opponents of the drink traffic, and had called it all sorts of bad names when speaking of its existence in foreign countries? But what had he done a few months ago? Why, the only way seemingly in which he could celebrate the Queen's Jubilee was by breaking the law, and keeping open the public-houses a few hours longer, the result being that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was enabled to congratulate the House upon the fact that we had made an additional £300,000 that year out of drink. He (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was glad to see the Bishops were taking up the case of the Native races, and he wished them and his hon. Friend (Mr. M'Arthur) God's speed in their enterprize. It was time that something was done in the matter abroad, as well as at home. We read continually in the newspapers, and in the speeches of great statesmen, that this country had the great mission to fulfil of promoting Christianity and civilization throughout the world. But how did the country promote Christianity and civilization throughout the world? Why, with three agencies —gunpowder, gin, and the gospel. It was by means of those three that we carried out civilization. First of all we introduced gunpowder. A General went out and shot large numbers of the Natives, and then, when he had killed a sufficient number, the gin merchant came in, who poisoned a large proportion of the survivors, and he was followed by the Minister, who converted those who were left. Civilization indeed! No wonder that the Irishman who, when thrown upon what he considered to be a desert island, exclaimed when he saw a man hanging upon a gibbet "Sure, this is a civilized country," and when a little further he met a drunken man he said "Faith, and a Christian one." He congratulated the House upon the work it was doing that night. It might be that it was intended to commit an enormous mistake later on by taking the hard earnings of the people of this country in order to subsidize persons who carried on this pernicious trade for any loss of income they might suffer through interference with their business; but, at any rate, they were now striking a blow for good. It was satisfactory to everyone that the blow should be struck against traders dealing with Native populations, because the traders who were stricken to-night did not possess votes at elections. It was safe, therefore, to strike at them boldly. However, it was a good thing to begin even against them; because he was quite sure that what was done that night would not be forgotten. The hon. Gentleman who had last spoken (Baron Henry de Worms) would always be glad that he had spoken out so boldly upon this question. Why should they not join in this crusade against alcohol, wherever they found it existing. What did Sir Andrew Clarke say? Why, he uttered these words—

> "When I think of the evil done by this alcohol, I feel disposed to give up my profession and everything, and go forth in the required crusade, preaching to all men the power of this enemy of our race."

Well he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) had been engaged in that crusade for a good while, and he rejoiced that night to find that his hon. Friend the Member for Leicester and many other hon. Gentlemen had joined him. They were a band of noble recruits, and he trusted they would go on until they had successfully carried, at any rate, one of the outposts of this great enemy of mankind.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, he was not going to follow the hon. Baronet who had just sat down (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) into the question of compensation to publicans for licences which might be withdrawn under the provisions of the Local Government Bill. He would simply say that he did not agree with the right hon. Baronet upon that point; but he did wish to congratugratulate the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. A. M'Arthur) on the great service he had done to mankind by the debate he had raised that night. He (Sir Robert Fowler) hoped, however, that the hon. Member would be satisfied with what had fallen from the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms). The hon. Member the Under Secretary had spoken out most strongly about the evils which attended the system which had been brought under the notice of the House. Whatever hon. Members might think of the state of things in this country—which was not germane to the Motion before the House—there would be no doubt that in dealing with uncivilized races we found that spirits had a most prejudicial effect upon them. Although he did not agree with the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) in his theories in regard to the use of alcohol, he believed that the result of over indulgence, so far as Native races were concerned, was their destruction, mentally, morally, and physically. There could be no doubt, therefore, that it was the duty of the Government to do everything that lay in their power to put an end to the system which had been described, and that it had been fully recognized by the Under Secretary. That hon. Member had pointed out the great difficulty which the present Government and the late Government and successive Governments had had to contend with in consequence of the refusal of the United States of America to take action in this matter. He would draw the attention of his hon. Friends opposite the Members for Cumberland and Battersea (Sir Wilfrid Lawson and Mr. O. V.

Morgan), who were much respected in the United States, to that matter. He did not appeal to those Gentlemen as regarded the Government of America; but he knew that they had interest with people in that country, and he trusted that they would bring the subject to the notice of their friends there. He would appeal to them to make known to their friends in America the course the Government was taking. It was to him a very surprising thing that in America, where teetotalism was more prevalent than perhaps in any other country, there should be so much opposition to the course Her Majesty's Government were taking on this important matter. He could not but hope that what had been stated in that House that night by various speakers would, by the favour of the Press, be read on the other side of the Atlantic, and that it would have some effect in inducing the American Government to take a different view of the subject when next their attention was called to it by Her Majesty's Government.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he would ask the hon. Member who had brought forward the Motion (Mr. A. M'Arthur) to accept the Amending words suggested on the part of Her Majesty's Government by the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. At the same time he thought he might congratulate his hon. Friend (Mr. A. M'Arthur) on the success which had attended his Motion. The hon. Gentleman had done good service by bringing the question before the House, and he trusted that he would not be content with the result of to-night's debate. The Under Secretary of State had given them an admirable promise for the future, and he (Mr. Mundella) believed that the hon. Member was quite in earnest in his desire to put an end or to mitigate as far as possible this most injurious traffic. But, after all, everything depended on the vigour, energy, and persistency with which the Government took the matter in hand. If the hon. Member (Baron Henry de Worms) would forgive him for saying so, he would observe that if he was as earnest in his endeavours to abolish the drink traffic amongst the Natives under our influence as he was in his efforts to abolish the sugar bounties, there could be no doubt that they might look forward very shortly to a favourable result. But it was no use sending out circulars to Foreign Powers and to our Representatives abroad, unless we gave them to understand that we were in earnest in the matter, and unless there was someone at headquarters who was determined that the will of the Government should be enforced, and no one knew that better than the Under Secretary of State himself. They heard a good deal about the difficulty of obtaining the assent of Foreign Powers. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler) had spoken of the United States of America. No doubt, the United States were, with ourselves, sinners in this respect. He would not say who were the greatest sinners. But there was another Power which exercised a more detrimental influence in regard to this traffic than did the United States, and that was Germany. It was the enormous importation of cheap spirits of the very worst character throughout Southern and Western Africa that was one of the greatest sources of mischief amongst the Native races of that Continent. Well, we had had some experience of what could be done by the Germans. They were not impervious to public opinion. Reference had been made to the North Sea Convention, which he (Mr. Mundella) was very glad to have had an humble part in promoting. That Convention had been for the regulation of the supply of spirits to the fishermen in the North Sea, which was a curse to our marine, and a source of mutiny, bloodshed, poverty, robbery, and every kind of iniquity. There had been some difficulty in getting a number of Foreign Powers to come to a common and substantial agreement, but they had finally succeeded. It was only done, however, by the pressure, so to speak, of public opinion, England taking the lead in promoting that public opinion. Let England do the same with regard to this drink traffic amongst the Native races. Let her record be clear. Let us begin by cleaning our own doors. Let our record be clear in this matter as it was with respect to the Slave Trade, and then let us be resolved to put an end to the evil. It was no use talking about licensing dealers amongst foreign populations. The King of the Belgians might have thought he was doing a good thing in that direction; but he (Mr. Mundella) had little faith in the resolution of his action. The only way in which Native races could be benefited was by prohibiting the drink traffic altogether. The Native races were free from all the evils attending intemperance until they came in contact with civilization—with the introduction of civilization, which brought drink in its train. Not only every kind of crime, but every kind of fraud was perpetrated upon them in the matter of land, and in the matter of buying and selling. Persons took advantage of them by getting them under the influence of drink before making bargains. In this way this drink traffic was not only a curse to the Natives morally and physically, but it was also a curse to the commerce of this country. He thought the hon. Gentleman who represented the Colonies in this House had spoken of the suppression of drink and gunpowder as the things going together, but there was not so much danger in the supply of gunpowder and arms if the supply of drink were stopped. At any rate, if the supply of drink and gunpowder to the Natives were put an end to, much would be done in the way of promoting civilization. Every word which had fallen from the hon. Member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool confirmed the necessity for this Motion. They would admit the good service which the hon. Member himself had done, and with regard to Sir Charles Warren, it was impossible to speak too highly of his work. Sir Alexander Gordon also had shown them what work could be done in this direction in Fiji. That Gentleman had brought about the complete suppression of the traffic, and the action of no English ruler had ever been more beneficent than his. In conclusion, he (Mr. Mundella) could only say that the hon. Member for Leicester was to be congratulated on the work he had done that night. They must all feel that they owed a debt of gratitude to the hon. Member the Under Secretary of State for the sympathetic and courageous answer he had given to the Motion. He (Mr. Mundella) trusted the hon. Member would follow that answer up, and would not be content to leave what they had achieved alone — he trusted he and his Colleagues would follow it up time after time, until they had impressed their views on all our Representatives abroad.

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) said, he was glad to have heard the satisfactory statement made by the Government, and thanked them for the honest and honourable way in which they had stated their views. But he would urge them not to be "weary in well-doing." It was one thing to make a declaration, and another to see that it was fulfilled; and he would impress upon them to carry their action to a successful issue. Many impediments would, no doubt, be placed in their way, and the greatest possible vigilance would be required. He thought, however, that the present debate would strengthen their hands.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy) said, after the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms), there could be no doubt of the sincerity of Her Majesty's Government, though their efforts to check the traffic had not always been successful. The House and the Government were under an obligation to the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. A. M'Arthur), for the Motion would strengthen the hands of the Government in their endeavours. The difficulties to contend with were great, and not the least was the difficulty of arriving at an arrangement by which the co-operation of Foreign Governments could be secured. But he (Sir George Campbell) desired to say a few words upon another practical difficulty. He observed that the Motion was directed to the disastrous effect of the traffic upon the uncivilized races, and, as the hon. Baronet (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) said, we did not apply the same principle to our own people at home. But we drew yet another distinction, and acknowledged an inalienable right of Englishmen to consume liquor in any part of the world. Wherever, by ordinance or legislation, an attempt was made to restrain or prevent the use of liquor by the Natives, liquor shops and canteens were allowed, so that the English settler might still have his liquor, no matter how few the Whites might be in proportion to the Natives. In that there was a difficulty that prevented drink being kept from the Blacks altogether, for there would always be White men willing to help the Native to indulge his propensity for drink. The only effectual way to prevent the disastrous physical and moral effect of drink on uncivilized races would be to suppress the liquor traffic altogether in all Native Territories under British influence, not scrupulously maintaining the trade for the White Christian and denying it to the Blacks. He did not think it was at all necessary that wherever a Christian went he should have his liquor. The Government should be prepared to face the question in that way, if they really meant to suppress the traffic; not showing the Natives that while the latter were put under restrictions, full liberty of indulgence was allowed to the Whites. One word on another point of the question. The House had been told that the Germans had scrupulously carried out the prohibition of the drink traffic in their portion of New Guinea; but the British Government had delegated all its responsibility in regard to New Guinea to the Government of Queensland—a Colony whose record was not clean. When New Guinea was made a British Possession, Her Majesty's Government were bound to see that our duty to the Natives was not neglected—we could not shuffle off our Imperial responsibility.

Mr. A. M'ARTHUR said, that after the debate they had had, he was quite willing to accept the Amendment proposed by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, and thanking him for the courteous manner in which he had dealt with the subject, he might just say that he had no intention of accusing Her Majesty's Government of any neglect, nor of throwing blame upon the Australian Colonies. He confined his remarks specially to the West Pacific and South and West Africa. He was glad to know what other Colonies had done; he was aware that some of them had done a great deal towards stopping the traffic, and he hoped they would do more. In accepting the Amendment, he presumed that the proper course would be to withdraw his Resolution and move it in the amended form.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That this House, having regard to the disastrous physical and moral effects of the liquor traffic among uncivilized races, as well as the injury it inflicts on legitimate commerce, will cordially support the Imperial and Colonial Governments in their endeavours to suppress the traffic in spirituous liquors with Natives in all Native Territories under their influence and control."—(*Mr. A. M'Arthur.*)

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said, he wished, before the debate concluded, to make some remarks and to obtain some information from the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) on the subject of the traffic in spirituous liquors in one of the latest acquisitions of the Crown—namely, Upper Burmah, and especially as to the issue of spirit licences there. Under the former independent Sovereigns of Burmah, the consumption of opium and spirits by the Natives which was forbidden by the Buddhist religion, was strictly enforced by the civil power, though it was true that there were some Chinese in Upper Burmah who consumed a small quantity of opium, and that some of the wild tribes who were neither Burmans nor Buddhists used spirits. He understood that last April or May the Indian Government, finding itself in want of revenue in Burmah, had determined to issue licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors and opium. He was further informed that the officers in charge of the districts in Upper Burmah, with scarcely an exception, had reported against the introduction of intoxicating liquor as likely to cause great injury to the country, not only morally but in an economical point of view. The best part of the Native population was also strongly opposed to it. Apparently the Government was undeterred by these reports, as well as by the expressed opinion of the principal of the Burmese people, and a considerable number of licences were put up to auction and issued even for districts where the whole population was Burman, and therefore bound by religion and law not to drink intoxicating liquors. The sale of opium was similarly introduced where there was no Chinese population. In July last he had asked for information on the subject, which the India Office professed itself unable to give, and had carried an Address for Returns giving full particulars of the licences issued. Again in February he pressed the Under Secretary for information as to what was taking place and when the Returns would be laid on the Table, but he received practically no information. By this time, he earnestly hoped that the hon. Gentleman would be in a position to state when the Returns would be ready. They ought, at any rate, to know when these Returns were likely to appear, but apparently the authorities in Burmah kept the India Office and the House equally in the dark, and treated with indifference akin to contempt the wishes here expressed. The matter was a rather serious one. We conquered the country with professions that it was for its own good, not only commercially, but as regarded the better moral and intellectual development of the people; yet it appeared that the first step we took towards the introduction of civilization was to introduce these very vices which already had wrought so much harm in other parts of our Indian Dominions. He could assure his hon. Friend that it was commonly believed in Burmah that the Government had issued these licences for the sake of revenue. This would probably be denied by the Government; but if revenue was not the object, what was? There was no need for mere regulation, because there was nothing to show that unlicensed sale had begun to be, and in fact it was not, a practical evil. If the Government, when it took over the control of the affairs of Burmah, had continued the same severe discipline which was practised by the Native Kings, there would have been no need of the introduction of any licensing system. Nor was it necessary to introduce a licensing system for the Chinese in Burmah, for they were confined to a very few towns such as Mandalay and Bhamo. He would remind the House that they were not without some practical experience in this matter, seeing that exactly the same process had been gone through in Lower Burmah, where the sale of opium and spirits had increased under the British *régime* with a result deleterious to the country. He earnestly hoped that the Under Secretary would be able to announce that the Government of India had receded from its first intentions, or had checked what seemed to have been the first intentions and acts of the Local Authorities in Burmah. He believed that the expression of opinion which had made itself felt in this country had told upon the Government, and that if the Government did not take some step in the matter the opinion of the House would be unmistakably expressed with a view to doing something to check the course upon which they were entering, and to show that those philanthropic expressions which always found utterance when this country made a fresh annexation were real and substantial.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) said, before alluding to the specific subject which his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Bryce) had brought forward, the House would forgive him if he said a few words on the general subject. In his humble opinion, nothing had been heard during the debate that was really new to the question. It was extremely easy for the House to pass unanimously abstract Resolutions; it was easy to frame Ordinances in Colonies and dependent States, and the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite seemed to think that if those Ordinances were made in the sense of absolute prohibition of the liquor traffic, there would be no difficulty at all in the matter. But he (Sir John Gorst) would venture to say that when the abstract Resolution was passed in the House, and the Ordinances for the total prohibition of the traffic in the Colonies were framed, then the difficulties began. The difficulty was not to make laws, but to enforce them. This was, in his earlier days, forcibly brought to his own attention by the utter break down of an honest attempt to enforce total prohibition in the Waikato district of New Zealand. The district was in a state of semi-insurrection against British rule, and one of the bitterest complaints made by the Chiefs against our civilization was that their people were being utterly demoralized by the introduction of extremely bad rum into the district. The Imperial and Colonial Governments were quarrelling among themselves as to who was to be responsible for the management of Native affairs in New Zealand; but they combined to enact stringent regulations to prevent absolutely the introduction of all spirituous liquors into the district, except under special licence, and rendered persons who transported such liquor from one part of the country to another liable to punishment by fine and imprisonment, and enacted the confiscation of all liquor so transported, He (Sir John Gorst) was a Commissioner charged with putting these enactments into force. In those days, he was young and enthusiastic, and he refused to issue any licences whatever, so that there was about as absolute a prohibition, even in the sense of the hon Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), as there could be, not only against Natives but Europeans also. After a trial of about a year, the attempt broke down. Liquor was smuggled into the country and concealed, and not all the vigilance of the Commissioner and the Native Chiefs could keep it out. He fined one or two of the offenders and confiscated a few kegs of spirits, and at last one of the Chiefs who had exerted himself greatly seized a large quantity of spirits—perfectly illegally—and kept the spirits in his own village. After the lapse of about a fortnight, he and his head men broached the spirits they had confiscated, and got so drunk upon them that they had to be summoned before the tribunal and fined. The example at once became contagious, and the attempt to suppress the traffic utterly broke down. He did not, as a moral to that, mean to say that the attempt should not be made. He would not despair, he would try again; all he wanted was that hon. Members should see the difficulties. One effect it had had upon him—to make him extremely charitable towards the unfortunate officials in India, who were so often accused of failing to suppress the traffic, because he had had personal experience of the difficulty of doing it. So long as the Government and officials were honest in their efforts to minimize as much as possible the evil that arose from drunkenness, he should be sorry to cast a stone at them; because the circumstances under which they were placed did not enable them to suppress the traffic altogether. From this digression he returned to the question in reference to Upper Burmah, and the last great Native population brought under British rule. There the principle of the Resolution was being carried out. He did not quite join in the picture the hon. Gentleman had drawn of the extraordinary virtue and sobriety of the Burmese under their Native Kings. It was true that the Buddhist religion, like every other religion, forbad drunkenness; but it was equally true that adherents of that religion, as of many others, did not always practice what they preached. If this state of sobriety existed in Upper Burmah, its existence had escaped the notice of most authorities who had written about the country. The law was perfect in principle, no doubt; but, as in other places, obedience to it fell short. But he was willing to admit that, as a race, the Burmese were, and are still, a sober people, just as the Indians were, and are still, a sober race. When Upper Burmah was annexed, it was decided, in the first place, to refuse all licences for the sale of opium. That, of course, did not entirely stop the sale of opium; but no licences were granted, the prohibition of the sale of opium to Burmese was maintained, and the sale was strictly confined to a few Chinese who were addicted to the drug and could not do without it. Then liquor shops were licensed in a few exceptional towns, where there was a large non-Burman population. This state of things continued until June of last year, when the Chief Commissioner proposed to extend to Upper Burmah the liquor laws and excise laws that prevailed in Lower Burmah. So far from deserving the animadversions of the hon. Member for South Aberdeen, the liquor laws had been eminently successful there for the past six or seven years in reducing the consumption of liquor and improving the condition of Lower Burmah. He was surprised, as he listened to the hon. Member's speech, because he had a table before him, showing that although the population of Lower Burmah, during the last six or seven years, had increased by 28 per cent, the revenue from the sale of liquor had diminished, and that from the sale of opium only slightly increased.

Mr. BRYCE explained, that he did not say that the consumption had increased lately; he said that during a number of years after the introduction of the licensing system, the consumption had gone on increasing.

Sir JOHN GORST said, that might or might not be the case. Before the licensing system was introduced, there was no means of knowing what the consumption was; but, so far as the test of figures could be applied, the liquor law of Lower Burmah did not deserve the blame cast upon it, and the same might be said of India, and indeed other parts of the British Empire. When the proposal was made to extend the liquor laws to Upper Burmah, it was at the same time proposed to abrogate the restriction of the sale of liquor to Burmese. This, however, was not for the purpose of revenue, but because it was pointed out to the Government that the law was practically a dead letter, and had not had the effect of preventing such sale. Letters from Commissioners, Sub-Commissioners and others, showed this was the case; one of those letters saying that the attempt by means of this law to prevent Burmese from using stimulating drinks was as ineffective as would be a law to prevent the Scotch from drinking whiskey by restricting the sale in Scotland to Englishmen and Irishmen. The fact was, prohibition or not, a Burman who could afford to buy liquor found no difficulty in inducing an Englishman, a Chinese, or a Coolie to procure it for him, and the prohibition was of no great value. Those proposals having been made—not for purposes of revenue, but to improve the excise system found useful in Lower Burmah—were investigated by the Government of India and the Secretary of State. To show the House the principle which the Burmese Government were instructed to follow in the arrangements for the sale of liquor, he quoted from a despatch written at Simla, November 5, 1887, from the Government of India to the Chief Commissioner in Burmah. Of course, he would lay the Paper on the Table if there was any wish for it. It was as follows:—

> "Whatever arrangements are now introduced should be defensible as restrictive measures, and should be carefully guarded against any tendency to facilitate the sale of liquor. Special care is required that indulgence should not be allowed where such does not now exist, and that under the favor of a general excise system intoxicating liquors should not be introduced in places where innocent drinks only are now known. That is the only policy that commends itself to his Excellency in Council, and which, no doubt, you also have in view, but it is also that to which the Secretary of State has pledged the Government of India by answers to Questions asked in Parliament regarding the excise policy now being pursued in Upper Burmah."

With that policy in view the arrangements were made as follows:—Licences were required for the importation of all foreign liquors into Upper Burmah.

Secondly, the sale of foreign and country-made liquors was allowed only in selected places, where foreigners were numerous. Thirdly, at each of these places, a distillery might be established, but, in some cases, one distillery might supply two or three places. Fourthly, all other distilleries but those were regarded as illicit, and the liquor made there contraband. Fifthly, licences for sale issued were to be strictly restrictive, the intention being that the present facilities for obtaining liquor should not be increased. The restrictions of sale to Burmese were to be maintained. The possession and transport of liquor were to be brought under regulation. Tari, procured from the palm, was to be brought under excise, and licences to be taken out for tapping every tree and for the sale of the liquor. He did not say that restrictions and regulations of that kind would necessarily be effective in preventing any drunkenness in Upper Burmah, but he did say that they were an honest attempt on the part of the Government of India to check any special prevalence of drunkenness there. Members of the House—who were always so ready to censure the administration of the Indian officials, as being animated only by the desire to raise revenue, and as allowing any degradation and corruption of the people under their charge, if only they could screw out a few more rupees for the revenue—should consider that, in a country where the juice from a tree, after standing for a few hours, became an intoxicating liquor, the difficulties in the way of checking the vice of drunkenness were extraordinarily great, and the efforts of the Government to check it deserved the support of the Parliament and people of this country. As an explanation of the delay in furnishing the Returns ordered, he might say that on receipt by the Government of India of the Secretary of State's despatch in December last, a circular was sent out by the Chief Commissioner of Burmah to all the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners of Upper Burmah, asking for full information in the various districts as to the circumstances which ought to govern the administration in a final settlement of the excise system, and asking also for a very elaborate Return, which would include that asked for by the hon. Member. He confessed that the long delay in furnishing the Return was unjustifiable, and as representing the Government of India, he sat in dust and ashes before the hon. Member; but the delay was accounted for by the fact that the Government of Burmah asked for extremely complicated information that had taken much time to collect. He thought it would have been better had the Government been content with supplying what was asked for, not attempting more; but an elaborate Return had been requested, which, though long in being procured, would, no doubt, be found extremely valuable. He hoped that the discussion of that night, and the unanimity that had prevailed in the House as to the principle that ought to govern their policy in the matter towards all Native races, would be productive of good effect throughout the Empire. But he warned hon. Members that, easy though it might be to propound a principle, and to embody it in ordinances and laws, there was great difficulty in enforcing actual practice, and those engaged in that extremely difficult work were deserving of generous consideration and charitable construction of their actions on the part of Parliament.

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham) said, he felt bound, as the hon. Member for South Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) had introduced the subject of Burmah, to offer a few observations in reply. The hon. Member, having become an apostle of the Temperance Party, had adopted the extreme views of that Party, and their version of facts. Everything that could possibly be said by that Party against Burmese administration found an echo in the hon. Gentleman's voice, and was translated into his eloquent language. He (Sir Richard Temple) thought that the House would agree with him that the facts had been exaggerated throughout. Of course, there was a certain substratum of truth in the remarks which had been made; but the truths which underlay them were strained to the extreme. He had never heard until that evening that the Burmese were free from intemperance prior to the British occupation of that country. He certainly believed that drinking existed under the Burmese rule—in a country where Nature supplied the materials abundantly for such consumption. There were, no doubt, prohibitions against the importation of spirituous liquors; but no one who took a sober view of the facts believed that those prohibitions were ever effectual. No doubt, the Burmese, like all the Oriental nations, were not drunkards as a rule; but there was a certain amount of dram-consumption among them. He had been especially surprised to hear what had been said about Arracan. To believe that the Arracanese were being demoralized under British rule was to believe in an incredible supposition. As to Upper Burmah, the House must recollect that the Burmese were not the only people there. There were also the Chinese, besides a considerable influx of Indian people. The principal stations of the country were occupied by Native Indian troops, the Burmese not being a race who entered into the Military Service. With the troops there were, of course, camp-followers, the non-combatants being, perhaps, three to one to the combatants. There was also a certain proportion of Europeans. All these people were in the habit of drinking in a moderate degree, and therefore there must be a moderate importation and a certain amount of manufacture of spirituous liquors. This being so, it was necessary to have either total prohibition of the traffic, or regulation of it. Total prohibition was impracticable. Prohibition might be enacted, but could not be carried out. The only alternative was regulation, and that alternative had been adopted in Burmah. His hon. Friend the Under Secretary for India (Sir John Gorst) had stated that in no part of the British Indian Empire was the regulation of the liquor traffic more effectually carried out than in Burmah. He hoped that the statement thus officially made would be accepted. From what he knew of officials who served their country in British Dependencies, he was sure that the officials in Burmah were doing what it behoved them to do for the protection of the Natives from the evil of intemperance as from all other evils. They wished to do their duty in this respect, and he felt confident that the House might safely trust them to exercise properly the powers which were placed in their hands. He quite believed, as the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) supposed, that the Burmese in the interior of the country, if left to themselves, were tolerably temperate. He admitted, therefore, that licensing should be so regulated that no unnecessary temptations to drink should be held out to the people. It was very important that there should be no encouragement of drinking among the people. It was said that wherever British rule extended these dangerous influences arose, and that if absolute prohibition were not introduced the whole country became demoralized. He contended that there could not be total prohibition, but that there must be regulation, and that with regulation there was no fear whatever of national demoralization. He felt sure the House would not think that improper influences had been permitted to arise in Burmah; that the people of Burmah would constantly improve under our rule; and that the introduction of civilization among them would prove to be, not a myth nor a shadow, but a constant and ever-growing reality.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That this House, having regard to the disastrous physical and moral effects of the liquor traffic among uncivilized races, as well as the injury it inflicts on legitimate commerce, will cordially support the Imperial and Colonial Governments in their endeavours to suppress the traffic in spirituous liquors with Natives in all Native Territories under their influence and control.

WORKMEN (WOOLWICH).

RESOLUTION.

COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich), in moving the following Resolution:—

"That a Select Committee of Seven Members, four to be nominated by the House and three by the Committee of Selection, be appointed to inquire into and report on the circumstances under which workmen entered in the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, and other Government establishments, between the 17th day of December 1861, and the 4th day of June 1870, have hitherto been refused the benefit of 'The Superannuation Act, 1859,' and 'The Superannuation Amendment Act, 1873,' and subsequent Amendment Acts, and particularly whether it was in the year 1870 or later that they were for the first time informed that a War Office Circular of the 17th day of December 1861, had assumed to suspend 'The Superannuation Act 1859,' so far as these men were concerned, and as to whether they are or ought to be within the benefits of the said Act of 1873:—That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records:—That five be a quorum,"

said, that the question was one which affected the interests of 524 labourers and artizans employed by the Government. It was not a general question of pension or superannuation, but a question of whether these men were entitled to superannuation in respect of having entered the Government service prior to the 4th of June, 1870. The claim had been considered by several Government Departments, and, up to the present time, in consequence, he believed, of the settled opinion held by the permanent officials, it had been refused. The claim had been investigated individually by several Members of the House, with the result that every Member who had looked into it had come to the conclusion that the men had a just claim to superannuation. The present hon. Member for Greenwich (Mr. Boord) investigated the case some years ago, and was firmly convinced of the justice of these men's demand. The hon. Member for the East Toxteth Division of Liverpool (Baron Henry de Worms), who was now a Member of the Government, also investigated the case and advocated the claim. The hon. Member gave the men reason to think that their demand was just, and would be attended to; and, no doubt, under the circumstances, he would be disposed to support the Motion. The same observations applied to the hon. Member for the Enfield Division of the County of Middlesex (Viscount Folkestone), who believed in the justice of the case. He (Colonel Hughes) had also investigated the claim, and the more he looked into the matter, the more he was satisfied that the War Department was wrong and that the men were perfectly right. He admitted, to the utmost, the courtesy with which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) had dealt with the case; but the right hon. Gentleman always gave the same unfortunate answer to the demand made upon him—namely, that the demand could not be entertained. It was really a very small matter. These men would not all live long enough to come into pensions, and, if they did, they would gradually die off. The procedure that would have to be followed before the men's claim could be granted was, that the claim should be recommended to the Treasury by the War Office, and the Treasury would then have power to accede to it. He did not now ask the House to go the length of affirming that the men were entitled to what they asked. All he asked was that a Committee of seven hon. Members should be appointed to find out whether the men's statements were true or not. If the War Department settled the matter for themselves, it would be a case of employers deciding against the men in a matter in which they themselves were interested. As long, therefore, as the War Department said "No," the men would say "Yes;" and he knew of no other mode in which the matter could be disposed of than by a Committee of that House. If the men failed to prove their case before the Committee, there would be an end of the matter. If, on the other hand, they could prove it, the Report of the Committee would go before the War Office, which would have the opportunity of acting upon it if it thought fit. The question was not one of a Party character at all, because the men had put their claim before Secretaries of State under both Liberal and Conservative Governments. No doubt, he happened to sit on the Ministerial side of the House; but he wanted to divest the question of anything in the nature of a Party tinge. If the Government refused to assent to the Motion, the only way to settle the matter would be to divide the House upon it, and he would then be able to tell his constituents that he had submitted the question to the highest tribunal he could. The question was whether a Circular dated in 1861, which was supposed to be issued by the War Department, came to the knowledge of the men until nine years afterwards. If the men knew of the Circular in 1861, their case failed; but if they did not know of it until 1870, then they had been engaged in the same way as those who had joined the Service a day before or a year before, and their case ought to succeed. The late General Dickson, who was Superintendent at Enfield, wrote a letter, stating that the Circular was not sent to Enfield until 1873, 12 years afterwards. Naturally, the men said that if the War Office wanted to alter the conditions of their Service and to deprive them of the benefits of the Superannuation Act, the least thing to have done was to have sent the Circular to Enfield and Woolwich and to have put it on the notice-board in the shops. The men at Woolwich said that in 1870 they were told, for the first time, about the Circular, and that it was then, for the first time, put in the book of regulations for the workmen. He had a list of opinions to the effect that this was the main point at issue. Mr. Brand, late Surveyor General of the Ordnance, had said—

> "The question turned upon whether the men had notice."

The present Secretary for War had said—

> "If the men did not know before 1870, they ought to have their superannuation."

Sir Ralph Thompson, the Permanent Under Secretary, had said—

> "The only point is, when did the men know of the Circular."

Colonel Mildward was asked, in 1870, whether the men knew of the Circular in 1861, and he said he believed they did. It turned out, however, on a strict investigation, that Colonel Mildward did not enter Woolwich Arsenal until 1870, and he (Colonel Hughes) could not find out on whose information his report was made. Mr. Edmonds, the Assistant Superintendent of the Gun Factories, in answer to inquiries, officially stated that the men did not know of the Circular until 1870, and he was in the Arsenal during the whole time to which the dispute related. No doubt it had been said by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jackson) who represented the Treasury in that House, that the men were never intended to have superannuation under the Act of 1859. All he (Colonel Hughes) could say was that the Superannuation Act of 1859 took nothing away from them, and they had had superannuation under the old Ordnance Scale before 1859. In 1873 the House of Commons passed an Act respecting superannuation, excusing certificate on entry, and this Act was put in operation in all Departments of the Government except the Arsenal and at Enfield, the reason why the men in the arsenal and at Enfield were not served in the same way as the rest being on account of this hidden Circular. The officials at the Arsenal were instructed in the Circular to make certain Returns, and he was informed that such Returns were never made. That was another proof that the Circular did not reach the Arsenal. Taking it altogether, the evidence was of such a character that half-a-dozen Members of the House, including two Members of the Government, who had investigated the case, were satisfied that the superannuation ought to be granted, and he thought he could point to 40 or 50 Members who had gone sufficiently into the case to say that there was a *primâ facie* case, and that there ought to be no objection to the granting of an inquiry in order to satisfy the men. He could promise the Government that, unless he was defeated he would never leave alone a question in which over 500 of his constituents were so deeply interested, and the Motion would become a "hardy annual." He would remind hon. Members that, since the extension of the franchise, the House of Commons had become essentially a working man's House, and none of them could afford to have it said that working men could not get justice in this country. All the working men could do on a question of this kind was to appeal to the House of Commons to grant an impartial inquiry, and that was the reason he moved his Resolution.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea), in seconding the Motion, said, it was his firm belief that the men had no knowledge of the Circular of 1861 until 1870, and that, therefore, their claim was a just and reasonable one.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee of Seven Members, Four to be nominated by the House and Three by the Committee of Selection, be appointed to inquire into and report on the circumstances under which workmen entered in the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, and other Government Establishments, between the 17th day of December 1861, and the 4th day of June 1870, have hitherto been refused the benefit of 'The Superannuation Act, 1859,' and 'The Superannuation Amendment Act, 1873,' and subsequent Amendment Acts, and particularly whether it was in the year 1870 or later that they were for the first time informed that a War Office Circular of the 17th day of December 1861, had assumed to suspend 'The Superannuation Act, 1859,' so far as these men were concerned, and as to whether they are or ought to be within the benefits of the said Act of 1873:—That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records:—That five be a quorum."—(*Colonel Hughes.*)

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) in supporting the Motion, said, a great injustice would be done, if the object of the inquiry, which was most reasonable, were not conceded.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said, that he might, in answer to the Motion of his hon. and gallant Friend, take refuge in the fact that this subject had been investigated by successive Surveyors General of Ordnance and Secretaries of State since 1870, and that they had all, he believed, without exception, decided that the claim was one which could not be acceded to. But he would not shelter himself behind that argument. He had himself investigated the question, and had received a deputation from the men themselves, who had stated their case with great ability, moderation, and common sense. He cordially agreed that it was very necessary that the Government should keep faith with those whom it employed, and if it could be proved that there was the slightest possibility of it being said that the Government were not doing so, then there would be the strongest ground for granting what was asked. This was, however, a very broad question. The Government were the employers of these men, and were bound to employ them in the best interests of the State, so that the work of the country might be carried on with efficiency and economy, and the Government had undertaken to conduct the Arsenal so far as possible on commercial principles. The hon. and gallant Member had asked the House to stand between employer and men—that was, he asked the House to put the Government in a position different from that of any other employer of labour. The Act of 1859 provided that any claim for superannuation should be referred to the Commissioners of the Treasury, whose decision should be final, and another clause provided that it should be necessary for any person thereafter appointed to obtain a Civil Service certificate. In August, 1861, a Circular had been issued from the War Office, framed in accordance with those two provisions of the Act, to the effect that no persons were entitled to superannuation who were in receipt of the full market rate of wages; and persons who were not in receipt of the full rate were obliged to obtain a Civil Service certificate of competence. These men had been in receipt of the full market rate of wages, and, if anything, even over that rate, and they had no Civil Service certificate. The matter, however, was somewhat complicated by the fact that another Circular had been issued on the 17th of December, 1861, as the Department had neglected to lay down rules under which the men were to obtain the certificates, and it was thought that some of the men might have entered under the belief that they were entitled to superannuation, and that, therefore, some hardship might arise. This Circular of the 17th of December, 1861, after defining what the full market rate of wages meant, went on to say that if there were any men who had really entered the Department on the clear understanding or well-founded expectation that they would be entitled to superannuation, then the Secretary of State would consider each case on its merits.

It being Midnight, the Debate was adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon *Tuesday* 1st May.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LIMITED OWNERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(*Mr. Haldane, Mr. Asquith, Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Mark Stewart, Lord Elcho, Mr. Ferguson.*)

[BILL 63.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. HALDANE (Haddington) said, with great reluctance he would move the withdrawal of the Bill. Last year, it went through a second reading and an investigation by a Select Committee. Its object was to extend the provisions of the Settled Land Act to Scotland. It was a Bill of great magnitude, and the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had announced his intention of opposing it. Seeing that it contained over 100 clauses, it was impossible for him to face Government opposition with any hope of making progress. He, therefore, asked leave to withdraw the Bill.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Order for the Second Reading be discharged,"—(*Mr. Haldane,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Order *discharged ;* Bill *withdrawn.*

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 154.]

(*Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Baird.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Further Proceedings on Consideration, as amended, *resumed.*

On the Motion of Sir George Trevelyan, the following Amendments made:—In Clause 3, page 1, line 17, after "repealed," insert "as far as relates to factories and workshops situate within a burgh;" line 25, after "workshop," insert "within a burgh;" page 2, line 1, leave out "places," and insert "burghs;" page 2, line 4, leave out "places," and insert "burghs;" line 6, after "in," insert "such;" leave out from "or," to "parishes," in line 7, inclusive; and in line 8, leave out "and local authorities."

Title at end, to add "Scotland."

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Mr. HASTINGS (Worcestershire, E.) said, he had to explain that some misunderstanding had arisen in reference to the postponement of a Bill in which he was interested, the Public Health Bill standing fifth on the list. It was his intention to postpone the Bill to Thursday, but when the Order was called, the right hon. Baronet below him by some inadvertence called June 5th.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) hoped he might be allowed to make an apology to the House, and he specially desired to do so, after the kindness extended to him by the House in taking the Factory Bill somewhat later than usual. An hon. Friend of his who had charge of the Parliamentary Elections Bill, No. 6 on the Orders, asked him to put it down for Tuesday, June 5th. He expressed surprise at the lateness of the date, but was assured that that was the day. Between them, they made some mistake as to the number of the Order, and to his infinite, but he hoped not irreparable, regret he actually moved the postponement of the Public Health Bill to Tuesday, June 5th, imagining that that was the Bill committed to his charge. The hon. Member behind him (Mr. Hastings) had not time to intervene. The fault was entirely his, but he earnestly hoped that it was a fault that might be repaired.

Mr. SPEAKER: Perhaps under the circumstances, the House will think fit to allow the correction to be made, which under ordinary circumstances would be contrary to the Rules of the House.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 25th April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—Francis O'Keefe, esquire, *for* Limerick City.

Public Bill—*Second Reading*—County Government (Ireland) [6], *negatived.*

Provisional Order Bill—*Second Reading*—Local Government (Ireland) (Bangor and Warrenpoint) * [225].

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (IMPRISONMENT OF MR. J. D. PYNE).

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following Letter, relating to the imprisonment of a Member of this House:—

Court House, Clonmel,
Co. Tipperary,
23rd April, 1888.

Sir,

I beg to inform you that on Saturday the 21st inst. I, sitting as Chairman of Quarter Sessions of the Division of Clonmel, in this County, sentenced J. D. Pyne, Esq., M.P. for West Division of Waterford, to six weeks' imprisonment, under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Yr. obt. servant,
James A. Wall.

To the Rt. Honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons,
House of Parliament, Westminster.

QUESTIONS.

BELFAST—CHARGES OF FRAUD UPON AN INSURANCE COMPANY.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the serious criminal charges brought against several citizens of Belfast in connection with wholesale frauds alleged to have been committed against a certain Insurance Company there; whether serious charges have also been made in the Belfast Police Court against the Company; whether this Company is at present conducting the prosecution against two of its own officials, and also against one of its largest policy holders, who is a member of the Belfast Town Council; whether charges have been made that the Company sought to condone the alleged offence of this policy holder, by accepting surrender of the policies said to have been fraudulently obtained by him and by returning him the premiums which he had paid; and, whether, under the circumstances, it is the intention of the Government to take the conduct of the prosecution into its own hands, instead of leaving the conduct of the prosecution in the hands of a Company against which such charges have been made?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): Pending the proceedings referred to in the first four paragraphs of this Question, I do not think it right to do more than to state that a magisterial investigation into certain alleged frauds is now in progress. In reply to the fourth paragraph, the Attorney General informs me that he has directed the Sessional Crown Solicitor to make inquiry into the case, and to interpose at once if there be any want of *bona fides* in the investigation. In any event, the papers will be submitted to the Attorney General for his directions at the close of the magisterial inquiry, when he will be in a position to decide as to the course which should be taken on the part of the Crown.

Mr. CLANCY: I would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman, whether the Government ever gave instruction to any counsel to watch the case on behalf of the Crown; and whether, if they did not, there is any precedent for having taken such a course, or of rather for not having taken such a course?

Mr. MADDEN: I gather, from the information I have received from the Attorney General, that the case was being watched, not by counsel, but by the Sessional Crown Solicitor. That is a course which has been taken on other occasions. There is no departure from precedent.

Mr. CLANCY: Then am I to understand that the Sessional Crown Solicitor has been watching the case all the time on behalf of the Crown?

Mr. MADDEN: I did not state that the Sessional Crown Solicitor had been watching the case all the time. The answer I gave from the Attorney General was that he had directed the Sessional Crown Solicitor to make inquiry into the case, and to interpose at once if there were any grounds to suppose that there was any want of *bona fides* in the investigation. That is the entire information which I have from the Attorney General as to what took place.

Mr. CLANCY: May I ask when this instruction was given from the Attorney General to the Sessional Crown Solicitor?

Mr. MADDEN: I am not informed as to that. If the hon. and learned Gentleman requires further information he can put a Question on the Paper; but I have answered the Question which is at present on the Paper.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I should like to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman, whether he is aware that the Town Councillor referred to in the Question is a Mr. Dunlop, a gentleman of considerable property; that Mr. Dunlop was arrested under a warrant issued by a Resident Magistrate upon an information laid by a detective, who had direct instructions from Dublin Castle; whether Mr. Dunlop was kept in gaol for two nights and was then admitted to bail, and that afterwards the Crown——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That seems to be the subject of a new Question.

Mr. M'CARTAN: Arising out of this, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That seems to be the subject of a new Question, of which due Notice must be given.

Mr. CLANCY: I beg to give Notice that I will repeat the Question tomorrow.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

COUNTY GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 6.]

(*Mr. Carew, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Maurice Healy.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. CAREW (Kildare, N.), in rising to move the second reading of the Bill, said, he did not think it necessary to detain the House at any great length. He thought it was quite unnecessary to enter into any elaborate argument in justification of its introduction. The desirability of dealing with the question of local reform was a matter which was practically admitted by every section and every phase of political Party in the House. In England the question had at last—to use the language of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie)—come out of the region of promise into that of performance, and, as the right hon. Gentleman had reminded the House, this result had been brought about without any great and active force of public opinion behind to help him in dealing with it. The same, certainly, could not be said in the case of Ireland; there was an active force of public opinion behind them in that country in reference to the question. Agitation had been going on for many years. Ever since the year 1840 Committees had been reporting on the necessity of reform in the system of local government; and in recent years various proposals from the Nationalist Benches had been brought forward for putting an end to the present state of things. Now, if the necessity for reform in England were urgent, it was a thousand times more so in Ireland. Whatever might be the defects of the present system of local government in England, that system was at least of native manufacture and home growth. Englishmen had framed the laws for Englishmen, and the laws were administered by Englishmen who were more or less in sympathy and touch with the people—who were resident in the districts, and, at any rate, made some effort to understand the wants and wishes of the people. But what was the case in Ireland? There they had a system of local government which had been imposed and maintained by a foreign authority. He thought there was no one in that House who would seriously undertake the defence of the Grand Jury system in Ireland. It was a landlords' sytem, worked by landlords in the interest of landlords. The Grand Jury represented no one but themselves. They represented no property but their own, and were arbitrarily selected by an irresponsible person — the High Sheriff. There were sometimes absentee, or agents of absentee, proprietors nominated on the Grand Jury. The High Sheriff nominated from a select circle, and at his own pleasure, a number of men to serve on the Grand Jury. His own appointment depended on the action of the Lord Lieutenant. Well, this system certainly lent itself to jobbery and corruption. The High Sheriff, if he wanted any job carried out, or if he had any scheme or job on hand, had only to select or nominate 21 gentlemen to serve on the Grand Jury whose opinions he was acquainted with beforehand. These 21 gentlemen would sanction any job he had on hand; and, in proof of this, he would call attention to a serious case which occurred quite recently in the South of Ireland. A railway scheme had been promoted—was, in fact, being promoted now—and it had been necessary for the carrying on of the scheme to obtain a guarantee from the ratepayers. The ratepayers refused to give any guarantee; and why? Because there was another competing line in the neighbourhood to which they had already given a guarantee. But notwithstanding the objections of the ratepayers, who had a real interest in opposing the scheme, it was passed by the Grand Jury, and the ratepayers now found themselves saddled with a guarantee for two lines of railway. The High Sheriff happened to be a brother-in-law of the promoter of the scheme. Not only were the Grand Juries guilty of corruption and jobbery, but in time of agitation they were guilty, also, of misrepresenting the condition of the county. He would mention, in illustration of this, a case which recently occurred in the Queen's County. There the Grand Jury found that the County Inspector had sent in a favourable report of the condition of the Queen's County, and they consequently deputed a committee to wait on his Lordship, Judge Johnson, in order to declare that—

> "An unusually large quantity of applications for compensation for malicious injuries arising out of intimidation and Boycotting have come before the Grand Jury. These are 16 in number—a larger number than usual in the Queen's County—a great many of them arising out of intimidation and Boycotting."

He (Mr. Carew) would give his Lordship's reply without comment. He said—

> "I am sorry to hear what you say as representing the Grand Jury, because it does not coincide with the account I have received from the County Inspector, in which he informs me that this county is not only free from crime of a serious nature, but is in its usual state of peace and order. Since the Grand Jury Act was passed in 1835—over 50 years ago—malicious injuries have been rife in this county, and applications for compensation have been frequent—sometimes more and sometimes less. During my experience it has been very often found that these injuries are not malicious at all, but have been resorted to by unscrupulous persons as a means of getting compensation from the county. I can only express my opinion that so orderly a county I have not met, and that it is as orderly as it was on the occasion of my last visit 18 months ago."

Having failed to influence his Lordship and the County Inspector, the Grand Jury complained that the County Inspector had not included these outrages in his Report. The County Inspector explained that many of these so-called "malicious injuries" which were regarded as outrages, turned out on investigation not to have been malicious at all. Those injuries which were considered malicious, and with regard to which the Grand Jury actually awarded compensation, turned out to be bogus. Well, this was the system under which the Local Government of Ireland was carried on. These were specimens of the conduct of the Grand Juries in Ireland. He did not believe that, even if the system was as pure as it was corrupt, it would be allowed to continue in any other country than Ireland. And now he desired to refer to the Bill which he had the honour to introduce. The main principle of the measure was to give the elected Council control over strictly local affairs. They desired to abolish the Grand Jury system, and to transfer fiscal business to the County Councils to be elected under the Bill. They desired to abolish a system which was an embodiment of the principle of taxation without representation; and, in the second place, they desired to abolish Boards of Guardians. Under the Poor Law system in Ireland, in addition to giving half the votes on the Board to the landlord, additional advantages were given to that class by means of multiple votes, so that it was actually possible for a landlord to have as many as 26 votes, while a tenant had only one. He himself (Mr. Carew) had a number of votes for certain property he held, and he seldom even saw the property in regard to which he was entitled to these votes. [*Laughter and cheers.*]

Oh, yes; he acknowledged it, and the acknowledgment showed how glaring was the anomaly. In the next place, it was proposed to abolish the Lunatic Asylums Board. Large sums were annually expended on the Asylums, and over that expenditure it was sought to give the public some control. At the present moment, the Lunatic Asylums of Ireland were really governed by Inspectors, who were not only an inspecting authority, but a central controlling authority. At present, these Lunatic Asylum Authorities were in this position—that they often had to report to themselves grievances which they discovered existing. Fourthly, the promoters of the Bill proposed to abolish Town Boards; and, in cases where the population was less than 2,000, it was proposed to merge them in the counties. It was proposed, also, to reform the municipalities. That was, in brief, the outline of the Bill he had the honour to introduce. So far as the details were concerned for the purpose of taking over the business of the existing Local Authorities, they proposed to establish in each county a County Council to which every ratepayer and every cesspayer should be eligible for election. The object of that provision was to secure that the members of the County Council should have local knowledge and local responsibilities and liabilities. It was proposed that the members of the County Councils should be elected by the baronies. The area of the barony was the only possible area which they could take for elective purposes, they being conterminous with the counties. There were no other areas conterminous with the counties. To each barony they proposed to give three elected Councillors, believing that in numbers there was safety as well as strength. The number of baronies in each county varied considerably. In some there were only five, and in others there were 24—as, for instance, in the County of Cork. In order that the number of elected councillors might, to a certain extent, be uniform, it was proposed to revise the boundaries in those counties which had less than ten baronies, and to increase them to ten, so that in each county there should not be less than 30 elected councillors. In addition to the elected councillors, it was proposed that five councillors should be appointed by the magistrates of the county. That would have the effect of putting five magistrates on each Council. This was a concession which he did not care to defend on any ground at present, neither should he care to defend the establishment of the Parliamentary Franchise as a basis of election; but the reason these proposals were made was because it was thought desirable to do something to allay the fears of those who described themselves as the "loyal minority." They did not want to deprive that section of the people in Ireland, as that portion of the Irish public thought it was sought to deprive them, of all voice in local Councils. He himself had no fear on that point, and he thought he might speak with some authority with reference to his own part of Ireland. He believed that if the great National question which had been for so long agitated, was brought to a successful issue, the people would settle down, and that it would be found that the only qualifications necessary for a candidate to recommend himself to the electors were the capacity to deal with county matters, honesty, and a disposition to serve the people. It was proposed that every year a third of the Council should retire. This was copied from the constitution of the Dublin Corporation, where the practice had worked exceedingly well. It gave every man an opportunity of mastering the details of his business, and each member who retired would, if he had shown any capacity whilst in office, be sure to get re-elected. This system also preserved the continuity of the sittings of the Councils, and it also secured what he believed the present Government was so fond of—namely, single member constituencies. The members of the Councils, as he had already stated, would, under the Bill, be elected by the Parliamentary voters. One of their reasons for taking this as a basis was that it would save expense and trouble. There would be one registration for all. Peers and women also would be entitled to vote for the elected Councillors. Now, the business which they proposed to transfer to the County Councils was, broadly speaking, all the fiscal duties of the Grand Juries. They did not interfere with their present power of framing indictments. They proposed, in the next place, to transfer to the new Councils the management of the County Asylums from the present authorities. Thirdly, Town Boards which had a population of under 2,000 would be merged in the counties, and form part of the County Council districts; and, fourthly, they intended to give to the County Councils the control of the issuing and transferring of licences. Under the present system the issue of licences was distinguished from their renewal, and it was now proposed to hand over to the County Councils the duty of issuing all new licences and the transferring of old licences. At present it was the County Court Judge who issued licences in conjunction with the magistrates. Whatever might be the reason for giving the County Court Judge this jurisdiction he could not say. He had no greater power than was vested in the magistrates who sat with him. He had only one vote, and the result was that the magistrates, who were generally very much biassed and prejudiced, granted licences to whoever they liked. It was proposed to alter this, therefore, by giving the licensing power to the County Councils. It would be seen also that the Bill proposed to transfer to the County Councils from the present authorities the regulation of fairs and markets. It would be observed that they did not intend to extend the powers hitherto granted to the local bodies. Their object was to vest in representative bodies powers which had hitherto been possessed by non-representative bodies. The Bill did not propose either to interfere with the powers of the Local Government Board or any other Boards which sat in Dublin. They did not object to the existence of these Boards. What they objected to was that they should be controlled by a foreign authority. The question of dealing with these Boards was one altogether outside the scope of this Bill. It was a matter which would have to be considered when they dealt with the question of a national authority in Ireland, which question, he hoped, would be settled before very long—the sooner the better. Now the Bill went on to propose the creation of another local body. It was impossible, much as they would like it, to transfer to the County Councils all the local administrative work in Ireland. That being so, they proposed to create, following the precedent given them by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, what they called District Councils, to which Councils it was proposed to hand over the liabilities and duties of Boards of Guardians, and also the duty of Presentment Sessions. It would be impossible to hand all this work over to the County Councils. The County Councils would only meet once a month, whereas it was necessary to transact the business of Boards of Guardians at least once a week, and there were matters of trivial importance, such as small district roads, which should be settled by the District Councils, and not left over for the consideration of the County Councils. Therefore, it was proposed to transfer these functions of the Boards of Guardians to the District Councils. The election of members of the District Councils would be the same as the election of members for the County Councils. The Union would be taken as the unit of area. In each Union there were several electoral divisions. Each electoral division would have two members to represent it on the Council, and the same provision was to be made in regard to District Councils as he had referred to in connection with the County Councils—that was to say, an arrangement made for including in each of the County Council divisions five representatives of the Justices. Then, with regard to Municipal Corporations, provision was made for the equalization of the franchise by abolishing the present fancy franchise, so that there would only be one franchise for all and one registration for all. The Bill also proposed the division of the County Cess between owners and occupiers. That, he thought, was a salutary and necessary provision. People who paid County Cess paid it now in order to improve the property of the owners. Every sewer that was laid down, and, in fact, every act that was done, went to improve the property of the owner, and the owners enjoyed these improvements without paying a single penny towards the taxes. There was another provision in the Bill with reference to the Local Government Board. They intended to restrict, to a certain extent, the exercise of the functions of the Local Government Board. At the present time the Local Government Board exercised the power of superseding Boards of Guardians. Well, they did not propose to interfere with these powers, but they proposed to render it necessary for the Local Government Board to obtain the consent of the County Council before superseding any Board of Guardians. He did not think there was anything more for him to mention with reference to the provisions of the Bill. It was purely and simply a Local Government Bill. The larger and deeper question of national autonomy was left entirely untouched. Members on those, the Irish Benches looked forward to the time when that question would be settled. Notwithstanding the desires of the allies of the Government on the Opposition side of the House, they hoped that it would be settled at nodistant date; but, pending the settlement of that question, they desired the abolition of all those administrative anomalies which at present existed. They wanted to remove all those abuses which ought to have been swept away generations ago. They wanted to afford hon. Gentlemen opposite an opportunity of giving effect to those professions which fell so easily and spontaneously from their lips at the General Election. He thought it no exaggeration to say that two-thirds of the Tory Members at the last Election put Local Government for Ireland in the forefront of their programme. The promoters of the Bill now invited those Gentlemen to take advantage of this opportunity to give effect to their promises. It was true that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had said that local government should not be undertaken until national aspirations were abandoned. He had followed the lead of the noble Lord the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington). That noble Lord had said, and said most brutally, if he might be allowed the expression, that these national aspirations should be crushed out before any local government reform should be given to Ireland. So far as he (Mr. Carew) knew, however, he could promise the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury that if he wanted to introduce a Local Government Bill for Ireland until that happened he would have to wait a very long time. The right hon. Gentleman would, he thought, sit like the expectant rustic on the bank waiting for the stream to flow by. The tide of national life had flowed on and on, notwithstanding all the efforts of hon. Members to obstruct its progress. The national sentiment had existed in Ireland for seven centuries, and would exist for seven centuries to come. What they desired now was to secure local reform in Ireland—to secure that the wants and wishes of the people should be consulted in matters of local administration. He did not intend to say anything more on the subject, but now simply begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Carew.*)

Mr. SMITH BARRY (Hunts, S.) said, he had given Notice of the following Amendment:—

> "That this House, while prepared at the proper time to take into consideration any well-matured scheme for reform of Local Government in Ireland, is of opinion that at present it is not expedient to introduce large constitutional changes in that Country."

He did not propose to enter at any length into the details of the Bill introduced by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Kildare (Mr. Carew). It seemed to him to be a very large and comprehensive measure, and to go a great deal farther even than the Bill which had been introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board for England (Mr. Ritchie), and it failed, so far as he could see, to give any of that comfort and protection to the loyal minority which the hon. and learned Gentleman said would be found included in it. It appeared to him (Mr. Smith Barry) to be a Bill for the purpose of sweeping away the loyal minority from every Board in Ireland, and to place the representation, so far as Local Government Boards were concerned, entirely and solely in the hands of partizans of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Now, the hon. and learned Gentleman had made an attack upon the system of Local Government under the Irish Grand Jury system. Well, he (Mr. Smith Barry) was not in the least prepared to defend the principle of the Grand Jury system. It was, he was perfectly aware, an anomalous system, and could not logically be defended for any reason whatever. But everyone who knew Ireland well, and every right hon. Gentleman who had gone over from this country or from Scotland to govern in Ireland as Chief Secretary, must be perfectly aware, after he had been there a short time, that there were a great many things in that country which were turned upside down, and that it by no means followed that because an institution was logically indefensible it did not work extremely well in practice. Notwithstanding all that had been said by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, he (Mr. Smith Barry) was prepared to maintain that Grand Juries did their work far better and far more cheaply, and with far more honesty and uprightness, than any other Boards which sat in Ireland. The object of this measure was to sweep away the Grand Jury system, and also to sweep away the Lunatic Asylum Boards. Those latter Boards were also extremely well managed, and he did not know whether it was for that reason that they likewise were to be swept away. The only merit that he could see in the Bill was that it proposed to sweep away Boards of Guardians. Anybody who had any acquaintance with the way in which Boards of Guardians—and he had had, he would not say the pleasure, but the duty of sitting upon them regularly during the Parliamentary Recess—must know that the way in which they were worked was thoroughly unsatisfactory, and that almost any new system which could be devised for replacing them would be a distinct improvement. But what did this Bill propose to do? It practically proposed to set up in the place of the Grand Juries and Local Government Boards in Ireland a huge system of fresh Boards of Guardians. These Local Councils would be no more than large Boards of Guardians, and what he might call aggravated Boards of Guardians. They would be Boards of Guardians without that *ex officio* representation which the Boards of Guardians possessed at present. He could not say that on most of those Boards the *ex officio* members at present had very much power or very much influence. During the last few years every attempt had been made to make it impossible for what he might call the larger ratepayers to sit and work upon the Boards of Guardians; and what had been the result? Why, the result had been that since these Boards had got into the hands of the National Party—the popular Party as they called themselves—the rates had been increased, and the expenditure under the Poor Law was becoming larger and larger every day.

Mr. CLANCY: So is the property.

Mr. SMITH BARRY said, that he found that within the past 30 years the population of Ireland had decreased more than 1,000,000; that the average daily number of cases of outdoor relief had increased from 926 to 56,434; and that the actual cost of outdoor relief had increased from £2,245 to £164,951. The Return issued in February of this year of the outdoor relief for the six months preceding March, 1887, showed that the expenditure had increased to £100,216, and that the total Poor Law expenditure was £428,665. So that they might expect if they were going to place the whole county business—the whole local business—in the hands of the Local Councils they would have an enormous increase in the local rates throughout the country. What was the position of the Boards of Guardians at the present time? Why, he ventured to say that throughout the South and West of Ireland at this moment the majority of them were practically insolvent. The case of the Western Unions, Swinford, Belmullet, &c., the House was very well acquainted with. In the case of the Limerick Board of Guardians the Bank had declined to give them any further advance, because the overdraft of the Guardians had been so great. What did the Guardians do? Why, they passed a most indignant resolution stating that their bankers were treating them in such a manner that they would instantly withdraw their account—which was overdrawn to the extent of several thousand pounds—to another Bank which would be likely to treat them in a more agreeable fashion. At Skibbereen a similar circumstance had occurred. On March the 3rd there were in the Skibbereen Union 518 persons receiving outdoor relief, the Bank debt was £1,097, and the rates uncollected amounted to £5,100. The Skibbereen Guardians, under somewhat similar circumstances, passed a resolution very like that passed by the Limerick Board of Guardians. At Waterford, in 1880, the cost of outdoor relief was put down at £1,500; but on February 29 of this year, at a meeting of the Board of Guardians, it was stated that the cost now exceeded £4,000. At the Tipperary Union the outdoor relief cost £110 per week, the Bank debt was £4,000, and the debt to the national teachers £1,000, and it was stated by the Clerk of the Union that the amount of outdoor relief was greater than that of any three of the Dublin Unions.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: Have the rates increased in that Union?

Mr. SMITH BARRY said, he could not tell what the rates were, but he was aware of the fact that the financial condition of the Tipperary Union had been extremely shaky for a considerable time past. He found that in the Lismore Union there was a meeting of the Guardians on the 21st March of this year—and this was not a question of rates, but a question showing the manner in which the business of these Irish Unions was sometimes conducted—and there a letter was read from the Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, sanctioning the appointment of the Clerk to the Union as Clerk to the Local Authority under the Contagious (Animals) Act at a salary of £5 per annum, as proposed by the Guardians. The Clerk had hitherto done the work without remuneration, and it was stated that the reason for having the appointment sanctioned was to repay the surcharge on Mr. Pyne, M.P., by the Local Government Board Auditor, as he had granted outdoor relief to an evicted tenant. The surcharge was upheld at the Lismore Petty Sessions. The matter was regarded as a capital joke by the Guardians, as the £5 would come from the Consolidated Fund with the Lord Lieutenant's sanction. Here was another instance of the way in which the rates were spent in the North-West of Ireland. There were in the county of Donegal two Unions adjacent to each other—namely, the Unions of Ballyshannon and Donegal. The total expenditure for the year 1886 in Donegal was £2,449, and in Ballyshannon it was £3,591. One member of the Ballyshannon Board, a great Nationalist—namely, Mr. E. Dickson, was so disgusted with the way in which affairs were conducted by the Board that he sent in his resignation, and published the reasons for his withdrawal in the newspapers in a letter, a portion of which he (Mr. Smith Barry) would read to the House. He said—

> "I have, to the best of my ability, done my utmost to faithfully act as their (the ratepayers') representative, and to attend to their interest in making every effort to keep the rates as low as I possibly could. But the majority of the Guardians are increasing salaries, and accepting the highest tenders in a Union where the former rate cannot be collected, its officers are unpaid, its contractors threatening law proceedings for the amounts due to them, and the Union verging into bankruptcy. I, for one, will be no party, either on personal, sectarian, or political grounds, in aiding or assisting to raise taxes on an impoverished people.—Yours faithfully, Edward Dickson."

The debts due by the Boards of Guardians all over Ireland were very large, and the consequence was that the rate collectors' cheques remained dishonoured, and it was impossible in some places for the unfortunate people in receipt of outdoor relief to obtain that relief because the collectors could not get in the value of it. He had been told by rate collectors in Cork that the Bank now would only consent to cash their cheques on being allowed a considerable discount which the unfortunate rate collectors had to pay out of their own pockets. Well, so much for the Poor Law Guardians. But the Poor Law Guardians as a body, as at present constituted, had still a certain leaven of the magistrates and of the higher ratepayers amongst them. But how was it in the case of the Municipal Corporations? How did the Municipal Corporations manage their affairs? It was essential to go into this question, because they might expect the new local Councils if such a Bill as this passed, would be composed of the sort of men who sat upon Boards of Guardians and the Municipal Corporations. How did the Corporation of Cork get on for instance? Why, only a few weeks ago, although the Town Clerk told them distinctly that it was not a legal expenditure, the Cork Corporation voted a sum of £31 10*s.* to pay for the defence of the Mayor when he was prosecuted for having violently assaulted a police sergeant. The Vote was passed by the Nationalist majority in the Corporation. A few days later an even more unjustifiable payment was made. A sum of money—he forgot how much—was paid for a deputation to go from Cork to do honour to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) and the Marquess of Ripon when they visited Dublin, and a sum of money was also voted to a number of bandsmen whose musical instruments were destroyed in a *mêlée* which occurred on the occasion of a demonstration in honour of the hon. Member for

East Cork (Mr. Lane), who was returning to his native city after a brief sojourn in Tullamore. Another evidence of the manner in which Local Bodies elected in the manner of Boards of Guardians and Corporations were likely to treat the Loyalist minority when they were entirely at their mercy was given last autumn by the Municipal Council of which he had been speaking. On the 18th of November the Cork Municipal Council decided to Boycott *The Cork Constitution.* They declined thenceforth to send their advertisements to that paper, which was the only Unionist daily newspaper in the South of Ireland. They maintained that, taking the opposite line to them, it had been guilty of hounding on the Government to set upon and ill-treat the people.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Was that mentioned in the resolution of the Corporation, or was it not?

Mr. SMITH BARRY said, he had not got the resolution, but it had been carried by the Corporation and put into operation, and he believed was in existence at this moment.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: No; not at this moment.

Mr. SMITH BARRY said, then it had been rescinded. A resolution passed by the Cork Guardians to a similar effect had, after a considerable time, been also rescinded. All he (Mr. Smith Barry) wished to do was to show that these Municipal Corporations, even such a Corporation as that of Cork, one of the largest in the country, did not treat their political opponents in anything like a moderate spirit; and he desired in this way to suggest the manner in which Local Councils, when appointed, would be likely to treat the Loyalists, for the Loyalists would be almost entirely unrepresented on the Boards. With regard to Dublin, the Corporation there was elected on a still more extended franchise than that of any of the other Municipal Corporations in the country; and it was a remarkable thing that in connection with that Corporation the expenditure had steadily increased during the past dozen years, ever since 1880, when it got into the hands of the Nationalist Party. In the year 1874 the expenditure was £276,000, and it went on year by year at about the same rate, decreasing, if anything, standing in 1879 at £261,000; and in 1880, at about the time the old Body began to lose control, the expenditure jumped up to £292,000. In 1881 it was £293,000; in 1882, £300,000; in 1883, £316,000; in 1884, £324,000; in 1885, £321,000; and in 1886, £347,000. And, notwithstanding this, they found that at this very time—namely, 1881—the Mayor's salary, which used formerly to be only £1,000, and which was only £1,000 at the time when Sir Benjamin Guinness was Lord Mayor, became £2,000, and since that time it had been raised to £3,000, at which figure it now stood. It was a very curious thing, also, in connection with the Dublin Corporation, that whereas in every other town the tolls from markets and slaughter-houses were a source of income, in Dublin there was an annual deficit under those heads of something like £3,000. He would not weary the House by going further into those details, nor would he trouble the House, as he might do, with statements respecting the doings of different Town Commissioners scattered from one end of Ireland to the other, nor with the resolutions passed by those Bodies of a political character and entirely outside their ordinary business, when they ought to be attending to the work for which they were primarily appointed. But there was one resolution which he saw was passed by the Tipperary Town Commissioners, which was very typical of the sort of resolutions to which he alluded, and which showed the way in which these Bodies spent a great deal of their time. Mr. Quinlan, at one of the meetings in December, 1887, said he had a resolution to propose in reference to the imprisonment of the Lord Mayor, and he proceeded to move the following:—

> "That we, the Tipperary Town Commissioners, protest against and condemn the Tory Government and their wretched tool 'B——y Balfour' in imprisoning the self-sacrificing and pure-souled patriot and national bard, T. D. Sullivan, Lord Mayor of Dublin, and we believe that the law which makes such an exemplary man a criminal is a disgrace to civilization, and will stand for all time as a bloody rule of tyrants prepared to hold fast their plunder by means the most revolting and outrageous to common humanity."

This resolution was passed unanimously, and, having been passed, the meeting soon after adjourned. Matters such as those of cleansing the streets and looking after the interests of the town might go anywhere they liked. This, judging by analogy, was the kind of thing they might expect if the House consented to pass such a Bill as that introduced by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite that afternoon. He would not detain the House any longer. He should have liked to point out that whereas they had had municipal institutions in England and Ireland for a great number of years, and whereas it was the great hope of all of them sitting in this House that these institutions should be further extended in the counties in England, that in England municipal institutions had been working well, and that there was every reason to hope and believe that they would work equally well when extended to the counties. In Ireland the case was entirely opposite. Municipal institutions there had not worked well; and if they were going to extend the system which had worked badly in the Irish Municipalities, they would not only extend it further, but would render it far worse. In England the mass of the population, if not more quick-witted, were, at least, more highly educated than the mass of the people in Ireland—so far, at least, as they could judge from the result of the Elections in 1885. During that Election there were polled, throughout the whole country, 2,969,381, of which 80,145 were illiterates. In England and Wales the number of illiterates was 38,587, or one in 62; in Scotland it was 4,386, or one in 74; whereas in Ireland there were 36,722, or one in 5½. Now, he could not help thinking that if that House, in the year 1885, at the time when the franchise was largely extended to Ireland, had been cognizant of those facts, and of the condition of the voters throughout that country, they would have hesitated before extending the franchise as they did. That appeared to him to be a very sound reason—having discovered the condition in which the voters in the counties were—why they should not now make a further extension of the franchise to a set of people who were in a state of educational darkness. He did not wish the House to understand for a moment that he was opposed in principle to the extension of local self-government. He had candidly acknowledged that the Grand Jury system was, in his opinion, on principle indefensible, though he believed it worked well. He had said so many years ago, and very often he had looked forward to the time when it would be possible and prudent for this Parliament to extend a similar system of local government to Ireland. But that time had not yet come. Before granting any further extension of popular demands, it was the duty of Parliament to see that the powers granted were likely to be used for the purpose for which they were given, and not as a means of carrying out revolutionary measures. He earnestly hoped that at no distant date such an extension of local government would be found possible. But it must be when law and order had been thoroughly established. It must be when education had sunk deeper into the masses of the people; it must be when the country was no longer at the mercy of the political agitator and the National League wire-puller, and when the heated atmosphere of Party politics had so cooled down that it would be possible for that minority of the ratepayers which paid the greater portion of the rates to obtain not merely a fair hearing, but a fair share of representation on the Local Councils.

Sir JAMES CORRY (Armagh, Mid) in seconding the Amendment, said, the hon. Member said that having served on Grand Juries he believed that the system was one of the most extravagant that could possibly be devised for Ireland. The experience he (Sir James Corry) had derived from serving on Grand Juries led him to discover how carefully the interests of all parties were guarded, and, as a large cesspayer, he was not opposed to the extension of representative system; yet he would rather be under the rule of the Grand Juries than of the County Councils proposed to be instituted by the present Bill. In the North of Ireland he had found that, on the whole, the system worked exceedingly well; and to hand over the Poor Law Unions to the Council, as proposed to be elected under the Bill, would not only be a most expensive but a very dangerous operation. At the same time, he looked at the Poor Law system as very far from being perfect; yet the *ex officio* Guardians acted as the check upon extravagance, and he should be very sorry to see the Poor Law administration handed over to the proposed Councils. Then, with reference to Municipal Corporations, the proposals embodied in the Bill would, to his mind, if carried out, introduce a change of a very unsatisfactory character. They were told last year, when the Franchise Bill for Belfast was passed, that the old Corporation would be completely swept away. He was able to inform the House that 30 members of the old Corporation stood for re-election, and out of that number, although the voters had been increased from 6,000 to 23,000, only one failed to secure re-election. That showed that the old Corporation did its business properly, and to the satisfaction of the ratepayers. He had no wish to detain the House further; but he believed that the Bill was a dangerous measure, and although he was not opposed to the extension of local government in Ireland, he thought it ought to be carried out on very different lines from those contained in the Bill. If all control was taken away from the owners of property, who had the welfare and prosperity of the country at heart, a very great mistake would be committed.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, while prepared at the proper time to take into consideration any well-matured scheme for the reform of Local Government in Ireland, is of opinion that at present it is not expedient to introduce large constitutional changes in that Country,"—(*Mr. Smith Barry,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) said, he was not surprised to hear the declaration of the hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Armagh (Sir James Corry) that he would be sorry to see the old Boards of Guardians swept away, for now in the town with which the hon. Baronet was connected, on the Board of which he was a shining light, in a district with 60,000 Catholics, he believed it was a fact that there was not a single Catholic on the Board. That was the exclusive system which the hon. Baronet desired to see maintained. He congratulated the hon. Baronet on his consistency; but he wished the House to understand that the system the hon. Baronet desired to maintain was the old system of Orange ascendancy unimpaired. The hon Member for South Hunts (Mr. Smith Barry), who moved the Amendment, talked of political agitators as if there were no political agitators except the members of the National League. Now, he (Mr. Clancy) was not ashamed of being a political agitator. He thought that, under the circumstances, political agitators discharged a very important function. But there were agitators and agitators, and the hon. Member for South Hunts should be the last man to speak offensively of political agitation, seeing that he was the head of the Cork Defence Union, which, during the last six months, had been fomenting agrarian disturbances in the South of Ireland. The hon. Member had himself interfered personally not long ago to render a settlement of the dispute between the landlord and the tenants on the Ponsonby estate impossible, except on conditions of degrading servitude to the tenants. It was mentioned in a letter which only appeared last week that the hon. Member had been charged with laying secret information in order to stop a public meeting. That was a Gentleman who came there to cast reflections upon political agitators. The hon. Member's speech was very instructive. If anybody wanted to know why a man in the hon. Gentleman's position could not be elected for an Irish constituency, he had only to reflect on the speech just delivered. What was that speech? The anti-Irish Irishman could see good in every other country but his own, and could see nothing but evil in his own. If evils existed in other countries he passed over them unnoticed. He had heard the hon. Member allude to the number of illiterate voters in Ireland. He ought to have been ashamed to allude to the subject. If the Irish people were ignorant, who was to blame for the state of ignorance but the loyal minority, who for centuries had all the power of Ireland in their hands? [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Well, William of Orange was born two or three centuries ago, and his legitimate successors were the Orange Party of to-day. He would, therefore, ask who was to blame for the state of ignorance which was alleged to exist? If the phrase "Orangeman" was objected to he would withdraw it and substitute "the loyal minority," which had had power in Ireland for several hundred years. What use had they ever made of it? He would refer them to the speech of the hon. Member for South Hunts, who was able to come down to the House that day and base his argument for refusing freedom on the very ignorance the loyal minority had produced. No doubt there were illiterates in their country, and he was not aware that itwas laid down as a condition of the franchise that the man possessing it must be able to read and write. Many men in Ireland who were unable to read and write had a far more honest conception of their duties than many Englishmen who were able to read and write. The speech of the hon. Member was filled with reflections upon his own countrymen; but he must confess that when he listened to it he thought it was, on the whole, although a somewhat dull one, a good argument for Home Rule. In the first place, the hon. Member admitted the necessity and justice of the Bill. He had certainly not expected from the head of the Cork Defence Union and the urgency movement the admission that the Grand Jury system could not be defended on any principle whatever. The hon. Member said that many things were turned upside down in Ireland. No doubt. Everything was turned upside down in Ireland under the system of the Union. That was the grand result of the Union, which had now been in existence for 87 years. Everything was turned upside down; and, instead of doing anything to change that state of things, the hon. Gentleman and his Friends came down day after day, and objected not only to Home Rule in the largest sense, but even to a *modicum* of self-government for Ireland. The hon. Gentleman not only objected to the Grand Jury system, but he admitted that the administration of the Poor Law Boards of Guardians was unsatisfactory. He wished the House to observe the largeness and the significance of that admission. How were the Poor Law Boards of the country constituted? They were composed one-half of landlords. [An hon. Member: No.] Who said "No?" The law was that the number should be equal. There was an *ex officio* Guardian for every elected Guardian. Not only was that the case, but, as had been pointed out by his hon. and learned Friend who moved the second reading of the Bill (Mr. Carew), seats were secured to the landlords at the Boards of Guardians without election, and the Poor Law franchise was so manipulated that it was a matter of astonishment how it was possible to find a single Board of Guardians in the hands of the Nationalists at all. The landlords had as many as six votes, and the average tenant only one. Those were the Bodies that now managed the affairs of the Unionists throughout Ireland, and he regarded with significance the admission of the hon. Member that their management was thoroughly unsatisfactory.

Mr. SMITH BARRY said, that his admission only applied to those Boards of Guardians which had got into the hands of the popular Party.

Mr. CLANCY said, that was a favourite theory that would not hold water. It had been put forward only within the last couple of years, and it had been contradicted by sworn testimony before Commission after Commission, and by investigation after investigation by Committees of that House, which showed that all along the Poor Law system in Ireland had been a scandal and disgrace. That was a pretty commentary on the state of things in Ireland. The *ex officio* Guardians had in Ireland the management of the affairs of the various Unions of the country, not only because they formed one-half of the Board, but because they had a franchise which had been specially manipulated to give them an ascendancy; and yet the hon. Member, who had interfered with the settlement of disputes upon the Ponsonby estate, and who had recently got a public meeting suppressed by laying secret information, came down to the House and was compelled to confess that the system had broken down. Certainly the hon. Member had made an admirable argument in favour of Home Rule, for he had produced a list of figures to prove that there had been a large increase of outdoor relief. The hon. Member failed to see the other side of that admission. If it were true, it showed that, in the face of a population decreasing year by year under the Cork Defence Union and the Conservative Government, there had been an increase in the poverty of the country which was absolutely startling. It showed further what the Irish Members had always been contending for, and what the Unionist Party had constantly denied—that under the system of Castle rule in Ireland the country was simply going to the dogs. As a proof of that it was only necessary to refer to the figures produced to-day by the hon. Member, a Gentleman who was so popular in his own country that he had to go over to South Hunts for a seat. It was a remarkable fact that although there had been a large increase in the poverty of the people in the West and North-West of Ireland, and an increase existed for giving outdoor relief, yet, on the whole, there had not been an increase, but a decrease in the cost of taxation for poor relief. There was a decrease in Poor Law rating of 1884 compared with the previous year of £36,472, while the Grand Jury system managed by the loyal minority showed an increased cost of £19,000. As the hon. Member's researches had not enabled him to find these figures, he would commend them to his attention. The Return for the year 1885 showed that the gross amount of Poor Law taxation for that year was £79,549 less than in 1884, and the aggregate poor rate in Ireland in 1886 showed a decrease of £47,480, as compared with that in 1885, the decrease in the Grand Jury cess for the same year having been only £12,000. These two years certainly did not bear out the contention of the hon. Member, although they did show that in the West of Ireland, where there was extreme poverty, there had necessarily been an increase over the cost for Poor Law relief in England. The hon. Member had alluded to various Unions, and, among others, to that of Ballyshannon, one of the districts in which the landlord party had always been supreme. The hon. Member did not and could not deny that fact. He asked the House, therefore, to measure the audacity with which the hon. Member came down to the House and gave figures which he would have the House to believe showed incompetency on the part of the popular Party, whereas they showed most conclusively an incompetency on the part of the loyal minority. The hon. Gentleman had referred to the question of municipalities. The Irish Members had been quite prepared for all this. They had had trotted out again and again all about the Corporation of Dublin. The favourite practice of the organization and Party to which the hon. Member belonged was that of throwing dirt on the country to which they belonged, and every institution of a popular character was subjected not only to fair criticism, to which he did not object, but to unfair and hostile attack, the object being to close the eyes of the English people to the real truth that the Irish people would not be content until they were entrusted with the management of their own affairs. The hon. Member had referred to the way in which advertisements were issued to the Cork Unions. He said the Cork Board of Guardians would not give their advertisements to a Loyalist newspaper. He did not know that the action of the Cork Board of Guardians was not open to defence, for it was fair to use any weapon in a state of war such as now existed. But if he wanted any defence for the action of the Cork Board of Guardians he could find it in the action of the Government themselves. Only a couple of weeks ago Her Majesty's Government were asked whether they had not issued—and they dared not deny the statement except in an equivocating way—whether they had not issued a Boycotting Circular against the Nationalist newspapers of Ireland? It was said that the Nationalist newspapers preached crime, although that was a very doubtful term now-a-days, thanks to the administration of the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour); and, consequently, if any Nationalist newspaper applied for an advertisement it was not to have it. In the face of this Boycotting decree the hon. Member for South Hunts came down to the House and held up the Cork Board of Guardians for censure, because it had deprived the hon. Member's own newspaper of certain advertisements. He believed that hon. the Member was personally interested in that newspaper.

Mr. SMITH BARRY: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. CLANCY: At any rate it was supported by a large subsidy. It was an organ of the loyal minority, and could not exist without a subvention of some kind or other. He did not know how these things were managed. There were certain transactions in Ireland which were not always published. [Mr. Smith Barry: Hear, hear!] He was quite well aware what the hon. Member was cheering. The Nationalists did not publish their accounts, nor did the Loyal minority theirs. When the Loyal minority did, the Nationalists would publish theirs. The hon. Member had made an extraordinary mis-statement in regard to the franchise. As a matter of fact, although there were 300,000 people in Dublin, very few of them enjoyed the franchise. The hon. Member did not appear to be cognizant of that fact, yet he came down to the House and talked about illiterates. He thought the hon. Member ought to be somewhat chary in talking about what the "old hands" did in Ireland. What did they do when the Loyal minority had their own way, and he would invite the attention of the Liberal Unionists specially to these facts? The "old hands," for instance, when they left off work in 1840 had imposed upon the City of Dublin a debt of £43,836, and in such desperate straits did they leave the City, that even the Mansion House and its effects were in the hands of the bailiffs for debts contracted by these "old hands," and it had to be redeemed by Daniel O'Connell and his Catholic Councillors before the Corporation could enter into possession of it. This was an instance of the way in which "old hands" did their work. But that was not all. The "old hands" were very liberal with other people's property. He could state, as a matter of fact, which could not be contradicted, that if the property which originally belonged to the Corporation of Dublin had been left in the hands of the people and their representatives, not one single penny of taxation would have been necessary at the present day for a single public work. What became of the property? The "old hands," in their after-dinner potations, gambled it away and mortgaged it for their debts. Whole streets were sold to Earl Fitzwilliam and the Earl of Pembroke for barleycorn rents, and pairs of gloves. This was what the "old hands," did, and now they had their successors coming down and endeavouring to throw dirt upon the reformed Corporation which had so managed the affairs of Dublin that they had reduced the old debt of nearly £400,000 down to £200,000, without imposing a single penny of additional taxation in the last 10 years. The hon. Member had spoken of the way in which the Dublin Corporation was managed, but a greater libel on any public body was never uttered than that which had been pronounced by the hon. Gentleman. Not a single stain rested to-day on the reformed Dublin Corporation. They had carried out some of the greatest public works in the Kingdom. They had established the finest water supply in the Three Kingdoms; they had paved the streets from end to end; and they had instituted a system of cleansing which they were not too exclusive or ashamed to borrow from Glasgow, and to go to Glasgow also for a Protestant and a Conservative to carry it out. If it were the fact, as he believed it was, that the public burdens of the City had been increased to some extent, the hon. Gentleman had been disingenuous enough to conceal the further fact that the citizens of Dublin were perfectly satisfied with the way in which their affairs were managed, and with what they had obtained in exchange for their increased burdens. The salary of the Lord Mayor of Dublin had been referred to, and the hon. Gentleman opposite had made suggestions which were the meanest he had ever heard in that House. The salary of the Lord Mayor of Dublin was not a new thing, seeing that it had existed in the days of the "old hands." The "old hands" were not ashamed to pocket salaries of any kind. He had never heard of an "old hand" declining a salary awarded to the Lord Mayor of Dublin, or of their refusing anything they could get. They kept everything they could get, and everything they could not get by fair means they obtained in their after-dinner potations. It had been said that the salary of the Lord Mayor of Dublin had been increased during the last few years from £2,000 to £3,000 per annum. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] Hon. Members said "Hear, hear!" That fact was quite true; but everyone who was acquainted with the circumstances must know that the official expenses of the Lord Mayor of Dublin were very heavy. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members might laugh, but they could not deny the fact. He was prepared to state as a positive fact that there never was a man who occupied the post of Lord Mayor of Dublin who had not spent as much and half as much again as he got. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Yes; no man ever held the office of Lord Mayor who found that the £3,000 given to him in the shape of salary was sufficient for the expenses of the office. There was no other Corporation in the Kingdom which paid its Mayor in an illiberal fashion. He thought they had heard of a Body called the Corporation of London. He believed that the Lord Mayor of London received £10,000 a-year for the expenses of his office; and if he was not mistaken, in addition to that £10,000, he was not ashamed, rich man as he was, to accept the repayment of the expenses of Civic feasts from out of the pockets of the ratepayers. He should like to know who paid the expenses of the banquet the other day to the noble Lord the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington). Why, they came out of the pockets of the ratepayers of the City. This attack which had been made upon the Lord Mayor of Dublin was, therefore, a mean and scandalous one, and ought to be reprobated accordingly. The Lord Mayor of Dublin received £3,000 a-year, but how much did the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland get? If the Lord Mayor got £3,000 a-year he did good work for it. He lived in Dublin and had to pay for lighting and coals. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary—a magnanimous man and a generous man, who would not touch the public money with a 40-foot pole—received £4,500 a-year, and was not ashamed to get his coals and gas for nothing, although he did not go to Dublin, and never used the coal and gas. When the right hon. Gentleman did go over to Dublin he did not live in his own house, but resided in that of the Lord Lieutenant, and how was the case with regard to the Lord Lieutenant himself? He ventured to say that the Lord Mayor of Dublin did ten times the amount of work discharged by the Lord Lieutenant, seeing that he was a member of every Committee of the Corporation, and had every day public work of some sort or other to transact. The Lord Lieutenant notoriously spent the greater portion of his time in England, and the rest in recreation in Phœnix Park, in cricket and other games. They never heard of the Lord Mayor of Dublin doing that. The Lord Lieutenant, in addition to £20,000 a-year, had a house provided for which he paid no rent, and, like the Chief Secretary, he had his coals and gas for nothing. He thought they had had enough of this miserable and paltry taunt at public men because, in the first place they received a salary, and because, in the second place, that salary was increased by the inevitable and necessary expenses of the office. It was often said that Belfast did not pay its Mayor; but if hon. Members would look into the accounts of the Corporation of Belfast for 1885, they would find that, although the Mayor did not take anything for the office, he was not ashamed to get his hall decorated and other expenses paid for the reception of the Prince of Wales and Lord Spencer. In Dublin nothing was charged upon the ratepayers for entertainments of that nature. When the same things were done on both sides they were only considered evil in reference to one particular side.

Sir JAMES CORRY said, that the Mayor of Belfast did not allow the Corporation to expend a single penny of the ratepayers' money for his reception of the Prince of Wales.

Mr. CLANCY said, that although the hon. Baronet might be a member of the Belfast Corporation, and might have attended to his business, he (Mr. Clancy) could speak of this as a matter of fact, because he had seen it in the accounts of the Corporation, and, to borrow a phrase from the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), he would not take a contradiction upon the subject. If these charges had been increased they had been voluntarily increased. Suppose he admitted fully everything that had been said on the other side. It must be remembered that there was an office in connection with the Local Government Board in Ireland whose duty it was to prevent excessive expenditure. Not a single pound could be expended in Ireland by Boards of Guardians, Town Commissioners, or Local Boards in excess of the local expenditure. There was an officer of the Local Government Board specially appointed to check improper expenditure, and the record was a most creditable one, for there had only been a very few cases—only one here and there in the course of the last few years—in which the auditor had surcharged any public officer on account of illegal payments. Supposing, however, that everything which had been said was true, what argument was it against the Bill? They proposed to abolish the present system. When hon. Members opposite found fault with the administration of the Corporation of

Dublin, and with the administration of Boards of Guardians, they were finding fault with creatures of their own creation; and, supposing the faults did exist, they were the result of the narrow franchise which prevented the people from having proper control over the Corporation. All the arguments adduced were arguments in favour of the Bill, and for changing the whole system of Government in the country. He believed that until they did that they would never be free from corruption and oppression. His hon. and learned Friend who introduced the Bill correctly stated that it did not touch the question of national self-government. It only dealt with those administrative abuses and anomalies which had existed, and which ought to have been swept away long ago. The Irish Members reserved to themselves a future opportunity for the treatment of the higher question of national self-government. For his own part, he thought no better argument could be advanced in support of Home Rule than the rejection by the House of this Bill at the suggestion of the very loyal minority who were opposing the proposed reforms.

Colonel WARING (Down, N.) said, that he ought, perhaps, to feel crushed by the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy); but he belonged, however, to the "unconquerable Colony," as Macaulay called them, who did not know when they were beaten. He was glad to find that one valuable admission had been made for the first time on the Benches opposite—namely, that there was a loyal minority in Ireland; that implied that there was a majority that was something else than loyal. He had long contended that that was the case, but it had never before been admitted on the Irish Benches. Previous speakers had also admitted that the funds of the Cork Corporation were applied to the defence of the Mayor of Cork when he was charged with making a violent assault on a police constable. The Irish Members approved these illegal payments, which went a long way to show that the local administration in Ireland was not likely to be satisfying if the state of things now existing in the towns was extended to the counties. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Clancy) was very indignant with the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Huntingdon (Mr. Smith Barry) for having reflected upon the amount of illiterate voting in Ireland, and the hon. Member taunted the Party to which he (Colonel Waring) belonged with having been the cause of the illiteracy of the country by their mismanagement of the education of the country. The taunt was one which he entirely repudiated. What had been the cause of the ignorance of the greater part of Ireland for the last few centuries? Not the ascendancy of the Party which hon. Gentlemen opposite were opposed to, but the action of the clergy of their own Church in preventing the instruction of the people, and in putting every obstacle in the way of the people being taken out of their present state of ignorance. He was not in a position, nor did he intend, to go into statistics with regard to a large part of Ireland. He had the good fortune to live in a part of Ireland which was less affected by the organization to which hon. Gentlemen opposite belonged than, perhaps, any other; but, with regard to illiteracy he could give one example which might be instructive. In his own county, of which he represented a portion and an hon. Member opposite (Mr. M'Cartan) represented another portion, there were two sections, one of which was almost exclusively free from the influence which, he alleged, had been the cause of the ignorance of Ireland, and the other of which was largely under that influence, and, therefore, returned a Member in support of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell). At the last Election there was nearly the same number of electors in each constituency, and in the electoral division of North Down 170 persons voted as illiterates; but in the electoral Division of South Down, in which the clergy of the religion of hon. Gentlemen opposite had a great deal of influence, no less than 2,000 illiterate persons voted. The people of South Down lived under precisely the same system of schools as the people of North Down; they had the advantage of the same class of teachers; and they had all the advantages which were enjoyed in North Down. In every single county they found that where the sway to which he alluded held good ignorance existed, and where it did not hold good education was almost universal. Reference had been made to the present system of Poor Law. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Dublin said that they were not to say anything about the Poor Law Boards as at present constituted, because they were one of the institutions he proposed to do away with. That was quite true, but he (Colonel Waring) greatly feared lest the new state of things would be worse than the present, for every single precaution which had led to some Boards of Guardians being better and more economically managed than others was to be swept away by the new proposed County Council. It was alleged that there was one-half of each of the Boards of Guardians representing the landlords. He utterly and entirely denied the statement. As a matter of fact, an equal number of *ex officio* Guardians to elected Guardians sat on Boards; but in how many Unions would such a number of *ex officio* Guardians be found who could, or would, attend to the duties of the Boards? Everyone who knew anything about the Irish Poor Law system knew that it was on very rare occasions indeed that a large number of *ex officio* Guardians were present, and that those occasions were not those on which public expenditure was to be dealt with. Supposing the *ex officio* Guardians did attend, what were they? They were magistrates who were ratepayers in the Union, but the magistrates were not all landlords; and in recent years, since the Government which lately managed the affairs of Ireland was in power, there had been a very large number of magistrates whose estates would, perhaps, have been very heavily taxed to furnish the necessary qualifications. He entirely denied that the *ex officio* Guardians held half of the representation, or that they went out of their way to regulate and control the Boards of Guardians. Another attack was made upon the power of the landlords to control the votes at Boards of Guardians, and in that respect, also, the facts were very largely misrepresented. As a matter of fact, the power of accumulated voting did not amount to anything like what was alleged on the other side. In his evidence Mr. Walsh was asked by the Committee which sat on the Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, 1883, whether or not he approved of the proposition then before the Committee to reduce the number of votes which could possibly be given as accumulated votes from 30 to 18? In answer to that question Mr. Walsh said—

> "No; instead of that I would increase it. A landlord with an income of £1,000 a-year, and paying half the rates on £1,000 in one electoral division, had only six votes, while his tenants, paying the other half, had 60. In another case two landlords had six votes each, and their tenants had 100."

Therefore, it was perfectly false to say that the landlords' votes controlled the votes of elected Guardians. Great indignation was aroused in the mind of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Clancy) by some words which fell from the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Huntingdon (Mr. Smith Barry) with regard to the conduct of the Dublin Corporation. In the first place, the salary of the Lord Mayor was considered to be a very fair and proper charge upon the resources of that Body; and, of course, it was for the Dublin Corporation electors to say whether they considered that salary a fair part of the municipal charge. That salary stood at £2,000 for a long time, but it had recently been raised to £3,000. He (Colonel Waring) asked what were the increased expenses which made it necessary that this additional salary should be given? As far as he could make out, for a long time the Lord Mayor gave banquets at which there was an abundance of champagne, and at which, later on, he presumed, there was a good deal of John Jamieson consumed. At the present time, he understood, the Lord Mayor gave a charming entertainment, called a conversazione, at which coffee, cocoa, soda water, and ginger beer were handed round. He could not think that the cost of these banquets was so high as to render the addition of £1,000 to the Lord Mayor's salary necessary. The idea of the Mayor of Belfast performing his duty without salary had been laughed at, and it had been insinuated that a small sum was charged for the decoration of the hall for the reception of the Prince of Wales. That had been denied. He was not there, however, to discuss the question whether it was true or false, because he did not think it much mattered. The vote, if it was given at all, was for a great Civic entertainment, and the charge would be very fairly defrayed out of the public funds. But what occurred on the same occasion? The Mayor for the time being spent very close upon £20,000 of his own private money on the same entertainment, and that entertainment was upon a scale of magnificence which was rarely equalled in the world. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Clancy) made a very great boast of the manner in which the Dublin Corporation had paved the streets of Dublin from one end to the other. But he forgot to remark that the stone sets were supplied by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) at a cost of 24*s.* per ton, when equal or superior sets were offered by a Northern firm, members of the loyal minority, at 22*s.* per ton. He (Colonel Waring) did not see that there was any great economy effected by that; and, therefore, they were quite entitled to demand that, before they were to be handed over to the tender mercies and the financial management of gentlemen who held with hon. Members opposite, they should have a little better proof than they had yet had of the capacity of those gentlemen to manage affairs economically, and without favour or affection to any one party or the other. Now he came to the Bill itself. He had not the slightest intention of going into the details of the Bill, for the simple reason that at the present moment the details made no difference whatever to his argument. He objected to the Bill, not in detail, not in principle, but he objected to it on the ground of the time of its application. He maintained that the time was unsuitable, that the conditions of the country were unsuitable to the passing of such a measure as this. He entirely objected to any Bill whatever effecting, as the Amendment of his hon. Friend ran, "any constitutional change" in Ireland in its present state. He objected most thoroughly to it, in the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), whom he regretted not to see in his place—

> "As long as the National League is as vigorous and effective, and, if you like, as tyrannical and terrifying, as ever."

While the League was as tyrannical and terrifying as ever, and that was admitted—it was admitted only the other day at Rossendale by the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley)—while that was so, he (Colonel Waring) held that County Councils elected by votes controlled by the National League could not be trusted with the management of the finances and with the local affairs of the country. They had to look to what had been done. Some attention had been called to several points already; but he thought it would be useful to go a little further into the question of how the finances of the country had been managed by the Boards of Guardians in the part of the country which was under the control of the National League. In the Union of Roscommon, up to 1879, the gross rate never exceeded £5,000 a-year; in 1884 it had risen to £7,500. The outdoor relief in the same period had gone up from £500 to £1,000. The ordinary allowance as outdoor relief was 3*s.* per week; but when the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) thought it necessary for the public peace and welfare to put certain gentlemen under temporary restraint, their families were at once granted the sum of £1 per week as outdoor relief during the term of the men's imprisonment. The sum of £1 was a somewhat arbitrary amount to be fixed upon, and there was no particular reason why it should not be 19*s.* or 21*s.*; it was a curious thing that the National League had been accustomed to give the families of those who had been arrested £1 per week, so that when the Board of Guardians resolved to subscribe £1 a-week to a suspect's family, it was only like subscribing £1 to the National League for the family of every suspect. After a while the Local Government Board, which existed sometimes for good and sometimes for evil—he was bound to say he was not always a great admirer of the Local Government Board, for it occasionally made mistakes, and it occasionally did very useful work—the Local Government Board discovered that this was going on, and, thinking it a very improper use of public money, they sent down a sealed order, by which they made it clear that it was not legal to grant money in this way, and that orders for food and fuel should only be given to families of persons in that position. But the Board of Guardians were equal to that too; they gave orders for food and fuel, but they gave the orders upon the shop of one of the principal members of the Board.

It might be said that these men were ratepayers themselves, and that they were hurting themselves by all this liberality. To a certain extent they were hurting themselves; but it must not be forgotten that the incidence of the Poor Law was different in Ireland to what it was in England. In every part of Ireland the landlord paid on every holding one-half of the rates, but in respect to holdings under £4 the landlord paid the whole of the rates, and in consequence of the large number of these holdings a very much larger proportion than half was always contributed by the landlords to the rates in the Unions in Ireland. Nearly three-quarters, certainly five-eighths, of the cost of the support of the Poor Law in Ireland was defrayed directly by the landlords. Therefore, it would be seen that the interest that the elected members of Boards of Guardians had in the matter was comparatively small. It was ridiculous to suppose that the rates inflicted upon these men by this extravagance would be sufficient to deter members of Boards of Guardians from the unfair distribution of money in their charge. Now they came to the question of the distressed Unions. It would be remembered that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne granted £20,000 to assist the poverty in six Unions in the West of Ireland—namely, Belmullet, Clifden, Galway, Swinford, Westport, and Oughterard. In these Unions at the time this was given there were 1,000 outdoor paupers, but how many were there in six weeks after the grant was given? Just 100,000. Was it not fair to ask the reason? An ex-Chairman of one of the Unions used these words in conversation—"Borrow all you can; the more you get the less you will be asked to pay." That was perfectly true. [*Cries of* "Name!"] No; he would not give the name for very obvious reasons; he had no doubt that hon. Gentlemen opposite knew the name perfectly well. What was said was absolutely and perfectly true. They had not yet been asked to pay, and he was perfectly certain that they never would pay if they were asked. The outdoor paupers rose in six weeks from 1,000 to 100,000. Outdoor paupers were on the list who held large acreage of land, and who had 13 to 20 head of cattle, large numbers of sheep, and who were contractors under the Union, and who, strange to say, at one time were actually Guardians themselves. In the Committee to whose proceedings he had previously referred Colonel Spaight was asked—"Have you ever known a Guardian put in an application for outdoor relief?" And his answer was that he was present at a meeting when the Chairman of the Board of Guardians was going over the numerous applications for outdoor relief. A Guardian was standing close by watching the administration of relief, and Mr. Butler, the Chairman, read out his name, and, looking up at him, said—"Surely this is not your name." The Guardian replied—"Yes it is, Sir; I want relief as much as anybody." Now, they did not want men to be voting relief for themselves out of the county rates, and until they could feel sure that that would not be done, they thought it was better to postpone the taking of the step which was proposed by the Bill before the House. He would not detain the House long, but there were other points to which he must refer. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Dublin insinuated that evictions had been the great cause of outdoor relief. He (Colonel Waring) thought he had got a bit of evidence which would make it rather difficult to reconcile that statement with the truth. There were six Unions in the County of Kerry—he was not sufficiently acquainted with the exact boundaries to be certain that they were all within the county—they were Dingle, Cahirciveen, Kenmare, Killarney, Listowel, and Tralee. In the first three he believed that what had been admitted to be the Loyalist minority had retained a certain amount of power, but in the last three the Nationalist Party had become supreme, and what were the figures? In Killarney, in 1880, 2,107 paupers cost £1,752, or 16*s.* per head; in 1884, 2,867 paupers cost £3,617, or 25*s.* 2*d.* per head. In Listowel, in 1880, 258 paupers cost £65, or 5*s.* per head; and in 1884, 2,187 paupers cost £1,638, or 15*s.* per head. In Tralee, in 1879, 87 outdoor paupers cost £30 17*s.* 11*d.*, or 7*s.* per head; and in 1884, 3,484 paupers cost £2,534, or 14*s.* 9*d.* per head. While this was going on in these three Unions, what was happening in the three other Unions in the same county? In Dingle the increase amounted in all between the two years mentioned to £4 8*s.* 4*d.*; in Cahirciveen to £186; and in Kenmare the diminution amounted to £20. He thought that was a sufficient refutation to the insinuation that the expenditure on pauperism in general was in any way attributable to the eviction of the tenants. Now, he objected altogether to the transference of the powers at present existing to the hands of elected representatives of Ireland, while the tyrannical power, which had been so well described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), whom he now saw in his place—while that tyrannical and terrifying power existed to the extent it did, he entirely objected.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY said, he was sorry he was not in the House when the hon. and gallant Gentleman referred to him some time ago. Of course, when he used those words he was using words applied to the League by its opponents.

Colonel WARING said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman ought to have been careful so to inform his audience, for such an interpretation did not appear from the extract of the speech which he possessed.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: They quite understood that.

Colonel WARING said, he was perfectly satisfied, and he thought that if they were not the right hon. Gentleman's words, they were, at any rate, perfectly true. Another objection he had was that while a very great deal of care was taken of the interests of the farmers of Ireland, who happened to be supporters of hon. Gentlemen opposite, very little regard was shown to other classes who had an equal right to the care of Local Authorities. He had a letter from a labourer complaining of the treatment labourers received under the Labourers' Cottages Act; indeed, the labourers had no confidence in the present Boards of Guardians. While the opinion of the landlords, or, if they chose to say it, the educated classes, the mercantile classes, and the labourers, who at least formed one-half of the Irish population, was against trusting gentlemen elected on the same principles as Boards of Guardians; and while the supporters of this change were to be found principally on the Benches opposite, he thought the House would be wise and prudent to think twice and thrice before they gave a second reading to a Bill which struck at the root of all property, and would put property in Ireland in the power of men who had nothing to lose but everything to gain by the change.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) said, they should not be diverted from the natural course of the discussion by the tirade of abuse which had been opened upon the local institutions of Ireland. He should not endeavour to follow the hon. Member for South Huntingdon (Mr. Smith Barry) in his reference to either the old or the new Corporation in Dublin; but he desired to resent, on the part of the clergy of Ireland, the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Down's (Colonel Waring's) assertion that they had been opposed to the education of the people of Ireland. The clergy of Ireland had been at all times the exponents of the people's grievances, and they had at all times run great risks in order to extend the education of the people. The only educational institution to which the clergy of Ireland opposed themselves was that known as the Model Schools, and he might also add the Queen's Colleges. That system of education which reached the people, the system of national education to which the people chiefly owed their education, had had the support and supervision of the clergy of Ireland. Therefore it was an unworthy charge the hon. and gallant Member made, and one that was not borne out by the facts. The hon. and gallant Gentleman alluded to the Dublin Corporation, and endeavoured to prove mismanagement of the affairs of Dublin by referring to a contract for paving sets that was some time ago entered into by that Corporation. The hon. and gallant Gentleman endeavoured to throw a stigma upon the Corporation, because they gave the contract to the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) at a higher price than they might otherwise have got the sets. In 1885 the Corporation of Dublin advertised for tenders for the supply of paving sets and other things. The proprietors of a Welsh quarry and several other quarry owners tendered at the rate of 27*s.* a-ton, but the hon. Member for Cork tendered at the rate of 24*s.* a-ton, and a quarry owner in the North of Ireland tendered at the rate of 22*s.* a-ton, these being the lowest tenders at the time they were accepted by the Corporation. It was only after the tenders had been accepted that the proprietors of the Welsh quarry reduced their price to 21*s.* 6*d.* a-ton, and if the Corporation had gone back on their contract they would have laid themselves open to an action for damages. What was the fact with regard to the sets from the North of Ireland? The surveyor of the Dublin Corporation had declared that the paving sets supplied from the quarry in the North of Ireland were of such specific gravity that a ton of them would not pave as much space as a ton of the sets supplied by the hon. Member for Cork; and yet the Corporation were continuing the contract with the firm in the North of Ireland, on behalf of which the hon. and gallant Gentleman made a complaint. It was not fair to introduce such matters; certainly the hon. and gallant Member should make himself better acquainted with the facts before he introduced a case which told as completely against himself. The hon. Gentleman the Member for South Huntingdon, in proposing his Amendment, complained that if this Bill were made law it would deprive the class who had had the local government of Ireland in their hands up to the present of all share in such government. The hon. Gentleman approved of the Local Government Bill for England and Wales. Did he not know that under the provisions of that Bill, which would, no doubt, be passed into law before very long, the people of his class—the landlords of this country—would have to seek, through the portals of popular suffrage, the position of local governors of their counties? Why was not the hon. Member for South Huntingdon satisfied to accept for his class in Ireland that which he approved of being extended to them in England? The hon. Gentleman wished to retain in Ireland the old system of ascendancy—the old system of *ex officio* governorship—under which landlords, if they had not come at all times to deliberate with the elected Guardians or Councillors in the country, had invariably turned up when a job was to be done for their friends. If the rates of the country had been increasing, it was because of the rack-renting by the class of which the hon. Member for South Huntingdon was a distinguished ornament. The hon. Gentleman alluded to several Local Bodies; in particular, he referred to the Tipperary Guardians, and he pointed out that that, as well as other Unions, had been mismanaged because the system of outdoor relief had been extended, and because there was a slight increase in the amount of money expended upon outdoor relief. But the hon. Gentleman did not inform the House whether there was an increase or a decrease in the amount of indoor relief. The hon. Member knew perfectly well, as a member of the Cork Board of Guardians, that the tendency and inclination of all Boards of the kind at the present time was to extend the system of outdoor relief and to decrease the system of indoor relief. In olden times, when the *ex officio* Guardians did pay some attention to their duties, they made it an indispensable condition of relief that a man, or woman, or child asking for relief should enter the workhouse. That system had been abandoned, and the better and more wholesome system of outdoor relief was being extended in every Union in Ireland. What were the facts in the case of the Tipperary Union? He held in his hand a statement of figures which had been supplied to him by the Chairman of the Board of Guardians, who was a Nationalist—a man who was elected to the position in 1882, when he was in prison; a man who had filled the position with honour, and who regulated the affairs of the Board, with the assistance of a majority of Nationalists, ably and satisfactorily. He would not weary the House by going through the statement; but the figures showed that there had been a gradual reduction in the amount of rates levied in the Union. In the electoral division of Ballygariff the rate was 1*s.* 4*d.* in the pound last year; this year it was 1*s.* 6*d.*; in another division it was 1*s.* 2*d.* last year, and 1*s.* 2*d.* this year; in another division 2*s.* last year, and 1*s.* 10*d.* this year; in another division 3*s.* last year, reduced to 2*s.* 6*d.* this year; in another division 4*s.* last year, and 3*s.* 6*d.* this year; in another division 2*s.* last year, and 1*s.* 9*d.* this year; in another division 3*s.* 8*d.* last year, and 3*s.* 6*d.* this year; in another division 4*s.* last year, and 3*s.* 6*d.* this year. In almost every case the Poor Law rate charged upon the rateable value of the district has been reduced, and received, owing to the good management of this Nationalist Board of Guardians that had met with the abuse of the hon. Member for South Huntingdon. But he had a more general class of statistics, which he could read with advantage to the House, and which would disprove the assertion made by the hon. Member who proposed the Amendment. In 1882 the number of persons who received indoor relief was 2,659. In the same year there were 3,841 who received outdoor relief. The cost of the indoor relief was £5,193, and that of outdoor relief £4,315. The rate for that year was 1*s.* 8¼*d.* in the pound. What were the figures last year? In 1882 the present chairman had not been chairman long, and it was not altogether a Nationalist Board of Guardians. In 1887 the number of people who received indoor relief was 3,762, an increase from 2,659; 3,023 received outdoor relief. The cost of the indoor relief was £4,842, and of the outdoor relief £4,276. The rate levied upon the district amounted to 1*s.* 7¼*d.* in the pound, or a reduction of 1*d.* from what it was in 1882. They saw, notwithstanding the charge of the hon. Member for South Huntingdon, that though there had been an increase in the number of the people relieved, there had been a decrease in the amount of money expended upon their relief, and that while there had been an increase in the number of people receiving indoor relief, there had been a large decrease in the number of those who received outdoor relief. The hon. Member also attacked the Tipperary Town Commissioners. The hon. Gentleman was the landlord of almost the whole of the town of Tipperary, and would he dare to say that the respectable shopkeepers of Tipperary had not the capacity to govern that town in a prosperous fashion? There was no man who had better reason to know the capacity of the Tipperary people to conduct their business in a satisfactory manner than the hon. Member who had abused them to-day. They had improved their property at their own expense. The hon. Gentleman had laid restrictions upon the concession of land to those shopkeepers; but notwithstanding those restrictions and notwithstanding the excessive rents which the hon. Gentleman demanded from them, they had increased their business to such an extent that they were the most prosperous people in the South of Ireland, and their local government was conducted on the most intelligent lines; but because they passed a resolution condemning the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) the hon. Gentleman condemned them, and would not give them credit for the abilities they displayed in the furtherance of their own business, on the improvement of his property, and on the punctual payment of the large rents which he took out of their pockets. But they did not need to rely upon the landlords of Ireland or upon the landlords' representatives in the House of Commons for a good character for the Irish people in regard to their capacity for Local Government. There was a gentleman in Ireland upon whom they all had to depend from time to time for those valuable statistics which were used sometimes with such dishonesty by those who opposed the cause of Ireland. Dr. Hancock said the inhabitants of Ireland had shown the greatest aptitude for Local Government in their administration of local taxation. Dr. Hancock was an official of the Government itself, but he was forced by a contemplation and examination of the subject extending over many years to bear this testimony to the capacity of the people of Ireland. The Poor Law system had been in operation in Ireland for 30 or 40 years. There were some 276 Unions in Ireland. Had it ever been known that an Irish Poor Law Union had been crushed out of existence by the Local Government Board because of its mismanagement? If Unions were at present in arrear it was only because the state of the country had gone from bad to worse. It could be seen from the statistics that they had reduced their expenditure. It could be seen that they had cut their cloth according to their measure. It could be seen that while more people had been relieved the cost of the relief had been less. Undoubtedly Unions were in arrear at their bankers. Why was that the case? Because the collectors of the poor rate came back day after day, weary and footsore, and told their employers, the Poor Law Guardians, they could not get the rates, that the people were being pressed for their rents, that the people were being evicted wholesale. And, then, the hon. Member (Mr. Smith Barry) who was the cause of these evictions, who, in conjunction with the rest of his class, endeavoured to impoverish the people by taking rack-rents out of their pockets, came here and blamed the administration of the Poor Law when they were in arrear at their bankers. He would not pretend to follow the hon. Member further. His Bill had been called for by the state of the country. This Bill and a great many Bills like it had been proposed in the House of Commons by their predecessors. The subject of Local Government had been reported on by Royal Commissions and Select Committees over and over again and all to no purpose. There had been no fruit. They had cried out for a reform of the system, and a few years ago they were promised reform and promised upon the very highest authority. In the Queen's Speech in 1881 the following words occur—

> "A measure will be submitted to you for the establishment of County Government in Ireland founded upon representative principles, and framed with the double aim of confirming popular control over expenditure and of supplying a yet more serious want of extending the formation of habits of local self-government."

That promise remained unfilled up to the present moment. He did not blame those who made that promise; but successive Governments since that time had held out the hope to the people of Ireland that they would be treated on an equality with the people of England and Wales. He did not see the least sign of it at the present time. The people had complained that the system as it existed in the past had been productive of large and serious injury to the Government of Ireland. They had complained of the whole system of Local Government in the country. In the first place, the Grand Juries were selected by the Sheriff, who was appointed by the Castle, and these Grand Juries associated with them for some of the purposes of local government what were called associated ratepayers. But they were brought together in the most hap-hazard and slipshod fashion. First and foremost those who collected the County cess in Ireland had to supply the Sheriff with the names of 100 of the largest ratepayers in the district. Of these the Grand Juries selected about a dozen, and these were the men who were supposed to represent the ratepayers. The people of Ireland were very naturally indignant with this state of things. They were discontented at it, and they would be dissatisfied until these associated ratepayers were elected, and elected by all parts of the barony upon some popular suffrage. Under the present system only the largest ratepayers were selected, and of course the poorer parts of every barony were unrepresented. The people who wanted the greatest improvement had no persons to urge their claims. He had alluded to the Commissions and Select Committees that had sat from time to time upon this subject. They had recommended on the occasions that they had reported to the House, that the associated ratepayers should be elected for the purpose of administering the taxes imposed upon the people and for the purpose of county government should be elected upon some popular suffrage, and he and his hon. Friends brought forward this Bill believing that it supplied a long felt want. He believed that the operation of the Bill would be beneficial to the people, and give them confidence in the laws of which they were themselves the administrators; he believed that if they had the power to dispense the taxes they would be quite willing to be taxed for the public good.

Sir CHARLES LEWIS (Antrim, N.) said, he desired to be brief, because he knew that many hon. Members wished to speak, and therefore he would only state some of his principal objections to the Bill. He had three principal objections to offer to the Bill. In the first place, as regards the electoral body proposed by the Bill, it was not drawn upon right lines; secondly, even if it were rightly drawn, it was clearly not brought forward at the right time; and lastly, there was important evidence before the House to prove that a measure so framed and a body so constituted was not likely to lead to good results. The first point was very essential, especially in connection with the principle that Ireland should be put upon the same footing as England with regard to legislation, and particularly with regard to legislation connected with the franchise. What was the position of the matter? On comparing this Bill with the English Local Government Bill, it would be seen that different franchises were proposed in the two Bills for the election of County Councils. The Parliamentary franchise was taken on the basis of the present Bill, whereas in the Government Bill for England the franchise depended upon the payment of rates. Therefore, the two proposals were not analogous. Under this Bill, Clause 5 provided that the qualification, of voters was to be framed by a transference of the Parliamentary qualification, which was entirely independent of the payment of rates by the elector. Bearing in mind, therefore, that in Ireland a large proportion of the rates was paid by the landlords, and a large proportion of property was not rated at all, he was entitled to say, that whilst the Government Bill would confer the franchise upon English ratepayers, the present Bill would confer it upon Irish non-ratepayers. Was the House disposed to agree to that part of the Bill irrespective of all other considerations? Was the House prepared to say that whilst the payment of rates was required as a qualification in England, it should not be required in Ireland? Surely that was a startling proposal to place before the House. He repeated that the franchise conferred by this Bill would constitute a constituent body, a large proportion of whom would not pay rates.

Mr. CLANCY said, they would be all landlords.

Sir CHARLES LEWIS said, he did not understand the observation.

Mr. CLANCY said, there was a property vote for landlords. They proposed to give it to them, and the hon. and learned Gentleman objected.

Sir CHARLES LEWIS said, he was referring to Clause 5, which conferred upon many thousands who were neither owners nor ratepayers the franchise for the election of County Councils. But that was only one sample of the unjust and inexpedient character of the measure. Passing to his second point, he maintained that the Bill was not brought forward at the right time. Times and seasons were always regarded as important by sensible men. In justification of his contention he would quote the declaration of the hon. Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy) that a state of war now prevailed in society in Ireland. If that was a correct representation of the state of the country, was it a fit time to propose to entirely revolutionize the country and municipal management of affairs, the effect of the revolution being to place the power for all purposes at the control of those who paid nothing and suffered nothing by the expenditure of the county with which they were connected. But at the present time a grave question was being disputed in the House and all over the country as to what was to be the relation of Ireland to the rest of the United Kingdom, whether it was to be a federal relation, a subjugated relation, or whether it should have a delegated or even an independent Parliament. Of course, that question was not now before the House, and there was no hon. Member, whatever his feelings on the subject might be, or whether the views he entertained were extreme, moderate, or doubtful, but recognized the seriousness of the controversy. At a time when this question was in solution and in doubt, was it proper that men's minds should be disturbed by the consideration of a Bill in which that question was to a great extent forestalled, and in which new relations were drawn up regarding the municipal functions and action of the people in Ireland? At the present time excitement and passion were easily raised on Irish questions, as was shown by Tuesday evening's Debate, and that was not a time for a satisfactory solution of such a question. No doubt they would be told "You always say that it is not the right time." His answer to that observation was that legislation had been going forward pretty fast during the last few years—[An Irish Member: On the wrong lines.]—He thought that even the most extreme or Radical Member could not by any possibility complain of the slowness of their legislation. But it seemed almost impossible for hon. Members opposite to leave that legislation when passed alone for a few weeks or months. He repeated, therefore, that amid the excited feelings and passion exhibited the previous night in dealing with the Irish question, it was by no means the right time in which hon. Members should be called upon to settle a new local constitution for Ireland. Therefore, he did not think that the objection about time was an unfair objection, and he was sure that whatever might be thought in the House people would think a great deal of it outside. His last objection was that the measure was not likely to lead to good results. In other words it could not and would not work. They had not in Ireland the same elements in society, high or low, capable of working a Bill of this kind as were to be found in England. In the first place, they had religious bigotry. Religious lines divided parties in Ireland in such a way as was unknown in England, and would interfere with the new machinery in the same way as it interfered with the old. His next objection was—who were going to be members of the new Councils? Were they going to introduce a number of angels who would settle down upon the country from a superior state of being to work this Act quite distinct from the class of persons who had been working similar Acts in Ireland during the past half-century? The Bill proposed to upset the Boards of Guardians, but like stage ghosts, the Guardians would go out of one door only to return by another. Would they re-appear or not? Would they sink to the level of the ordinary ratepayer? Would they not rather re-appear as Councillors under the new Bill? Indeed, gentlemen who now give orders for supplies which they executed themselves were not in the least likely to disappear from the sphere of municipal government. He was sorry to have to refer to things that were by no means complimentary to many Boards of Guardians in Ireland. What was the financial condition of many of the Unions of the South and West? Why, a condition of overdrawn banking accounts, of dishonoured cheques, of resolutions passed bullying bankers because they would not advance any more money, and of generally dishonouring the transactions in which the Guardians had been engaged. He did not say that was so universally, but it was quite common. The City of Limerick had been allowed —to the disgrace of every Government that had been in power during the last six or seven years—to set to the Municipal Bodies of Ireland the example that if they repudiated their legal obligations they would succeed in evading them. Over and over again there was brought before the House the case of the City of Limerick, which owed the Government some hundreds of pounds for a charge depending on an Act of Parliament, and which Parliament itself had assessed. [An hon. MEMBER: It was a fine.] In no sense was it a fine; it was a contribution towards the expenditure on the police—settled by Act of Parliament—in a matter in which that City alone was interested. It was resisted, and the Government, he thought, of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) obtained in a Court of Law a judgment for the whole amount; and since that time no Government had ever ventured to enforce that obligation. The way in which they had been allowed to evade and resist the payment was disgraceful to each successive Government. If a Municipal Body was thus allowed to coolly repudiate and escape from their obligations, what were they to expect from the Councils to be constructed under this Bill with that example before them? There were plenty of examples in Ireland of the kind of Bodies which these new Councils were likely to be. In 1886, the then Chief Secretary for Ireland came down to the House and represented that a number of Unions in Galway and Mayo were in such a deplorable condition as regarded the means of providing relief to the paupers of the district that it was necessary to interfere in a way never known before in the history of Poor Law administration, and to make a special grant to be spent for the relief of distress under the control of the Boards of Guardians; £20,000 was accordingly voted by the House for that purpose in that small district; and how was that money used? A Report of a Commission of Inquiry laid on the Table last year was full of pregnant matter showing the financial danger of trusting Bodies such as now existed and such as would be created under this Bill without the most careful provisions to prevent fraud and irregularities of every description. This Report was most instructive reading, and he earnestly recommended hon. Members to peruse it carefully. For example, in Westport Union, County Mayo, no fewer than 1,824 persons were relieved in one electoral Division out of a population of 1,947. Was that a class of persons whom they were going to invest with the franchise for the election of a County Council? Those scandals must have arisen through the gross misconduct of the Guardians; and they occurred not in one Union or district, but in several. In one case the number of persons relieved was actually more than the entire population of the district, Among the instances mentioned in the Report as illustrating how the grant was spent in outdoor relief were those of two publicans and a man who sold 13 bullocks at a fair—all three of whom received relief. Many other men, owning many head of cattle and sheep, were also recipients of relief. The list of recipients of money also included colliery contractors and workers, a constabulary pensioner, a man who held 1,075 acres of land; and enjoying £60 a-year; many men who owned a dozen or more cattle; Pat Joyce, the well-known gombeen man; a man who received 34*s.* per week wages; and a cattle jobber who had money in the Ulster Bank.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked, who was the Chairman of the Board of Guardians there?

Sir CHARLES LEWIS said, he was unable to say, but he believed the Chairman had one vote. If any hon. Member could show him that the Chairman of the Board had been guilty of these iniquities, he would bind him up in the bundle and burn him with the rest of the Guardians. Again, in one case a medical man, under a Board of Guardians, as medical relief, actually ordered a sewing machine. He asked the House seriously to consider whether this was the class of people which ought to be enfranchised for the purpose of making rates, seeing that so many of them paid no rates. Anyhow, the instances he had cited showed the kind of men who were now acting on Boards of Guardians, and the kind of people, also, who would be placed in authority by the present Bill. A system of local government which might do for England would not do for Ireland, because the circumstances of the two peoples were very different. Speaking on behalf of a large majority of a population of 60,000, nearly all of whom were engaged in agriculture, he assured the House that they would infinitely prefer that Parliament should cut them off, and let them take their chance in the *mêlée* that would ensue than hand them over to such a system as that, the iniquity of which would be that the vast majority who paid nothing would rule, and the small minority who paid almost everything would suffer.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): The particular remarks of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Sir Charles Lewis) appear to be either irrelevant, or are in the nature of a direct condemnation of the Bill. The general remarks of the hon. Gentleman were directed to a distinct proof that the people of Ireland were totally unfitted for an extension of local government. He has referred to their habits and methods of dealing with pecuniary transactions, and their unfitness for the discharge of such business; and, in fact, he has shown that, if he is right, those who formed the present Parliament, and who, nearly without exception, promised a liberal extension of local government to Ireland, were either absolutely ignorant on the subject on which they spoke, and absolutely incompetent to deal with it, or else that they practised on the electorate of this country a deliberate imposture. Look at the hon. Gentleman's particular observations. He referred to the Corporation of Limerick, and his remarks were totally irrelevant to the Bill. The Corporation of Limerick is in no way touched by the Bill. The hon. Gentleman is very indignant, not only with the Corporation of Limerick, but with all the Governments which have failed to enforce upon the Corporation what was undoubtedly a legal obligation, not, however, a legal obligation arising in the shape of a voluntary contract between two parties which they had refused to fulfil, but a legal obligation which was imposed upon them by Parliament. The Corporation did what we very much regretted, and undoubtedly it would have been our duty, as it would have been the duty of succeeding Governments, to make a levy upon the goods of the Corporation for the purpose of liquidating the debt, if we had thought that on public grounds it was expedient or prudent to do so. The opinion which we formed to the contrary effect was shared by our Successors, and the Corporation of Limerick remained masters of the field. The Irish nation, so far as I know, whether before or after the Legislative Union, might be open to the charge which the hon. Gentleman has just made against them of extravagance in the expenditure of money. But this I must say, that, so far as I have been able to trace the matter, they have never been open to the opposite charge of being parsimonious in payments where they ought to be paid. The Corporation of Limerick refused to pay the sum by way of trying the principle that was involved. The hon. Gentleman says that they had no legal right to do so. They certainly had not; but is that a thing totally unknown on this side of the Channel? What were the censures bestowed upon the Nonconformists of this country who refused to pay Church rates? I do not recollect any censures, but they were greatly glorified for their refusal. I am not going into the matter to justify or to condemn the refusal, but the act was deliberately done to try a public principle, and it had the effect of greatly accelerating the settlement of a great question in a manner which has been eminently beneficial to this country. The Society of Friends subsisted from the first upon the principle and upon the practice of refusing to fulfil certain legal obligations on the ground of conscience; but it is quite true that they never resisted a levy upon their goods. I never had the smallest idea, nor had my Colleagues, that the Corporation of Limerick intended to resist a levy upon their goods. My impression and belief always was that they would have submitted to a levy upon their goods without resistance. But the question was, What would have been the effect upon the public feeling and upon the general condition of Ireland? The case is exactly parallel in principle with what has been done on this side of the water, but as to the present Bill it has no relevancy whatever. The hon. Gentleman has referred to the case of the Westport Union, and I agree that it is a very instructive case. It showed the dreadfully demoralizing effect of the grant of public money. I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman himself objected to the grant of public money when it was before the House.

Sir CHARLES LEWIS: I did not object to the grant. I object to the expenditure.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am making no charge against the hon. Gentleman. It so happens that, upon the occasion I refer to, one hon. Member did object to this rather immoral grant, and I believe he objected to it in detail. That was the hon. Member who now represents East Mayo (Mr. John Dillon). What happened? The Board of Guardians, as the hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles Lewis) says, totally misconducted themselves, and he is quite right in saying that they bestowed a great deal of money in a manner that was not justifiable. That being so, one naturally inquires who were the Board of Guardians? Were they all elected men? No; a number of them were *ex officio* Guardians, and the part which they took in respect of this outrageous abuse was that they either concurred in it or they slunk from their duty and left others to abuse the money. Look at the extraordinary position in which the hon. Member places himself and us. Because a Board of Guardians, constituted and elected as it is, has abused its trust by a wanton waste of public money, therefore the hon. Gentleman exhorts us, on that account, to refuse a second reading to a Bill which would abolish that Board of Guardians, and would substitute for it another elective body upon conditions which we should have by-and-bye to consider. Surely, a more extraordinary argument I never heard. This is a question in which I must recognize that there are some difficulties, and having to balance and to choose between difficulties, I intend to vote for the Bill. In the first place, I am convinced, with regard to Ireland, if we are to do Ireland justice, the proper mode of infusing a just and prudent public spirit into the transaction of all public business is to commence not with local, but with central institutions. I do not wish now to detain the House on a matter I know there is not a disposition favourably to entertain, but it is my difficulty that I am compelled to approach these subjects in the order which I believe to be not recommended by public expediency. I go further, and say that, apart from the priority of central institutions, there ought to be a basis, in the sense of public responsibility, for the transaction of Irish affairs. If we are to establish County Government and County Councils in Ireland, we cannot expect that improved local government will produce its good effects in full until that greater operation has been performed which will provide a central point for all Irish institutions. There are clauses in the Bill for which, as they stand, I am not prepared to vote; but the question with which we are now concerned is whether we will abolish some governments in

Ireland which are not elective and provide elected governments in some cases where they have not been provided. There is much force in the objections which have been taken to the manner in which rates are paid in Ireland, and to the particular provisions as they stand in this Bill with respect to the levying and the paying of rates. I quite agree with that, and other important details would have to be carefully considered and amended in Committee. But I have now to consider what is the general position of Members of Parliament with respect to Local Government in Ireland. I have to consider that in 1881 a reform of local government in Ireland by local institutions was promised in the Speech from the Throne. When that promise was made, the amount of agrarian crime had reached about four times what it now is; and if imperfect social organization and disorder in Ireland be a reason for withholding Local Government from it, I can only say those who made that promise, of whom, speaking for myself, I was one, and occupied a prominent position, were extremely wrong, and those who received that promise without objecting to it—and there were no objections from any quarter—although they were not wrong in the same degree, unquestionably failed in their duty, if there was this glaring unfitness and fundamental incapacity in Ireland to discharge the duties and functions of Local Government. But that promise has been repeated from year to year and from time to time in every imaginable shape. I do not know that it has been repeated in Queen's Speeches; but it has only been omitted before 1886, because the urgency of other questions prevented it being repeated. If I come down to the General Election of 1886, when the pledge undoubtedly existed in full force, my Party did not promise Local Government to Ireland, because they promised something which exceeded and included Local Government. We promised them a Body which could have itself been capable of considering and bestowing Local Government. It is true that the majority of the English constituencies did not approve of the proposal; but what were the professions of those who came to Parliament to represent that majority. They objected throughout the Election, on high Imperial grounds, to the policy with which I have been associated; but they also indignantly repudiated, as a cruel and unwarranted imputation upon them, the idea that they intended to withhold better Local Government from Ireland. I have here a long list of names of Members of this House who were returned laden with pledges which no steps have been taken to fulfil; and during the last two years many similar declarations have been made. That list includes Messrs. Anstruther, Shaw Stewart, Baird, Hozier, and Sir Herbert Maxwell. Has anything been done to redeem that mass of promises? Is the state of Ireland to be pleaded for refusing to fulfil them? Three years ago we know the state of Ireland was so good that a Tory Government thought it totally unnecessary to propose a continuance of coercive laws, and, although they have proposed and passed coercive laws since, we know from the Chief Secretary and others that the effect of that has been to produce a great and solid, though not absolutely contented, people, and in improving the condition of Ireland. Where, then, is the reason for exempting Ireland from the extension of Local Government which you are now giving to England. It is in those circumstances that the measure for Ireland is brought forward. The Government have not thought fit to do anything in redemption of the pledges they gave to the majority who elected them. Had there been a Government measure before us or promised, I would have set aside this Bill, but the Government have given us no such promise. The Government cannot plead that the state of Ireland is worse than it was at the time of the General Election, but they declare that until Ireland foregoes her national aspirations, and is content to withdraw her claim for a central Government for Irish purposes in Dublin, no Local Government Bill shall be presented by this Government. I think it is indisputable that any man in these circumstances who, on this occasion, refuses to say, "I support the second reading of this Bill," becomes by implication a party to that declaration. Hon. Members opposite speak as if the Irish people were under a curse of nature and had been improperly invested with the civil franchise. I cannot afford to renounce even this opportunity, though a narrow and partial one, of asserting, by voting for the second reading, the principle that Irishmen are competent, like others, for the discharge of civil duties, and that if the present Parliament is, unhappily, unwilling to entertain the proposal to give them civil privilege in the larger and broader form in which they ask us, yet the minor boon at least we ought not to refuse, but ought to manifest our disposition to go some way, so far as our consciences permit, and our oaths bound us in fulfilling the pledges behind us, and to go forwards in satisfying the just demands and expectations of Ireland for an extension of her Local Government.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I should not have interposed in this debate at this stage, and it is doubtful if I would have taken part in it, if I did not think that I ought to make some observations in reply to the speech which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) has just addressed to us. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman naturally divides itself into two parts of very unequal importance and of very unequal length. The smaller and more insignificant part was devoted to discussing the merits of the Bill and its probable effect in Ireland. The second and larger part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech was devoted to an elaborate survey of the pledges made by himself and his opponents since 1881. That is a question to which I shall have to refer later, but if I might give a short summary and abstract of the right hon. Gentleman's argument under this head, I should put it in this way—"In 1881 I came into Office with an overwhelming majority and a united Party. In that year I promised local self-government to Ireland. I remained in Office in 1881, in 1882, in 1883, in 1884, and a large part of 1885. During that period the Irish Members brought forward, as they have done this afternoon, a Local Government Bill, and that Bill I caused my subordinates to reject. The Bill was accordingly thrown out. While I was in Office with that overwhelming majority I refused to give this measure of justice to Ireland, but now that my opponents are in Office, and I have the pleasure of criticizing, but not the responsibility of initiating, legislation, I think that every man who has ever given a pledge upon this subject ought to vote for the second reading of this Bill." The right hon. Gentleman has given his own interpretation of the Amendment which has been moved by my hon. Friend the Member for South Huntingdon (Mr. Smith Barry), and this was his translation of that Amendment—"Until Ireland foregoes her claim to separate self-government, local self-government is never to be given to her." That is not the interpretation which I put upon the Amendment. The theories of those who hold what are called Home Rule convictions are political theories, and I, for one, will never be a party to refusing to Ireland any reform of her local institutions because people in Ireland hold one or other of two sets of political convictions, and I will show why I think it would be unfortunate to grant local reform at the present time. Different circumstances and different behaviour are essential before local self-government can be proposed with hope of success in that country, and the reasons which are against it cannot be described as political at all. It is curious that while there have been many speeches made upon this Bill, only one speech has dealt with the measure as it has been brought before us. The other speeches dealt with the general question of Local Government, and I am bound to say that I regard this Bill as an illustration of an extremely evil practice which is creeping into and gowing in this House. A private Member's Bill is now too often not a measure for carrying out a specific object, but an elaborate means of bringing forward an abstract Resolution. The House is asked Wednesday after Wednesday to vote for Bills that bristle with absurdities, that show that their framers never trouble themselves to become acquainted even with the elements of their measure. The Bill now under observation is a bad measure, badly drawn, one which bristles with absurdities, and will not bear a moment's examination, and shows that its authors have not made themselves acquainted with the problem with which they pretend to deal. That being the case, it is very difficult indeed to deal with its provisions. But it is not necessary to go at any length into the proposals of this Bill. Let me point out that there are several strange omissions, for which the draftsman of the Bill is responsible. He intends, for example, that the smaller unit for this local self-government shall be the Union, and that the larger unit shall be the county, but it never appears to have occurred to this gentleman that 60 out of 160 Unions in Ireland are in more than one county, and that some are in more than two counties, and there is no proposal for dividing the Unions, and no machinery for the arrangement of the difficulties that would arise in connection with the workhouses and other matters. Then the hon. and learned Member proposes, for the purposes of presentment, to abolish the barony, and that the duties of the barony shall be transferred to the Union, but there is no provision in the Bill for dealing with the debt of the barony. The baronies are often largely indebted, some of them owing money to the State, and some of them money in other quarters, and yet, as the Bill is constructed, there is no proposal for dealing with this important matter. So much for the drafting of the Bill. I now come to deal with a large question, and that is the question of the franchise which is proposed. The Bill attempts for the first time to make the franchise for local purposes a franchise having no reference whatever to the payment of rates and taxes. The franchise proposed by this Bill is not a rating franchise, but a Parliamentary franchise. There are large districts in Ireland where the majority of the occupiers are absolutely absolved from any form of taxation for any local purposes whatever. They do not, like compound householders in England, even pay rates indirectly; they are absolutely divorced from all responsibility in connection with local financial matters, and yet it is to these people the Bill proposes to hand over without reservation the government of the district, and to have financial control over the affairs of the different localities. Such is the measure which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian is prepared to vote for on the second reading. Much of this debate has turned naturally upon the actual working of local institutions in Ireland. Unless we take a critical survey of the actual effects of such local self-government as has been already permitted, we cannot estimate the probable results of its extension. The right hon. Gentleman opposite attacked my hon. Friend who spoke last on this side of the House, because he quoted instances of great abuse by the Guardians. The right hon. Gentleman then said, "Those Guardians are partly *ex officio* Guardians, and if the Guardians misbehave themselves, you cannot do better than to replace them." Will this argument bear a moment's examination and criticism? Does not everybody who has studied this question know that Local Government in Ireland is bad exactly in proportion as the *ex officio* element is thrust out of the work of it?—[*Cries of* "No." "The other way."]—The Grand Jury system is an absolutely indefensible system in theory, but it is a pure and economical system, and it was declared to be so in the Report of the Committee presided over by the O'Connor Don. Can anyone say that the Boards of Guardians, when the elected members have full control over their affairs, present a picture either of economy or of purity? [An hon. MEMBER: Yes.] Well, there are certainly facts of some importance which I could give the House upon the point, but I may briefly state that since 1871 the system of giving outdoor relief has about doubled in Ireland. An hon. Member who spoke in this debate advocated the extension of outdoor relief because it was the best system. Is there any hon. Member who will contend that this is a proper policy to pursue in regard to outdoor relief?

MR. FLYNN: My hon. Friend, who has left the House, said that outdoor relief had increased because indoor relief had diminished.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member said that the better system was the expelling, and that indoor relief was the worse. I say it is better, and the fact that outdoor relief has doubled is a very serious thing. Now I am in a position to give some formidable facts in regard to this increase in the granting of outdoor relief. But perhaps you will say that poverty is largely increasing in Ireland, and that it is to its increase that the increase of outdoor relief is due. Well, I find that in the period to which I am referring the savings bank deposits have increased fourfold. Outdoor relief has doubled itself within the same period, while the deposits have increased to that extent. The true interpretation of this phenomenon is that since 1881 the management of Poor Law affairs has been going from the *ex officio* members, and that there has been a gradual deterioration in consequence in the administration of poor relief throughout the country. But, said the right hon. Gentleman, the *ex officio* Guardians have slunk away from their duties. I do not deny that there is some truth in that accusation. I do not deny that they would have done well, not merely in the interests of the locality, but in their own interests, if, in spite of all obstacles thrown in their way, they had thought it their duty to remain at their post and regularly attend the meetings of the Boards of Guardians. But it must not be supposed that *ex officio* Guardians who do attend have a particularly pleasant time of it, or that the decency and order at such meetings are such as to encourage the attendance of anyone who is not absolutely obliged to go. I was amused at reading some time ago a newspaper report of a scene at a meeting of the Ballinasloe Board of Guardians last year. There was a free fight in this respectable body. Some dispute arose as to the signing of the minutes; the Chairman refused to sign them, and it ended in the chair being taken from under the Chairman, and general uproar, only quelled by the arrival of a sergeant of police and three constables, who came to restore law and order. That is a specimen of the manner in which local self-government is conducted in Ireland. But that is not the only case of the kind which has occurred at the same Board of Guardians. I read in *The Freeman's Journal* only a few days ago of another fight, in which a Mr. Reilly and a Mr. Gardner and a Mr. Bowler were concerned. Mr. Dillon and other Guardians took part in what was described as a regular riot; the Chairman was knocked under the table, and a head constable and seven men were called in to restore order. At the same Board of Guardians' meeting in the year 1881 it required only one sergeant and three police-constables to restore law and order in the Board room; but in 1888, to effect the same result, a head constable and seven constables had become necessary. It must be admitted than an *ex officio* Guardian who slinks away from a scene of that kind shows, at any rate, discretion, though he may show cowardice, and he ought not to be visited with condemnation of too unmitigated a character. I do not quarrel with the fact that those Boards of Guardians spend much time in passing strong, though not always grammatically worded, resolutions against me. That is a very innocent occupation, but it unhappily occupies time that might be devoted to more serious business. The consequence of mismanagement is that some Boards of Guardians are bankrupt and many of them are on the verge of bankruptcy. The business is managed in the most scandalous manner. My complaint, however, does not stop here. We all have reason to regret in England that politics enter into the composition of our Local Authorities. I have always thought that most undesirable; but the political Party organization is now so deeply ingrained that it cannot, I fear, be eradicated. But Party politics in England are very different to what they are in Ireland, and the means resorted to in order to obtain a majority are also very different. In Ireland in connection with all local affairs intimidation of every kind prevails. [An hon. MEMBER: On the part of the landlords.] Is there any hon. Member who supposes that there is any landlord in Ireland who has the power to intimidate the feeblest of human beings? The organization and intimidation of the National League are brought to bear, and I can quote a case in which a man was shot at in order to compel him to vote for the candidate of the National Party in local elections. [*Cries of* "No!"] Is that statement denied? [*Cries of* "Yes!"] Then I feel bound to give one case in support of the statement I have made. On March 28th last, two shots were fired through the door of a man named James M'Grath, in the County Kerry, and into the house of another man who lived quite near. Both of these men stated that they could assign no reason for the outrage save that they voted for a certain candidate at an election for Poor Law Guardians.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the bullets found in those houses corresponded with the bullets used by the Constabulary, and does he know the local newspapers have demanded an inquiry into the statement the right hon. Gentleman has just made?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course there has been an investigation into the whole case. These are some of the election arts which prevail at this moment over a not inconsiderable part of the country to which the right hon. Gentleman opposite is desirous instantly to give local self-government. There are other cases of intimidation. Boycotting is resorted to, and the pressure of the National League is exerted in order to secure a majority on these Boards of Guardians. Can there be any doubt that if additional powers were granted to these Boards the same illegitimate means would be used? I do not propose to enter into the cases of distressed Unions, which have been fully dealt with by my hon. Friend behind me. It is clear that they are instances of the grossest abuse of the ratepayers' money. If this was done in the green tree, what would be done in the dry? The case of the New Ross Guardians is also a very instructive one. Does the House remember what occurred? A landlord in the neighbourhood of New Ross had a difficulty with his agricultural tenants. The National League thought that his difficulties would be augmented if the tenants of his house property joined hands with the agricultural tenants.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Will you allow me to explain? The dispute was first of all with the house tenants.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The unfortunate house tenants were dragged in, though they had nothing to do with the original quarrel. They combined not to pay their rents, and they were in due course evicted. They went to the workhouse. A number of the Guardians, in absolute contravention of all the rules of the Local Government Board and of all sound principles of Poor Law relief, established a special ward of honour, in which these evicted tenants were lodged. They violated every rule of the Local Government Board, and treated with exceptional indulgence those who, in obedience to the National League, had refused to pay their rents. I hope the House will consider the moral of this. So long as the present state of things exists, what happened at New Ross would, if this Bill were passed, happen all over the country. I hope that this example will make the House pause before assenting to the view that in this particular Session, or at this particular period, a measure of local self-government ought to be given to Ireland. There is another set of circumstances which the House ought to keep in view. There was a special power given by the Labourers' Cottages Act to Boards of Guardians to provide labourers' cottages out of the rates, and in many cases the landlords have only been protected by the action of the Privy Council from having this power used by the Boards of Guardians for no other purpose than the direct oppression of individuals. Powers given by this House for a benevolent purpose were so twisted that they have been used as an instrument of torture and oppression to individuals who brought upon themselves the wrath of the National League. With a fact like that staring you in the face—and hon. Members opposite cannot deny its truth—with what safety can you hand over new and unlimited powers even to a worse electorate than that which now exists for the election of Boards of Guardians in Ireland? There is one observation which I should like to make at this period. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian talked in an airy manner of the Government bringing in a Bill on this subject. Does he suppose that the Government could possibly promise that they would bring in such a Bill this Session? Is not the supposition absolutely grotesque? We are pledged to pass a Local Government Bill for England. It is an enormous measure, and the House may be said to have hardly touched it as yet; at all events, it has not made an impression upon it, and it is impossible to say when it will. When we have dealt with that measure—omitting all other subjects—we shall have to deal with Local Government for Scotland. That is a much less thorny question and not at all so formidable as the question of Local Government for England; yet it will be a very formidable task, and will lead to very prolonged debate in this House. How, then, would it be possible for the Government to bring in a Local Government Bill for Ireland, if they were ever so anxious to do so, and how can you ask them to pledge themselves to the raw and ill-considered proposals laid on the Table by the hon. and learned Gentleman? I do not pretend to say that I am opposed to a measure of Local Government for Ireland solely from the impossibility of finding time for it. I will pass no such fraud upon the House. I will only say that at this moment such a Bill would be inopportune. We in this House are not, surely, going to sink to the level of those speculative politicians who are satisfied if they can obtain some similarity of institutions without considering whether the Government of the country would be improved or not thereby. We are not going to devote ourselves to the introduction of machinery without considering what results that machinery would produce. And this brings me to a point which was largely pressed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. He truly said that the desire of almost all the Gentlemen on his side of the House and of many on this side, as expressed at the last Election, was to put England and Ireland on an equality of legislative institutions. That desire, I am sure, existed in 1886, at the time of the Election. I have no reason to believe that it is in any way diminished at the present moment. I believe the desire which existed then exists now, and that everybody wishes that Ireland and England should be put upon a footing of absolute equality with regard to legislative enactments. But what is equality? Equality of treatment implies similarity of conditions. If you apply the same nutriment or medicine to different kinds of patients you will not get equality; you may do good or harm, but you will not get equality; and unquestionably there was not a single man who gave a pledge or expressed a desire for equal institutions in both countries who did not do so subject to the condition that similar institutions would produce similar results. Is there a man on that side who would say that he was prepared to vote for local institutions in England because they would do good, and for local institutions in Ireland because they would do harm? I think I have shown the House sufficient grounds for believing that that necessary similarity of conditions does not at this moment, at all events, exist. But if additional proof were required, I would appeal to the speech made earlier in the afternoon by the hon. Member for North Dublin. That hon. Gentleman made a long, and, I think, very violent speech, a great part of which had very little reference to the question. But he made one observation which, I think, most relevant; it was made when the right hon. Gentleman was not in the House. That observation was—"A state of warfare now prevails in Ireland, and every weapon is fair which can be used in that warfare."

MR. CLANCY: I did not say "every weapon" was fair.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman said, at all events, that a state of warfare exists in Ireland. If the hon. Gentleman contradicts me I will withdraw. He does not deny the latter part of the remark. Does the House think that a country in which a state of social warfare exists is one in which you ought to desire to make this gigantic social change? But I am not left to the unsupported testimony of the hon. Member for North Dublin. Will the House allow me to read a very short extract from *United Ireland* of March 31 this year? This is the quotation—

> "Coercion or no coercion, we will struggle with equal fierceness for Home Rule. We would unscrupulously use every position we can capture, board room or town hall, as a Home Rule fortress, and drive the enemy unsparingly off the ground. Let that be understood. The greatness and strength of the movement master all minor considerations."

The minor considerations, I suppose, of common honesty and common fairness. We have thus from an undoubted authority a full, explicit, and perfectly lucid statement of the exact purpose for which local self-government is sought by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Local self-government is sought in England in order that the people of England may administer with more efficiency their local affairs; local self-government is sought in Ireland in order that the Nationalist Party may unscrupulously use every position they can capture, whether the Board room or the Town Hall, to secure Home Rule. Can there be similarity, can there be equality, between the condition of a country such as the Nationalists wish to make Ireland, and the condition in which England is at the present moment? Is it not plain that they are seeking, not the improvement of local self-government, not an enlarged franchise for the better management of local affairs, but an instrument by which they may carry out a political and social revolution, the magnitude of which is not to be measured by the mere use of the words Home Rule? I hope I have explained to the House clearly the reasons which, in my opinion, make it at this moment inexpedient to carry out the reforms, not merely those suggested by the hon. and learned Gentleman, but similar reforms in the Local Government of Ireland as in England. But I am not one of those who think that the present condition of things need necessarily be of very long continuance. I do not believe that any society can long continue in the state of social warfare which now prevails in Ireland. I look forward not merely with hope but with something like confidence to the restoration of law and order and peace in Ireland. I look forward to a time when it shall not be the first object of the local politicians to carry out a system of oppression against unpopular landlords, or against those whom they are pleased to describe as the "national enemy." When that time comes—and I do not see why it should be long delayed—I shall be one of the first to aid, so far as I can, in carrying out that equality which we all desire to see, but which, as I have said, can only be carried out when there is some equality of conditions, and when it can be carried out with advantage to everybody in every direction. But I do ask and entreat this House not to give its sanction to a Bill to promote what is called a reform by hon. Gentlemen opposite—a reform which is not going to be used for purely local purposes, but for carrying out a social warfare of which those who are supporting the Bill pride themselves on being the champions.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): In all the now not inconsiderable number of years during which I have been in this House, I have never found myself placed in so difficult a position as I find myself placed at the present moment. The question of Local Government in Ireland is by no means a novelty. Parties have taken up different attitudes upon this question after long deliberation and much discussion, and the respective attitudes of those Parties cannot, I think, be lightly changed. I observed in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down a strong tendency to a course of opinion and policy which would not in my mind, if carried out, practically be at all in accordance with the attitude taken up upon Local Government in Ireland by what I believe is the vast majority of the Unionist Party. The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) must be aware, although he was not in the Cabinet at the time I am going to speak of, that at the very critical, the very anxious, and the very difficult moment at which Lord Salisbury's Government succeeded to power, they had within a comparatively brief period to decide upon what policy they would announce to Parliament as representing mainly the Tory Party, and to a great extent the whole of the Unionist Party, with regard to this question of Local Government in Ireland. All the circumstances upon which the Chief Secretary has enlarged this afternoon, or, at any rate, circumstances of a very similar character showing all the defects which exist at the present moment in popular institutions in Ireland, and showing all the dangers that might be anticipated from the extension of popular institutions or the establishment of new ones, were before the Government of Lord Salisbury at the time when they had to take a decision—a most momentous decision—with reference to this question. It has been supposed—and this supposition I have never before noticed, although it has been rather widely alluded to in the Press—that in the declaration which it was my duty to make at that Table in August, 1886, I was stating that which was much more my own opinion than the opinion of Her Majesty's Government. Sir, I think it right to say that that was not so in any degree whatever. The declaration which I made at that Table at that time was, as far as it related to Ireland, a written declaration. Every sentence of it—I might almost go as far as to say every word of it—represented the opinions of the Government, and had been submitted to and assented to by the Prime Minister himself, and by the Chief Secretary for Ireland of that day. More than that, that declaration I made with regard to Ireland, I recollect it as well as if I had made it yesterday, I made without one dissentient voice and without one dissentient murmur being raised among the hon. Gentlemen who belonged to the Tory Party. More than that, I was given to understand, in the plainest way, that the declaration of the Government thus made received the full and entire approval of the Leaders of the Unionist Party. Why am I anxious to dwell upon these matters? Well, it is because on this point, which I fear is likely to raise some difference of opinion before long, if it does not now, the idea of the Government at that time was that Local Government in Ireland, a certain just extension within reasonable limits, was to be looked upon as a remedy for all these great evils which have been alluded to by the Chief Secretary. I venture to say this, that if those who are on this side of the House will carry back their minds to the terrible struggle we had all to take part in and to fight in 1886—one in which I may, without egotism, claim to have borne no inconsiderable part—there is not a single Member of the Unionist Party who would under the stress of that struggle have stood up upon an English platform and taken up the line on the extension of Local Government in Ireland which has been assumed this afternoon by speakers representing the Unionist Party. I feel certain that there are none—["Oh, oh!"]—well, there may be a few. It fell to my lot to have to watch very closely the course of that Election and the attitude taken up by Members of the Tory Party at the time, and I do recollect that the pledges given by the Unionist Party were large and liberal, and were distinct and full, and that there was no reservation with regard to those pledges, with respect to all the defects pointed out this afternoon in the Irish character and Irish unfitness for Local Government. Nothing of the kind. We pledged ourselves that we would at the very earliest opportunity extend to Ireland the same amount of local liberty which we might give to England. I venture to say—and I do not care how much I am contradicted, or what the consequences may be—that that was the foundation of the Unionist Party; and I venture to say more—that that is the only platform on which you can resist Repeal. If you are going to the English people, relying merely upon the strength of your special executive powers—if you are going to preach to the English people that the Irish must for an indefinite time be looked upon as an inferior community—that they are in every respect unfit for the privileges which the English people themselves enjoy—then I tell you that you may retain that position for a time, but only for a time, and that the time will probably be a short one. I do not know whether I am justified in asserting that the Chief Secretary, in representing the policy of the Government on the Bill, wishes the House and the public to understand that the question of Local Government in Ireland is to be only dealt with when, in the opinion of the Government, the state of the country will be so tranquil or so orderly as to justify it. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes, that may be cheered; but that was not your position. The question here is, whether we are to understand that, in the event of Parliament settling the great principles of Local Government for England this year, they will be prepared next year, so far as circumstances will permit, to extend similar privileges to Ireland? The words I used in representing the Government at that Table were, that in approaching this momentous question of Local Government, we should do so with similarity, equality, and simultaneity, as far as the respective circumstances of the two countries would permit. The time has gone by altogether, and I will be content no longer to bear solely the responsibility of those words, in which I represented the policy of the Government, and I do not think that there would be a *boná fide* carrying out of the policy I then announced if Ireland is not to have Local Government until the state of order in that country is satisfactory to the Executive Government. The history of the question of Irish Local Government is somewhat interesting and remarkable; but we on this side of the House, who pride ourselves on being a progressive Party, must take care that we do not expose ourselves to a well-sustained indictment of reaction. I do not know whether the House will remember that the Tory Party have already dealt, or attempted to deal with, Local Government in Ireland. You must go back a great many years—I do not know whether that attempt is within the knowledge of the Chief Secretary or of any of his Colleagues, but it happens to be within my knowledge, because I have for many years closely followed the course of Irish affairs. But, is the Chief Secretary aware that, at a period of Irish history when the state of the country was in no respect better than it is now, the Tory Government proposed a Bill for the County Government of Ireland, and is he aware that, among its main provisions, it provided for the abolition of Grand Juries, and for the establishment of a representative Council, and that there was only this difference between that Bill and the Bill proposed to-day—that, under this Bill, the barony is to elect three representatives, under the former Bill the ratepayers were to elect two representatives and the Justices one? Who was the person who introduced that Bill into the House of Commons? It was that pure Representative of unbending Toryism, the Right Hon. James Lowther—[*laughter*]—without any exception I think and speak of the right hon. Gentleman with the highest respect as representing, in a special degree, the *ne plus ultra* of unadulterated Toryism. What I want to put to the House is this—what will be our position if, having in the year 1879, when the Tory Government was very differently situated to what it is now, proposed a Bill for the County Government of Ireland, we now, with a majority at our backs, decline to give to Ireland local privileges which we are willing to give to England, until we are satisfied that those local privileges will not be abused, and are equally satisfied that the state of the country is perfectly tranquil? It would have been impossible for me, having taken the line I have taken in the country, in this House, and in the position which I had the honour to occupy—it would have been impossible for me, consistently with common honesty, if I had sat still and allowed it to be supposed that I personally associated myself with the views which seem to have been expressed by the Chief Secretary and by certain Irish Members on this side of the House to-day. It often happens that I am asked to go down into the country to address audiences, and when I go down I never lose an opportunity of telling the people to the best of my ability that it is the intention of the Tory Party—the Unionist Party—to legislate largely and liberally for the removal of Irish grievances. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; but I claim a specific interpretation of that point. I look for a *bonâ fide* and a prompt interpretation, and though hon. Members do not in the least object to my winning applause at great mass meetings in the country, there seems to be a considerable difference when I carry these opinions to a practical conclusion before this House. At any rate, I have made my speech. I have declined to sit quietly under what I believe to be not only a departure from the original policy of the Government, but what is also, I think, a ruinous line to follow. If you give to the Irish the same liberties which you give to the English, and if you tell them that after you have settled the English principle, you will give to them the same or similar privileges, you will do much to mitigate the ill-feeling that has been introduced in recent years, and you will do much to wile away from the ranks of the right hon. Gentleman opposite many who are now following him because they despair, and not unreasonably despair, of getting from a Government on this side of the House the legislation which they desire. It is very well now for you to say you think that a General Election is far off, that your position is still a very strong one, and that nothing can hurt it. You may persist in an attitude which is a negation to Ireland of what are her rights; but the day will come when you will have to argue the question again before the English people, when you will have to point to the fact that the promises you made with regard to Local Government in Ireland have not been redeemed. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Obviously, if the Election comes next year, you would have to point that out; and nobody can tell when the Election may come. At any rate, you defeated the policy of Repeal which was advocated by the right hon. Gentleman opposite; but you defeated it only because the nation believed you would not withhold from Ireland, for one day longer than Parliamentary possiblity allowed, the same liberty which you claim for your own people. I shall certainly not vote for the Bill; but, viewing the interpretation which has been placed by the Chief Secretary on the Amendment, I cannot conscientiously consent to vote for the Amendment. Therefore, I shall be obliged to follow the most unpleasant course of taking no part in the Division; but I wish the House and those outside the House who may look upon me as at all responsible for Irish policy, to know that I adhere in their integrity, their fulness, and their distinctness to the pledges which I made at that Table as representing the Government of the Queen and the Unionist policy—that a large and liberal measure of Local Government would be meted out to Ireland without undue delay.

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): The time will only permit me to address one or two words to the House, and I wish to do so with reference to the important and useful contribution to the discussion that has just been made by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill). It has been a very important contribution, as all hon. Members will admit, and I think that it has also been a most useful contribution, for it seems to me to act as a corrective to some speeches which were delivered earlier in the debate, and which were too much of the *non possumus* order. I do not think that, in view of the pledges which have been given by hon. Members sitting in all parts of the House, we can adopt at this day the proposition that nothing whatever is to be done, or done within a reasonable period, to extend Local Government in Ireland. There are two issues at present before the House. The first is whether we shall accept the Bill which is before the House, and to which we are asked to give a second reading. As to that I have no hesitation. I shall vote against it with a light heart, and, unlike the noble Lord opposite, I shall have no hesitation in killing it by voting for the Amendment. I shall do so on two grounds—first, because the Bill is a bad Bill, and cannot possibly be worked; and, secondly, because it is absurd to suppose that in the same Session in which you deal with English Local Government you can also deal with Irish Local Government. No Government which ever contemplated dealing with either of these subjects thought that it would be possible to deal with them both in the same Session. But I should not vote against the Bill comfortably if I believed that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was intended to declare as the policy of the Government the indefinite postponement of the consideration of this question. [Mr. A. J. Balfour: Hear, hear!]

The right hon. Gentleman said the subject was, and must be, postponed for the moment, and he laid stress upon the words "for the moment." I can only say that it is in that sense that I vote against this Bill. If we are to deal with this debate as raising the abstract question whether or not Local Government in Ireland is a subject for urgent and prompt consideration by the Government, then undoubtedly I am in favour of the affirmative of that proposition. But my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) told the House that although he was going to vote for the Bill it was only on the balance of considerations and arguments. He told us that a wrong order would be pursued if Local Government in the sense of municipal government were dealt with before the question of the central self-government of Ireland was considered. For not perhaps exactly the same reasons, but certainly because I think that this is not a subject to which priority should be given, I should be sorry to pledge the Government to deal with this matter even of necessity in the next Session of Parliament. There is another Irish question of still greater importance in my mind than either central or local self-government, and that is the Land Question. Is it considered by some hon. Gentlemen opposite impossible safely to extend municipal government at the present time, in consequence of the aggravated state of the agrarian question? It has been pointed out that the Irish Local Authorities may job. That is not a sufficient objection. If they like to job, provided that they do so with their own money, I do not see why we should interfere with them. But the difficulty is that in the present state of affairs in Ireland the persons who direct these Irish Boards would be able to job with other persons' money and to confiscate other persons' property. But if there were established something like an identity of interests and equality of responsibility, such as would be established if you were able to carry through any great scheme of land purchase to transfer tenants into owners, then this objection would disappear, and the time would come to give Local Government to Ireland. I only rose in order to make clear my own position, and to assure the House that in voting against this Bill I certainly do not understand that I am voting for the indefinite postponement of this question.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I only wish to say one word upon a remark which fell from my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain). He was, I think, extremely and naturally anxious to vindicate the vote which he is about to give. My right hon. Friend said he interpreted the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) as meaning that Local Government would be taken in hand by the Government at the first moment. My right hon. Friend would be justified possibly in taking that declaration in the sense which he has, if we did not remember a declaration made not many nights ago by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith). I hope my right hon. Friend will read the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in the light of the declaration made by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, which is neither more nor less than an indefinite postponement of the question; because the right hon. Gentleman put the dots upon the i's of that declaration by another declaration which he made at some banquet or gathering, where he said—and it was a most remarkable announcement—

> "I am not ashamed to say that I will not be a party to any measure which will make the National League supreme in the District Councils in every county in Ireland."

The right hon. Gentleman does not repudiate that statement. If the right hon. Gentleman stands to that declaration, as I have no doubt he will, then the declaration made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is, in spite of the interpretation of my right hon. Friend, nothing more nor less than an indefinite postponement of the question.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I am distinctly challenged by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley). I say again, most distinctly, that the course which I advocated is a course absolutely consistent with the statement of my right hon. Friend. There is no engagement which I and the Government entered into from which we retire to the extent of a single tittle. With regard to the circumstances to which my noble Friend the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) referred, and which he may interpret somewhat differently, they will render it justifiable for any responsible Government to extend institutions to Ireland——

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) here interposed, and said: I move the closure.

Mr. W. H. SMITH resumed his seat.

Mr. PARNELL rose in his place, and claimed to move "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put accordingly, and *agreed to.*

Question accordingly put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House *divided:*—Ayes 195; Noes 282: Majority 87.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Asher, A.
Asquith, H. H.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, Sir G.
Ballantine, W. H. W.
Barbour, W. B.
Barclay, J. W.
Barran, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Bolton, J. C.
Bolton, T. D.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, Jacob
Broadhurst, H.
Brown, A. L.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Buxton, S. C.
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Causton, R. K.
Cavan, Earl of
Channing, F. A.
Clancy, J. J.
Cobb, H. P.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Commins, A.
Condon, T. J.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Craig, J.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Deasy, J.
Duff, R. W.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Finucane, J.
Firth, J. F. B.
Flower, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Foley, P. J.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Forster, Sir C.
Foster, Sir W. B.
Fowler, rt. hon. H. H.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fry, T.
Gardner, H. H.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Grey, Sir E.
Gully, W. C.
Harrington, E.
Harrington, T. C.
Harris, M.
Hayden, L. P.

Hayne, C. Seale-
Holden, I.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, hon. W. H.
Joicey, J.
Jordan, J.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kennedy, E. J.
Kenny, C. S.
Kenny, J. E.
Kilbride, D.
Labouchere, H.
Lalor, R.
Lane, W. J.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leahy, J.
Leake, R.
Lewis, T. P.
Lockwood, F.
Lyell, L.
Macdonald, W. A.
MacInnes, M.
M'Arthur, W. A.
M'Cartan, M.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Carthy, J. H.
M'Donald, P.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
M'Ewan, W.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
M'Lagan, P.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Mahony, P.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Mayne, T.
Menzies, R. S.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, rt. hn. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, right hon. J.
Morley, A.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Murphy, W. M.
Neville, R.
Newnes, G.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Doherty, J. E.
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Keefe, F.
Palmer, Sir C. M.
Parnell, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Pease, A. E.
Pickard, B.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Playfair, right hon. Sir L.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Provand, A. D.
Quinn, T.
Randell, D.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, R. T.
Reynolds, W. J.
Roberts, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Robinson, T.
Roe, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, J.
Rowlands, W. B.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Schwann, C. E.
Sheehan, J. D.
Sheil, E.
Simon, Sir J.
Slagg, J.
Smith, S.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Tanner, C. K.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Tuite, J.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Waddy, S. D.
Wallace, R.
Wardle, H.
Warmington, C. M.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Wayman, T.
Will, J. S.
Williamson, S.
Wilson, I.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodall, W.
Woodhead, J.

TELLERS.

Carew, J. L.
Illingworth, A.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Aird, J.
Allsopp, hon. P.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, Sir G. S.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Banes, Major G. E.
Baring, T. C.
Barnes, A.
Barry, A. H. S.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Bazley-White, J.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Beaumont, H. F.
Beckett, W.
Bective, Earl of
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, J. A.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Collings, J.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Compton, F.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cross, H. S.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Darling, C. J.
Davenport, H. T
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon, G.
Donkin, R. S.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Dugdale, J. S.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Ebrington, Viscount
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. J. F.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Elliot, G. W.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Elton, C. I.
Ewart, Sir W.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Farquharson, H. R.
Feilden, Lieut.-Gen. R. J.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Fielden, T.
Finch, G. H.
Finlay, R. B.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Gedge, S.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Granby, Marquess of
Gray, C. W.
Green, Sir E.
Grimston, Viscount
Gunter, Colonel R.
Hall, A. W.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hambro, Col C. J. T.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, E.
Hardcastle, F.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Heath, A. R.
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.

Hill, A. S.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holloway, G.
Hornby, W. H.
Howard, J.
Howorth, H. H.
Hubbard, hon. E.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes - Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir G.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
James, rt. hon. Sir H.
Jarvis, A. W.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenrick, W.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kenyon - Slaney, Col. W.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lees, E.
Legh, T. W.
Leighton, S.
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewis, Sir C. E.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lowther, J. W.
Lymington, Viscount
Macartney, W. G. E.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
Madden, D. H.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Maple, J. B.
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Matthews, rt. hn. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Mildmay, F. B.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
More, R. J.
Morrison, W.
Moss, R.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, hon. F.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Powell, F. S.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Richardson, T.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Rollit, Sir A. K.
Ross, A. H.
Rothschild, Baron F. J. de
Royden, T. B.
Russell, Sir G.
Salt, T.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Sellar, A. C.
Selwin - Ibbetson, rt. hon. Sir H. J.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Spencer, J. E.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stewart, M. J.
Stokes, G. G.
Sutherland, T.
Swetenham, E.
Talbot, J. G.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Thorburn, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Townsend, F.
Trotter, Col. H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vincent, Col. C. E. H.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
Weymouth, Viscount
Wharton, J. L.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wiggin, H.
Williams, A. J.
Williams, J. Powell-
Wilson, Sir S.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put.

Resolved, That this House, while prepared at the proper time to take into consideration any well-matured scheme for reform of Local Government in Ireland, is of opinion that at present it is not expedient to introduce large constitutional changes in that Country.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 26th April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment (Scotland) * (76).

Third Reading—Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment * (75), and *passed.*

Withdrawn—House of Lords (Constitution) * (51).

HOUSE OF LORDS (CONSTITUTION) BILL.—(No. 51.)

(*The Earl of Dunraven.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The Earl of DUNRAVEN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he had not taken upon himself with a light heart the grave responsibility of submitting a plan for the reform of that House. He approached the subject with an amount of anxiety he found it difficult to overcome—anxiety he could not have overcome but for two reasons; first, that he had to the best of his ability thought out this matter for many years; and, secondly, that he entertained hope, and even confidence, that the House, recognizing the difficulties before him, would make a liberal and considerate allowance for them. More than four years ago, in February, 1884, he first gathered together his views on this subject in print, in the shape of an article in *The Nineteenth Century.* Since then he had thought much, and had spoken and written a little, on the same theme; and now, finding his opinions to be practically unchanged, he ventured to put them forward for the consideration of that House and of the country from his place in Parliament. The subject would have been more easily dealt with in the shape of a Motion merely affirming the necessity of reform, or by Resolutions; but he believed he was best consulting the dignity and convenience of the House, and best recognizing the gravity of the subject, by placing before the House what he deemed necessary to be done as clearly and distinctly as he could concentrated in the clauses of a Bill. The Motion of his noble Friend (the Earl of Rosebery) brought forward just before the Easter Recess, supported and debated in an eloquent, statesmanlike, and prudent temper, was criticized particularly on the ground that it foreshadowed no plan of reform; that it embodied, in fact, nothing definite upon which a scheme could be erected; nothing which could be referred to a Committee. The course now taken was, at any rate, not open to that objection. The Bill which he should ask the House to read a second time contained a precise plan. Whether that plan in its details, or even in its principles, might win their Lordships' approval he could not say. He earnestly hoped it might. At least, he could show that it was an honest attempt at reformation, and introduced a practicable plan. The proposition that some change in the constitution of that House was called for by the circumstances in which they found themselves placed, and also by the voice of the nation, was, he thought, incontestable. Let them consider the position of the question. Public opinion, so far as it could be gathered from the Press, was strongly in favour of reform—public opinion of all kinds, but rather of a Tory than a Radical character. Not only his noble Friend opposite (the Earl of Rosebery), but the noble Earl (Earl Granville), who had so often filled the Office of Foreign Secretary, had pressed upon the House the necessity for reform. Several Members of Parliament had publicly set forth their views in the same direction. A prominent Member of the present Administration—Sir Michael Hicks-Beach—also joined strongly in the invitation addressed to them from so many quarters favourable to that institution to adapt themselves to the requirements of the time. The other night, when a Resolution for "mending or ending" the House of Lords was before the Commons, the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith)—a man of singularly prudent and cautious temper—said, without defending the present constitution of the House of Lords, what was looked for was the initiation of reform by the Chamber itself. How was that suggestion received by the noble Marquess the Leader of that House? Not, as he understood his speech, by anything in the nature of a *non possumus*, but, while reserving his judgment, by a strong expression of opinion that proposals of reform should be made in a concrete form—in fact, in the shape of a Bill. There was thus a consensus of opinion among all sections fo political thought, with the exception of merely Nihilistic and purely destructive Radicalism, that constructive reform was necessary; that, to use a common expression, "something must be done." "Something must be done" was too often a paraphrase for "nothing shall be done." He trusted that was not the opinion and temper of the House; but that the House meant that something really should be done. What was that something to be? That was the question. Fortunately, they were not left without "light and leading" as to what the main points of a good plan should be. Speaking in April, 1869, upon Earl Russell's Bill for the creation of a limited number of Life Peers, the present Prime Minister said—

> "A Peerage has a double function. It is a great honour conferred by the Crown, and it is also a membership of political Assembly. Now, in dealing with the Peerage and the modes by which it is recruited, it is not only our duty to consider what classes of persons are most worthy to receive the honours which the Crown desires to bestow, but we must consider also how we can best strengthen and make permanent the political Assembly in which we sit."

And again, in the same speech, the noble Marquess added—

> "It appears to me, however, that the deficiency which may be recognized in the constitution of the House of Lords has been imprinted upon it by lapse of time, and does not belong to its original constitution. That deficiency consists in this—that we want a larger infusion from those large classes among whom is to be found so much of the wealth and power of the country. We belong too much to one class, and the consequence is that with respect to a large number of questions we are all too much of one mind."

It is now nearly 20 years since the noble Marquess gave expression to these views. Less than four years ago he repeated them in this House. Speaking on the same subject in 1884, he said—

> "It is a misfortune that we have not persons of a faith different from that of the Church of England and Roman Catholics, and it is a still greater misfortune that we have not representatives of the industry and commerce of the country in very much larger numbers. There are, no doubt, many subjects with which we cannot deal as thoroughly and efficiently as we could desire, and the presence of such representatives would greatly assist our deliberations. Such men have been raised to Peerages from time to time . . . . . but they have always been exposed to the difficulty that in the second generation, if they remained in trade, the stability of their position was open to some doubt, and if they left trade, in the next generation they ceased to represent the industry on account of which they were created."

Those were weighty utterances. They appeared to him to indicate in strong relief four great facts for consideration. They emphasized the difference between a Peerage as conferring an honourable distinction and as conveying legislative functions. They showed that altered circumstances necessitated change in order to restore the House to its former position; that by an infusion of secular and religious representation was reform to be sought; and that by no amount of creation of Hereditary Peerages could that reform be brought about. Those four truths had been his guiding stars throughout. The principal fact was representation, and that was the foundation and groundwork of the Bill—representation of the Peerage and of the material interests of the nation and of the main phases of her religious life. Such of their Lordships as had read the Bill would have perceived that his medium of reform or engine for bringing it about was the creation of a body within the House styled "the representative section." This expression might be open to cavil. The section was not exclusively representative in the usual sense, as it contained what might be called *ex officio* Peers—that was to say, Peers of the Blood Royal, Spiritual Peers, Lords of Appeal in Ordinary, and a limited number of Life Peers. But the preponderating numerical strength would lie in the hereditary division composed of representatives of the British, Irish, and Scotch hereditary Peerage. To these elements he proposed to add Lords of Parliament representing the great interests of the country, to be recommended by County Councils, one for each county, whenever and as soon as those Councils were formed. He also added Representatives of religious denominations other than the Established Church, of science and letters, and of our Empire beyond the seas. Into this body the House—the Peerage as a Legislative Assembly—would be eventually and automatically absorbed. It was necessary, therefore, that it should from its inception contain the non-representative elements, Peers of the Blood Royal, Law Lords, and others to whom he had alluded. But as representation was not only the predominant characteristic, but far outweighed all other elements, he thought the term "representative sections" described it with greater accuracy and justice than any other. To this body the House would be able to delegate any and all business and functions which it thought fit. But even if the House did not see fit to do so, and he assumed that it did not, and this section became merely a nominal body for the time being, their Lordships would presently see that it was essential to the carrying out of his plan that it should be immediately formed. To the component parts of this section he would call attention later on. He proposed not to destroy the present character of the House and substitute elements of a representative nature, but to add representation to the essential characteristics of the House as at present constituted. Representation was the basis of modern government. It was, in his opinion, by representation, and by that alone, that that Chamber, in the altered conditions in which they were placed, could find those elements of strength and that power of inspiring confidence which would enable it to fulfil without dangerous friction the difficult, the increasingly difficult, duties it was called upon to perform. To strengthen that House was his one and only motive, and in doing so representation was his main guiding principle. But other great considerations also had influenced him in preparing this Bill—respect for the principle of heredity, for the sacredness of existing rights, and for the rights and prerogatives of the Crown. In one respect only did he touch the rights of the Crown—namely, by enacting that for the future Peers on creation should be entitled to a Writ of Summons only after election. This was not vital to the Bill, but was highly desirable in order to bring about rapidly that reduction in numbers which was one of the main objects of reform. And it must not be forgotten that he proposed to grant powers to the Crown not hitherto enjoyed. As to the hereditary principle, of one thing he was convinced—that whatever changes might be considered necessary the hereditary character of that Chamber must be retained. The nature of the case required it. The nation wished it. The people were filled with ineradicable affection and respect for the great institutions under which our country had grown so prosperous and great, together with an equally deep-rooted conviction that those institutions, in order to remain the same in reality, in practice, and results, amid the changing circumstances of national life, must be themselves subjected to timely and wholesome change. The essential characteristics of the House must be preserved, but it must be adapted to the requirements of the time. That was the essence of true Conservatism; reverence for the past, efficiency in the present, forethought for the future. That he believed to be the temper of the nation, and he wished to act up to it. He went further; he desired not only to maintain but to strengthen the hereditary principle. How could this be done? Only by preserving it in its best and strongest form, and by eliminating those elements that were, he thought, universally admitted to be a source of weakness to the House. As to existing rights, he interfered with none of them. He deprived no man of his right to sit and vote in that House. He might be too Conservative—superstitiously Conservative—on this point; that was a matter for their Lordships to decide. Personally, he was loath to touch existing privileges and legal rights. Broadly speaking, what he aimed at was this. That House had rested, and still rested mainly, upon a territorial basis. In it was recognized the great fact that the strength and fate of a nation were intimately bound up with the soil and everything appertaining to it. It existed largely on the assumption that possession of land and the training, duties, and responsibilities connected with it afforded the best school for a political life. And this House had amply justified the assumption. That characteristic should not be lost. He wished the House to contain the fittest Representatives of our territorial aristocracy. He wished it to contain something more. At one time agriculture was the one and only great interest and industry of the country. At one time the Established Church embraced the whole religious life of the nation. And a House composed of spiritual Peers and temporal territorial Peers was truly representative. But other gigantic interests and other forms of religious observance had grown up. That House now reflected an imperfect image, and to bring it back to what it once was—a true reflection of national, secular, and religious life—he desired to have those interests and those phases of religious thought represented as living, moving forces among us. Such was the outline of the objects and considerations influencing him in preparing the measure which he now submitted to the House. Before endeavouring to show how those objects were to be attained by discussing very briefly what was in the Bill, he should like, if the House would excuse the peculiarity of the process, to allude for one moment to what was not in the Bill. Two matters—the quorum and the functions, or rather want of functions, of the Lord Chancellor bore with disastrous weight upon the efficiency of that House. Anyone who had heard one noble Lord assuring empty Benches that he would not trouble the House to divide—an operation requiring personally applied vivisection—would realize the absurd insufficiency of the present quorum of three. He need not dilate on the point, and would only suggest that good results would ensue if it were raised for legislative purposes from three to 30. Nothing tended more to paralyze the energies of private Members than the absence of any authority to decide as to which of two or more noble Lords rising together was to have the privilege of addressing the House. It placed a man in a most invidious position. He had to decide three things; first, whether he himself was the more worthy to be heard—a question which he probably answered in the affirmative; secondly, whether the other noble Lord recognized that fact—a query probably requiring a negative reply; and, thirdly, whether, in the estimation of the

House, he was the more worthy of the two—a point somewhat difficult to determine. And all these knotty points must be settled in about two seconds by a noble Lord suffering grievous agitation at finding himself about to be delivered of a speech. The result was that many capable men were intimidated from taking part in debate; and that where the head of neither aspirant to fame was adorned by any official halo the victory remained not necessarily with the fittest, but, perhaps, with him whose nature partook most largely of a metallic character. Those were matters for adjustment by Standing Orders, and not by a Bill. He mentioned them now because obviously if that Bill, or anything like it, became law they would have to be attended to. He passed on to a more important matter—the condition of the Irish and Scotch Peerages. Irish Representative Peers were elected for life, with the result that only one phase of political opinion was represented among them. The Scotch Representatives were chosen for a Parliament; but, like the Irish Peers, not being elected under any system of minority representation the same evil existed in that case also. A great and crying injustice existed in this respect which should be redressed. The position of Scotch Peers was peculiar. If they failed to be elected for that House they could not get into Parliament at all. There were only three classes of Her Majesty's subjects who were debarred from taking any part in public life—criminals, lunatics, and non - Representative Scotch Peers. He was aware that the Scotch Peers deliberately accepted this strange companionship; but in mercy he thought they ought to be given an opportunity of reconsidering their decision. Moreover, the numerical proportion of representation required amendment in equity. Thirty-two Scotch Peers were represented by 16, so that each Peer represented just one other Peer; 90 Irish Peers were represented by 28—that was, one man represented about two. The British Peerage would, as proposed in the Bill, be represented by one for every three Peers, each Peer representing two others. He was of opinion that in a reformed and improved House of Lords the Scotch and Irish Peerage should for legislative purposes be amalgamated with the British Peerage; but he respectfully declined the task. Any interference with the *status quo* in regard to the Scotch and Irish Peerages would require clauses amending the Acts of Union of 1707 and 1801. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." Without claiming angelic origin, he confessed he feared to tread this ground, and he declined to qualify for the other class by incontinently rushing in. It was ground upon which angels, unless they happened also to be Prime Ministers, might well hesitate to advance. But if Her Majesty's Government would undertake to introduce the necessary clause he should be glad. The main provisions of the Bill suggested the means whereby the great and salutary principle of representation could be introduced. How was it to be applied? That was a difficult and crucial question on which he was left to his own devices. He found no guidance from the Prime Minister except that the principle could not be satisfied by creations of Hereditary Peerages. With that he agreed, and the House would agree. How, then, could it be done? By a large creation of Life Peerages? He thought not. The House of Lords could not be reformed in that way. Objections recognized in the case of Hereditary Peers affected Life Peerages also. Peers created for life to represent special trade interests must, in the nature of things, cease to fulfil the objects of their creation. A large creation of Life Peerages, giving the unfettered power of nomination to the Crown—that was to say, to the Prime Minister of the day — would simply be opening the doors of the House to a number of Members of Parliament who had served their Party at the polls or in the Division Lobbies of the House of Commons. Their accession would only tend to deprive the House of one of its best attributes—independence. There remained, then, as far as he could see, only one other method — representation by election—and that was the method he had adopted in the Bill. The most important provision in the Bill was the application of the principle of representation by election to the hereditary British Peerage. This, whether it be good or bad, constituted no new departure, seeing that it already applied to the Peerages of Scotland and Ireland. His object in extending this principle to the British Peerage was two-fold. The efficiency of Second Chambers appeared to be in inverse proportion to the number of their Members, the strongest being the smallest, as, for example, the Senate of the United States. It was advisable, therefore, to provide for a reduction in the numerical proportions of this House. That was his first object. The second and most important object was to perpetuate the hereditary principle in this Assembly. That could only be done by allowing that birth conferred a seat, but conferred it subject to one condition—*primâ facie* fitness. Taking the whole number of Hereditary Peers at 541, it would be impossible to find among an equal number of any other class in this or any other country so many men capable of exercising the duties of legislators, with credit to themselves and advantage to the State. But the intrinsic merit, the natural weight of their decisions, was unquestionably weakened by the existence of some among them who, it must be admitted, were devoid of any special fitness to rule. Men who took no interest in politics or in social questions, who did not pretend to do so, might have to decide great questions affecting the lives, properties, and welfare of many millions of men—men who would not be suffered to take a prominent part among their fellows in the ordinary affairs of life might upon the gravest concerns of the nation have a deciding voice. It might be argued that, though the evil existed, it was exaggerated. In one sense that might be so. The black sheep, as they had been styled, existing here as in every other flock, probably did not attend much to the Business of the House; neither did many others of their Lordships who were men of the most exemplary character. But both these classes of Members might affect the decisions of the House, and occasionally did so. Even the possibility of such intervention in the House caused scandal. It created prejudice, and he who would eliminate prejudice from politics calculated on human action without reference to human nature. If territorial influence was to remain a living force in our system, if the hereditary principle was to last among us, it must be purged from a scandal which, if it were not abated, would one day revolutionize the constitution of the House, which he wished to preserve. No man who had observed the signs of the times could fail to see wherein the danger lay. If the hereditary principle was to survive it must be respected; if it was to be respected, it must be relieved of this great disability and detriment. The principle of selection, of the survival of the fittest, must be brought into play. How was this to be brought about? There was but one plan that he could see, at once simple and efficacious. That was the election as proposed in the Bill, election by the Hereditary Peers of a certain number from among themselves to represent them. It was, of course, necessary that such a body should fairly represent all shades of political opinion, and that essential condition he believed he had secured in the Bill. In dealing with this subject he was confronted with many difficulties, and the inevitable three courses presented themselves. First, that the House should proceed at once to select a certain number, say 180, of its Representatives to sit and vote in the House. But that would disqualify those Peers not elected from sitting and voting in the House. Perhaps the House might be ready to make that sacrifice. In many a crisis the House of Lords had shown itself animated with the spirit of devotion to the public good, and if occasion arose he doubted not that the present House would be worthy of its historic fame. But although the idea of the immediate delegation commended itself for its simplicity, it would be an extreme step, and he thought it wiser to conform to the habits of the nation in proposing a gradual process leading ultimately to the desired result. It was also possible to propose that future Peers—that was to say, Peers on succession or creation—should be eligible for a seat, but should obtain it only on election. But in order to bring about any practical reform by this means within half-a-century or so, it would have been necessary to deprive future Peers of all possibility of obtaining seats by the election of their Peers until the existing Members of the House had been removed by death or resignation. They would have had the House getting smaller and smaller in numbers, composed of Peers getting older and older in years, until at last it consisted of a solitary survivor, literally a last of the Barons. Any scheme for recruiting the House by admitting a certain proportion of future Peers, say one in five to election, was open to innumerable difficulties, and especially that minority representation which had no place in the system. Most complicated machinery would have been required. It could not be worked equitably or automatically. The idea was impracticable. There remained a middle course, which he had adopted—namely, to create a body within the Peerage, which he had styled the hereditary section or division, to which a proportion of their numbers should be immediately elected by the whole body of the British Temporal Peers. This part of the representative section of the House would be elected for nine years, one-third going out for re-election every third year. Every present Peer, therefore, and every person obtaining a Peerage by inheritance or creation, would constantly have an opportunity of being elected to this hereditary division. It would make no practical difference to present Peers whether they were elected to it or not, unless the House, by Standing Orders, conferred special functions on this representative portion; but future Peers—that was, Peers of succession or creation—would obtain a seat in the House only by means of election to this body. Consequently in time, in the course of a few years, deaths and resignations would reduce the British Temporal Peerage, so far as legislative purposes were concerned, to this body of 180. By this means, and by no other that he could see, was it possible to bring about the end at which he aimed—namely, gradually to introduce the representative principle, gradually to reduce the numbers of the House, gradually to weed out those elements that were a source of weakness to the House and the State. In his opinion no system of service qualification would avail. It would be invidious to point out cases where it would not produce the desired result; that undesirable results might ensue was shown by the fact that such a system would have excluded the Duke of Argyll and Lord Rosebery. His proposition involved dissociating in the future a Peerage as an honourable distinction from a Peerage as necessarily conferring a seat, merely extending to British Peers the conditions attached to the Peerages of Ireland and Scotland. It was impossible that the Peerage as conferring honourable distinction could be maintained without, at the same time, weakening the character of the House as a Legislative Assembly; for many men who were most worthy of the honour were not, and would not themselves pretend to be, specially qualified to make laws. The dignity of the whole Peerage could not fail to be increased by a change which should result in the fact that the Peerage, as a Legislative Body, would be composed of the very best and most highly-qualified Members of the whole class. Their Lordships need not fear he was unduly reducing the numbers of the House. He did not propose to bring it down to anything like its present working strength. According to his proposal the House would contain 224 Hereditary Peers—180 British and, as at present, 16 Scotch and 28 Irish Representatives—exclusive of County Council Peers, Bishops, Colonial Representatives, Peers of the Blood Royal, Life Peers, and Law Lords, or about double the number of those who now did all the legislation and Committee work of the House. Coming to the introduction of a non-hereditary element, in that case also, he maintained, there was no real innovation in principle. Irish and Scotch Peers could not transmit any right to sit in this House. The right rev. Prelates handed down to their children no hereditary right, any more than did the very distinguished lawyers who sat as Lords of Appeal in Ordinary. Between the Sovereign and the subject there was a great gulf, but that gulf was legislatively bridged over by the presence in Parliament of Princes of the Blood Royal. Between the aristocracy and the democracy there was socially no dividing line whatever; they merged imperceptibly one into the other. But, from a legislative point of view, an absolutely impassable gulf existed between the Peerage and the people. An anomaly existed in the Constitution in this respect that ought to be done away with. He proposed to associate these classes in legislation, as they were associated in the affairs of life, by granting seats in the House to persons accepted by the Crown on the recommendation of the new County Councils to be created under the Local Government Bill. The House of Commons tended to become more and more based upon the representation of numbers. He desired that the popularly-elected portion of the Upper House should rest upon a territorial basis, and should represent interests rather than people. Power to elect to this House might be given to such Bodies as Chambers of Commerce and Agriculture, the Iron and Steel Institute, and so on. But such a plan was open to the gravest objection. It was impossible to draw the line anywhere, and say which Bodies should and which should not be represented. The only other possible electorate consisted of the Councils of Counties and Councils of Counties of Towns and Cities to be created under the Bill before the other House. His object, further, was to secure for the decisions of that House the sanction which was enjoyed by institutions resting ultimately on some form of popular election. That could only be insured by directing into it a constant stream of representation—by insuring that in the event of a Lord of Parliament ceasing to represent an interest or locality, that interest or locality might put someone else in his place. By reason of their constitution the County Councils would represent every interest, urban and rural. They would be in themselves "a picture in little" of the commercial, industrial, and agricultural life of the nation. What he proposed was that they should be treated as electoral colleges for the purposes of this Bill, each being invited to send up a Representative, who need not necessarily be a member of the Council, to the House of Lords. That, as it appeared to him, would fulfil, and thoroughly fulfil, all the requirements of the case. The House would become truly representative; it would, in fact, revert to what it once was. If the County Government Bill was delayed, this Bill need not be affected. Representatives of County Boards could be added to the House as reconstituted in this Bill from time to time and at any time, and need not, for that matter, of necessity be added at all. Both in co-optative election by the Peers, and in recommendation by counties, he proposed that the term should be nine years, and, further, that out of each body so chosen one-third should go out for re-election every three years, so as to insure true representation, to guard against sudden changes, and at the same time to secure that the House should wisely and gradually adapt itself to the movements of the national judgment. He would admit that there was a domain to which it would be impossible, without great inconvenience, to apply the elective principle. It was impossible to invite elected Representatives from every one of the innumerable religious bodies in the country, but they might be represented with perfect fairness so far as the purposes of Parliament were concerned, for among Protestant Nonconformists there was a certain uniformity of interest, although their theological opinions differed widely. The Established Church only was represented in that House, and in any change note must be taken of the extent, importance, law-abiding character, and loyalty of the religious elements in the population outside the Established Church. They had proclaimed religious equality, and they must be prepared to act up to it. The Established Church alone was officially represented in that House. Roman Catholicism was indirectly represented, but that was an accident. Nonconformists had no representation of any kind—both being omissions which, according to the high authority of the Prime Minister, should be redressed. He, therefore, proposed that the Crown should have power to nominate two Representatives of Protestant Dissenters, and two in whom Roman Catholics would have confidence. The same principle of religious equality and the proposed reduction in numbers of Temporal Peers necessitated a reduction in the number of Bishops who were also Spiritual Peers. Here, also, election appeared to him impossible, for the simple reason that he could not find a satisfactory electorate. Election by the Bishops of a certain number from themselves would, he thought, interfere unduly with the position of certain among them, and without any special benefit resulting. The best plan, therefore, appeared to be to retain seats in the House in connection with certain superior Sees which were peculiar in their status and rights. Without interfering, therefore, with the rights of any existing occupants of the Episcopal Bench, he proposed that in future the Sees of Canterbury, York, London, Durham, and Winchester only should confer the right to sit and vote in the House. As to Colonial representation, that was a matter of the utmost moment, but of extreme delicacy and difficulty. He had always held that the future welfare of these Islands and of the Colonies was bound up with the unity of the Empire. In practical union for mutual assistance lay the best insurance for the Colonies against the possibility of aggressive tendencies that might be developed in foreign countries by continued pressure of population at home. The potential strength of this Empire, if it held together, would become so enormous as practically to insure immunity from attack. The commercial welfare of this country depended upon the development of the material resources of the Empire, and upon mutually amicable commercial relationships. Therefore, holding, as he did, that no object could be greater than that of endeavouring to consolidate the British Empire, he desired to do something towards securing some representation for our Colonies in Parliament. The sentiments of affection and acknowledgment of mutual advantages were strong between the Mother Country and the Colonies now; but every day the general drift must be either towards disintegration or towards a closer union. The Colonies and Dependencies of the Crown ought to have some voice in deliberations affecting them vitally; but the difficulties in the way of adequate representation were great. No direct representation was possible in the House of Commons, where finance and taxation were dealt with. The same objection applied to a less extent to that House. It would be impossible for direct Representatives of the Colonies to vote on other than Imperial matters. How were they to discriminate between Imperial and other subjects? They had it on the high authority of Mr. Gladstone to be beyond the "wit of man" to do so. Direct representation, therefore, he held to be impracticable—at any rate, for the present. It might be brought about by the formation of a Grand Committee or Council, to consist of Colonial Delegates and Members of both Houses of Parliament, and to which certain subjects might be referred at the will of both Houses of Parliament. But all that lay in the future. Difficulties also existed in the present condition of the Colonies themselves. Although population should not be considered in any scheme of Colonial representation, it would be somewhat out of proportion to give the same representation to Canada and to Newfoundland, or to the Federal Council of Australasia, and to any one of the Colonies not included in it. At first sight the immediate requirements of the case might appear to be satisfied by granting Peerages and seats to the Agents General during their term of office. That course commended itself to his noble Friend opposite (the Earl of Rosebery), but he ventured to suggest to him and to the House that it would be attended with many complications and difficulties. It would revolutionize the conduct of business at the Colonial Office. He did not think that the informal, and, for that reason, most useful interchange of ideas that now took place should be rendered impossible, as it would be if Secretaries of State and Agents General were to be confronted by each other in that House in the full publicity of debate. He doubted also whether the Agents General themselves would wish to have greatness thus thrust upon them, and he had still greater doubt whether the Colonies would approve of their undertaking these novel functions. He had, therefore, thought it, on the whole, best to leave this matter in a somewhat tentative or embryonic stage. A point of some delicacy remained to be touched upon—namely, the right of Peers to resign their seat in that House and their eligibility for election to the House of Commons. It appeared to him to be a great hardship that men should be compelled either to perform duties for which they had no liking, or lay themselves open to the charge of shirking their duties. Even a King could abdicate, but a Peer could not. Special circumstances might make it very desirable in a Peer to be able to resign his seat. The main function of an Upper House was said to be to insist upon the proper consideration of grave Constitutional measures; to prevent hasty and unconsidered legislation, but to give way to the well-considered opinions of the people. That might be so, and in many cases men might be perfectly ready to subordinate their own opinion. But in other cases they might not. How could men vote for a measure, or allow it to go by default, when their conscientious opinions were violently opposed to it? How could they, under such circumstances, retain the respect of their countrymen? Was it not fit and proper that men so situated should have the opportunity of retiring from Parliament, and so of relieving themselves from the dilemma of either provoking a serious breach between the two branches of the Legislature or of voting contrary to their convictions? He believed that this innovation would add greatly to the dignity and value of that House in the public estimation. It had always seemed to him a strange anomaly in a free country that the right of constituencies to return any Representative to the House of Commons whom they pleased should be limited. Equity and analogy demanded the admission of Peers to the House of Commons. Any Commoner could become a Peer by the natural process of creation by the Crown. Why should it be impossible for a Peer to become a Member of the other House through the natural process of election by the people? What possible objection could there be on the part of anyone who trusted the people who had confidence in the democracy? The exclusion of Peers from the House of Commons and their non-interference in elections had an object at one time. Such rules were obsolete now. Peers did sit in the Commons —Irish Peers, and very good Peers too, Castlereagh and Palmerston among them. Why should not the privilege be extended? At any rate, eligibility to the other House was the necessary corollary of limiting the right of Peers to sit in this House. They could not deprive any man of his natural right to serve his country in Parliament. It was necessary to the carrying out of the principles of this Bill, and he had provided for it, subject to limitations of an obviously necessary nature. On the other hand, there was a proposal in his Bill conferring on Cabinet Ministers, who were Members of the other House, the right to speak in this House upon subjects appertaining to their Departments, although, of course, they would not have the right to vote. It would be *ultra vires* upon his part to propose any alteration in the Rules or constitution of the House of Commons; but the right was intended to be reciprocal, and his own idea was that Cabinet Ministers should have a right to speak in either House. Two or three other points remained to be very briefly alluded to. As already stated, the House of Lords was not to be reformed by a large creation of Life Peerages; but a limited creation would be most beneficial. Many men eminently qualified to adorn a Senate were deterred from entering public life in this House by a reluctance to accept an Hereditary Peerage, which required the possession of great wealth. The creation of Life Peerages also had the advantage of checking the creation of Hereditary Peers, and the consequent numerical increase in the Peerage, and would tend to increase the estimation in which a Peerage, as an honourable distinction, was held. Their Lordships would observe that the Bill limited the number of those who could sit and vote to five in every Parliament. That would fairly cover the number of distinguished men deserving and desiring this distinction, and it was just one for every Parliament more than Earl Russell proposed when he undertook, with the acquiescence of the noble Earl (Earl Granville) who then represented the Government in this House, to deal with this subject. For these reasons he had sought to revive the ancient power of the Crown, and had not hesitated by a declaratory clause—in view of the great speech of Lord Lyndhurst, who led the House in opposition to Lord Palmerston's proposal to create Mr. Baron Parke a Life Peer—to grant a right to the Crown to create Peers for life, who should sit and vote in Parliament. As already stated, he believed that by election, and by election only, could the House be relieved from certain dangers that embarrassed it. But relief in that way must take time, and the danger was immediate. He would have nothing to do with any proposition for investing this House with arbitrary power to deprive any man of his rights. That could only be done by recognized process of law. He held it would be altogether absurd for this House to exercise anything in the shape of a moral censorship. But he saw no reason why this House should not be armed with powers similar to those wielded by every other Legislative Assembly in the world for regulating the attendance of its Members. The House might frame any Rules it thought fit. Why did it not do so? Because it could give them no sanction; it could impose no penalty upon their infraction.

He proposed to remedy this defect by enacting that if the House chose to make Rules regulating the attendance of Members it might, in the event of those Rules being violated, present an Address to the Crown, praying for the withholding or suspension of a Writ of Summons to Parliament in respect of the offending Member for such time as the House might suggest, and that the Crown might, if it thought fit, suspend or withhold the Writ by Order in Council. The provision with regard to the representation of learning and science contemplated the introduction into this Chamber, not only of distinguished men of letters and science, for whom in this country there was no special distinction, but particularly of men who had made science, with reference to the public health, a special study. The whole tenour of his proposals showed that he would guard existing rights, and it went without saying that there was no intention of interfering with the right of Peers of the Blood Royal to sit in that House. Such was the explanation he had to give. The few points remaining untouched required no comment on his part. He had gone through the Bill. He had done so as shortly as he could, and he was conscious that he had left much unsaid, and had done but scant justice to his cause. The House, reconstituted as he proposed, would be a composite Body. It was a composite Body now. It contained Peers sitting by hereditary right, by right of election for life, by right of election for the life of a Parliament, of Peers in virtue of their legal functions, of Spiritual Peers, some sitting by seniority, others in respect of their Sees. The reformed House would contain precisely the same elements, with one addition. The one novelty of the Bill consisted in the creation of Lords of Parliament, through the medium of the County Councils. That House resembled waters placid, profound, but stagnant. It required the breath of popular opinion to ruffle the surface, and to give it life and sparkle, and to confer vitality on its depths. He knew no other or better way whereby the vitalizing spirit of representation, so eulogized by the Prime Minister, could be conferred upon the House. If a better could be found, he should hasten to adopt it. He asked for criticism. He did not shrink from objections conceived in a liberal spirit, though he did demur to the spirit which induced a noble Lord to move the rejection of the Bill before seeing it. What he dreaded was objection to any change whatever. He deprecated what might be called the "venerable structure" argument—the view that it was dangerous to touch so venerable an edifice. If that House was so rickety that it could not bear the touch of friendly hands, how could it stand the breath of popular opinion if once that breath became hostile? If it could not bear reform, they might be sure it was in danger of becoming a mere picturesque ruin—a romantic monument of the past. If, as he believed, its walls and entire structure were really strong, and that they rested on the solid foundation of popular respect, there could be no danger in such alterations as would fit it to become the habitation of the spirit and the genius of the nineteenth century. Were they to remain immutable while every other institution was, as it were, brought up to date? In reality, the unchangeableness of the House of Lords was upon the surface. It was the most ancient Assembly in the world. The direct and lineal descendant of the Saxon National Council; its record was in the traditions and glories of our history. And why? Because it had adapted itself to the developments of our history, passing safely through stages representing the dominance of feudalism, ecclesiasticism, and oligarchy. And what did he ask? Only that they should do now what the House of Lords had done hitherto; change to suit the progress of the times, only that they should broaden their basis, so as to admit the Representatives of religious belief and of those world-wide activities which were not in existence, or not reckoned with, when the House was constituted in its present form. A Chamber constituted as proposed by the Bill would be an epitome of all the great interests of the Empire, and of all the departments of national existence. Such a Chamber would be strong with wholesome, national, popular strength; and such strength was needed. The horizon of the Legislature was being enlarged through the delegation of some duties to County Governments. New problems would have to be dealt with; new and weightier responsibilities would be constantly imposed upon it. If they were to bear their fair share in these high duties, they ought to make sure of their own efficiency and capacity to do so. It might be argued that they would be only gathering strength for conflict with the other House. Why should they not be strong for co-operation? There was nothing more antecedently improbable than that there should be a struggle for supremacy between the House of Commons and a strong and well-ordered House of Lords. The House of Lords was not likely, under any circumstances, to forget its Constitutional duty. It was also argued that the House would become too weak if Peers were eligible for the House of Commons, because only those who failed in winning the coy affections of the constituencies would come to their Lordships' House. Such fears were purely chimerical, but they argued strongly for reform. If the opening of a door of escape was to be followed by a stampede of Members of the House, surely no other argument was needed to show that the House was in a perilous condition. He did not for a moment apprehend such an exodus of Peers. Besides, this branch of the Legislature would always offer many advantages over the other; and in proportion as the House increased in dignity and importance in the estimation of the country, so would a seat in it be coveted and appreciated. The strongest argument against the supposition that the House would become too strong or too weak lay in the fact that the Prime Minister foresaw the possibility of both those evils. The Prime Minister suggested the other day that reform might cause movement in two diametrically opposite directions; and if the acute intellect and immense sagacity of the Prime Minister failed to discern which of these two directions the movement would take, surely it was more than probable—in fact, fairly certain—that the real movement would lie in the direction of a safe middle course. He trusted their Lordships would deal with this Bill on its merits, and with no reference to the quarter from whence it sprang. The other day his noble Friend upon the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss) evidently thought that as he was idle Satan had entered into him and possessed him with the idea of reforming the House of Lords; and the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) thought it was owing to his personal dissatisfaction with various localities in the House. There seemed to him more sense in choosing locality in reference to opinions than in regulating opinions according to locality. But what had his motives and actions to do with the value of the propositions he laid before the House? He trusted this measure might meet with their Lordships' approval, in principle, at any rate, if not in detail. If it did not, if their Lordships rejected the Bill, he entreated them at least not to reject the present opportunity for reform. Public opinion would not long tolerate the existing state of things. Reform must emanate from their Lordships' House, as was admitted by Mr. W. H. Smith. Reform must be undertaken by the Conservative Party, as was admitted by the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville). The Conservative Party were now in Office, and, humanly speaking, destined to remain there for some years. Owing to the fusion of Parties in the fierce heat of a great national danger, a close alliance existed between the Party in power and many of those generally opposed to it. No storm of popular indignation, genuine or spurious, beat against the House. The time was one of profound peace. Circumstances conspired together to render the moment favourable for the consideration of a grave Constitutional question. He prayed their Lordships not to let it pass; but, while occasion so singularly served, to take steps to relieve the House of all that was baneful to its worth and hurtful to its good name, to re-invest it with its former representative character, to give it strength to deal adequately with the great problems that were to come, to make it in every way worthy to be a branch of that Legislature that held in its hands the present welfare and future destinies of hundreds of millions of subjects of the Queen.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*The Earl of Dunraven.*)

Lord DENMAN said, he had to beg pardon of the noble Earl for having given Notice of opposition to his Bill before he had read it. The noble Earl who introduced the Bill appeared to him to wish rather to transform the House than to reform it. Lord Lyndhurst had proved that there was no Prerogative enabling the Sovereign to create Life Peers with a right to sit in their Lordships' House. He had advised the creation of Lords Wensleydale and Kingsdown as Hereditary Peers, and no Life Peers were made for 20 years. At present there were only three Law Lords, with a limited period of usefulness; but there were nine Hereditary Peers learned in the law. The Offices of Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in England and Ireland had needlessly been abolished. Lord Redesdale wished those Offices to confer *ex officio* Peerages; but if noble and learned Lords would accept them, they would correct the great evil of an over-large Queen's Bench Division, in which no one could tell when his cause could be tried. There should be separate lists for each Court. The late noble and learned Earl (Earl Cairns) had experience of a law suit, and so had the noble and learned Lord the Lord Chief Justice of England, and they must have felt the evil of uncertainty. The Bishops were to be reduced in number in their Lordships' House; but, if so, the duties of the few left as Spiritual Peers would be increased. In 1886, being in the Gallery of the House of Commons, he heard Mr. Lowe (since Viscount Sherbrooke) say that the effect of it would be to eject the Bishops from the House of Lords; but Mr. Coleridge (now Lord Coleridge) said the right hon. Gentleman wished to induce the Bishop of Winchester to restore Convocation to its full powers. The noble and learned Lord had a Notice to reject the Church Discipline Bill on the Minutes. Many great changes had already taken place in the constitution of the House, and he was quite sure their Lordships would regret it if they assented to the proposal to introduce a representative system. In his opinion, the Bill attempted a great deal too much, and proposed that which was impracticable. There was an ample reserve of debating power within that House, and, indeed, many excellent speakers deserved great credit for declining to occupy their Lordships' time unless it was absolutely necessary that they should do so. He should be sorry to see any system of election introduced into that House. Lords Kensington and Palmerston were never candidates for the honour of being Representative Peers for Ireland, and if Peers of the Realm who had failed to be selected were to appear in the House of Commons they would be treated with very little respect. If the harmony that had so long prevailed between the two Houses of Parliament had been temporarily disturbed it could very easily be re-established. In conclusion, he wished to remind the noble Lord of an epitaph on a tombstone in an old churchyard, which was to the effect that "I was well; I tried to be better; and here I am;" and he might add that the best portion of the National Anthem was that in which they prayed that Her Majesty might defend their laws, for they were good, and were worthy to remain unchanged.

The Earl of PEMBROKE said, that he was strongly in favour of a reform of the House of Lords, and strongly opposed to many of the proposals that were now current. The necessity for a strong Second Chamber had greatly increased of late years—in the first place, in consequence of the extension of the suffrage; in the second place, by the fact that, owing to the increase of Party organization in the constituencies destroying the independence of Members and Ministers having gradually come to be regarded as the people's rather than the King's, the House of Commons had ceased to be an efficient check upon the Government of the day; and, in the third place, the reform of procedure in the other House, which would undoubtedly enable a temporary majority to pass many measures of which the country might not really approve, and which it ought, therefore, to be given a chance of reconsidering. He did not believe that the House of Lords, as at present constituted, was strong enough in popular estimation to do its work efficiently, without causing an amount of irritation that would endanger its powers, if not its existence. They must remember that the hereditary principle, on which the House was chiefly constituted, was, of all others, the most distasteful to the democratic spirit that prevailed in our time. He supposed he should be reminded that in the last struggle between the Houses the House of Lords at least held its own. But they must not forget that the battle was never fought out, and that no one could tell what the result would have been if Mr. Gladstone had appealed to the country with a cry for the reform of the House of Lords. For it was not abolition that they had to fear. With our political institutions, a Second Chamber was an obvious and undeniable necessity. The danger was that in a fit of democratic passion the country might insist on a reform in the direction of curtailing the powers of that House to an extent that would make it too weak to be of much use as a Second Chamber. He held, therefore, that the object of any reform should be to strengthen the House in the estimation of the country without proportionately increasing the friction with the popular Chamber; and that the extent to which they intended to do this should be the test by which all proposals for reform should be tried. The proviso which he had stated was a very important one. They might construct a Second Chamber nearly as strong as the House of Commons; but if they did, the popular Chamber could never rest until it had crippled or destroyed it, so that its stability would be less than that of the present House of Lords. How did this Bill look when tried by such a test? He strongly protested against the provisions which enabled Peers to choose which House they would sit in. He was sure that such a scheme must greatly weaken the *personnel* of the House. Many of its most distinguished Members would never have been there at all if they had been able to remain in the House of Commons. Young Peers of ability would be the strongest and most acceptable candidates for the county divisions. When they were of any use the pressure put upon them by their constituencies to remain where they were would be stronger than they could resist, even when their personal inclinations pointed the other way. The result would be that, as a general rule, the strong men would stay in the Lower House and the weak ones would come there. It would be better to have no reform at all than to consent to a plan that would so seriously weaken the House. This proposal was a necessary consequence of the supposed necessity of reducing the number of the existing Peers under any reformed scheme. It was naturally felt that if they were going to deprive Peers of their seats they nust throw the House of Commons open to them. But let him ask what this necessity of reducing their numbers amounted to? So far as it was directed to reducing the preponderance of the hereditary element he had a certain amount of sympathy with it, though he thought the remedy worse than the evil. But they were told that unless that was done they would have such an unwieldy House. What was the meaning of that cuckoo cry that everyone seemed to repeat? What did the practical inconvenience amount to? They did not want to march the Peers all abreast through Piccadilly, and big Divisions in their Lordships' House were not so frequent that they need consider the time taken in passing through the Lobbies. If 200 Life Peers were added to their numbers they would be no larger than those of the House of Commons. But it was said they must cut down their numbers in order to exclude those Peers who took no part in their proceedings as a rule, but came up for big Divisions and swamped the working Members of the House by their votes. He admitted that it was a scandal that some of those Peers should vote, but the evil was commonly exaggerated. Without going into the merits of the country Peers, whose competency was generally underrated, he denied that in practice they did swamp the intelligent opinion of the House. How many important Divisions could be pointed to in recent years in which the issue would have been different if the last reserves from the country—"the Landsturm" of their Lordships' House—had not been called up on both sides? And if that was so, what did it matter whether a Division was won by 400 against 200 or 200 against 100? He did not believe that it told hardly, as was generally believed, against the opposite Party. It was the London quite as much as the country Peers who had come over to the Conservative side of the House. One of the most interesting sights on a big Division night was certain fossil Peers, if he might be allowed to call them so, on the other side of the House—interesting relics of a time when there was a Whig aristocracy—a happy time, when a large section of the upper classes found it possible to work in the ranks of the Liberal Party. But if it was, as he admitted, some scandal that such Peers should vote at all, it was not necessary to resort to such revolutionary methods as depriving Peers wholesale of their seats in order to prevent them, which reminded him of Charles Lamb's China-man burning his house down to roast his sucking-pigs. It might easily be done by rules making a certain minimum of attendance a necessary qualification for the right to vote; and he would remark, by the way, that such a rule would practically settle the difficulty of the "black sheep." By such a scheme all the difficulties and drawbacks that inevitably followed from any provision to exclude a large section of Peers would be avoided; for he wished to point out that any large reduction in their numbers would distinctly tend to weaken the House in popular estimation. He thought it was Mr. Morley who pointed out during the struggle in 1885 that the Peers individually were more popular than the House of Lords. He believed this was true. Most districts had their pet Peers, who brought home to them as nothing else could that a hereditary landowner might be a very proper person to have a seat in the Legislature. But it followed from this that a large number of Peers scattered over the country were a source of strength to the House of Lords, and that to cut down the House to a select body, of which great masses of the people knew nothing of any single Member, would be to weaken rather than strengthen the hold of the House upon the people. A good deal in this Bill was worthy of consideration, but its main proposal to appoint a Peer from each County Board was so premature, while its excision would necessitate such an entire redrafting of the Bill, that he felt that it could not pass in its present shape. This being so, he hoped he might be allowed, with the indulgence of the House, to give his views, as briefly as he could, of the lines on which a reform of this House should and should not proceed, always remembering that their object should be to strengthen the House in popular estimation without increasing friction. The thing that struck him most in considering this subject was the wonderful smoothness with which, on the whole, the House of Lords had performed its functions in the Constitution. In spite of its constitution being most repugnant to the political spirit of our time, in spite of the era of constant radical change that they had been passing through during this century, there had been wonderfully little serious collision between the House of Lords and the Representatives of the people. He did not think that most would-be reformers had devoted sufficient attention to this fact, and, consequently, they had failed to note one or two essential points in the nature of the House of Lords that had enabled it, in spite of all drawbacks and inefficiencies, to perform the duties of a Second Chamber so well. It seemed to him that two of the most important of these were, first, the fact that its constitution, and in a certain sense its duty did not clash with those of the House of Commons; and, secondly, the fact that its Members were responsible to no electorate, but to the nation as a whole alone. These two characteristics they must seek to preserve. On this ground he was opposed to all schemes for making it a representative in the sense of an elected House. Let him say, first, that if they introduced the elective element they must be prepared for its becoming a Representative Chamber altogether, for the elective and nominative elements would not harmonize. The former would always claim the superior authority, and eventually oust the other. It would say—"We represent so-and-so; you represent no one but yourselves;" and a Representative House would be worse fitted for a Second Chamber than the present House of Lords. It would not be nearly so easy for a House with an electorate behind it to yield gracefully to the Representatives of the people as it was for this House, which had nothing but its broad national duty to consider; and the House of Commons would be far more jealous of such an Assembly than it was of the present House, because it would regard it as trenching upon its own character and function of representation. Every dispute between them would be tried partly on the false issue of which really represented the better mind of the country. Nothing but harm could come of such a confusion of Constitutional functions. The House of Lords should claim to be representative of nothing but a large portion of the patriotism, good sense, talent, and independent opinion of the country, and the more of these they put into it by means of life and *ex officio* Peerages the better. On the same grounds he had no sympathy with any attempts to deal with the evil of the Conservative majority, on which the noble Earl who moved for a Committee on this subject before Easter laid so much stress. In the first place, any attempt to equalize Parties was futile, because Liberals became Tories nearly as fast as they could make them on coming into the independent atmosphere of this House. Secondly, it was mischievous, because it encouraged a wrong idea of what the spirit and functions of the House of Lords should be. This House should not be a place for constant Party contest and attempts to win Party victories in the Division Lobbies. They could not, of course, exclude altogether the spirit of Party; but it was certainly the peculiar duty of this House to take a national rather than a Party view of political questions, and for this purpose it was specially fitted by its constitution. Members of the House of Commons were returned as the Representatives of Parties in their constituencies, and their allegiance to Party was necessarily very strong. Members of the House of Lords sat as the representatives of no Party, and their chief duty was directed to the nation, to which alone they were responsible, and he wished to say that this ideal of what the spirit of the House of Lords should be was fulfilled in practice to a far greater extent than people were in the habit of thinking. Surely the noble Earl who moved for the Committee might have remembered that the long list of Liberal measures that had been passed during the present Reign, and which Liberals were so proud of, had all successfully run the gauntlet of the Conservative majority which the noble Lord regarded as so great an evil, and, in many cases, in their passage through this House had been improved rather than obstructed, as was the case with the Land Act of 1881, surely as distasteful a measure to the Tory majority as any that could be conceived. As a matter of fact there was never a Session when a Radical Government was in power that the Conservative majority did not put their Party prejudices and even their personal opinions into their pockets again and again. Their adversaries very often sneered at them on this very ground, but he said boldly that it was just this power of taking a broad national view of its political duty that fitted the House of Lords for its position as the Second Chamber of the country. He did not believe that any revolutionary reform would have the effect of strengthening their Lordships' House in the country, because any strength that might be gained in other directions would be more than counterbalanced by the loss of that strength which came from long prescription. It seemed to him absurd to believe that a brand new House of Lords, based upon any fancy franchise, would be more stable in a Constitutional struggle than the present House, which possessed that respect which always belonged to age, and which had proved both its right and its power to exist by seven centuries of trial. The only reform, therefore, that he wished to see was that the overwhelming preponderance of the hereditary elements should be qualified by a strong infusion of life and *ex officio* Peers. There were people who failed to see that there could be any middle course between condemning the hereditary principle altogether and approving the present composition of the House. Surely it was an intelligible view to hold that such men as the great hereditary landowners, brought up as most of them were with a greater sense of public duty than any other class in any other country in the world, might be very proper people to have seats in the Upper Chamber, and yet to hold that to have that House almost made up of such an element was intolerable in a democratic country like ours. It was objected to this plan that the life and *ex officio* Peers—say, 150 or 200 strong—would still be swamped by the Hereditary Peers, if the latter were allowed to remain in their present numbers. He did not think that anyone who knew the modest and retiring nature of the great bulk of the Hereditary Peers would be the least afraid that they would over-rule such an element either in fact or in appearance, either by their influence or by their votes. And if rules were adopted such as he advocated for obliging them to qualify by attendance for the right to vote there would be no danger whatever of this. It was absolutely necessary to institute Life Peerages if the *personnel* of the House was to be strengthened by the addition of able and distinguished men. For at present their selection was confined to those who were also rich. They could not make a poor man a Hereditary Peer, because his grandson without even wealth and social position to qualify him might be quite unfit for such a position, and thus some of the men who were most desirable were excluded. The noble Marquess at the head of the Government answered this argument in his speech on the noble Lord's (the Earl of Rosebery's) Motion by the remark that poor men were becoming less unwilling to accept Hereditary Peerages. He must say that this remark filled him with alarm. He could hardly imagine anything that would be more fatal to their Lordships' House than a body of Hereditary Peers, without even wealth and social position to recommend them in the absence of personal distinction, coming down from their homes in the suburbs, or, perhaps, begging half a day's holiday from their places of business, in order to record their votes in their Lordships' House against some decision of the other House. Patient as this country was of anomalies, he did not think they would long tolerate that. Then it was objected that men would think it beneath their dignity to accept Life Peerages instead of Hereditary ones. His answer was that he hoped the practice of creating new Hereditary Peerages would be greatly diminished if not altogether extinguished, and that when it came to be understood that Life Peerages were the reward of distinction and Hereditary Peerages the reward of successful money making, the former would come to be regarded as the higher honour of the two. But the most common objection to this scheme he advocated was that it would bring about all the dangers involved in a reconstruction of the House for a very small object. He denied both *in toto*. It would not involve those dangers, and the object was not a small one. Its chief merit was that there was no loss to set off against whatever strength it might add to the House. It would not excite the jealousy of the House of Commons, and there was no departure in it from existing lines. The principle of *ex officio* Peerages had already been admitted in the persons of the judicial Peers who had been such an addition to their Lordships' House. They had Life Peerages practically represented by several distinguished men, whose presence there was owing in part to their possessing no sons. When the reform was accomplished the House would be still what it had always been in theory and what it really was at its beginning—as assembly of the chief notables of the country. And yet he could not admit that the change would be insignificant. What he wanted to bring about was that when the ordinary citizen was asked by a foreigner how the House of Lords was constituted he should reply "Oh, it's in the main an assembly of all the great men in the country," instead of saying, as he would now, that it was chiefly composed of hereditary landowners and plutocrats. To call such a change in the popular view of that House a small one argued to him some lack of imagination. He earnestly hoped that if the Government could not allow this Bill to be sent to a Select Committee, they would give some pledge that if it were withdrawn they would deal with the question themselves. If they made the question their own they could construct a scheme which would avoid the numerous dangers that were involved in this question of reform, and they had plenty of strength to resist unwelcome alterations. The opportunity was a golden one, and might not recur. They could not strengthen the House of Lords when there was a Radical majority in the Commons. And the moment was one of profound peace. The agitation against the House was temporarily dormant, and they could reform themselves without interference or suspicion of weakness. Some would say that this was a reason for leaving things alone. He answered that it was only in time of peace that the House of Lords could be properly reformed. They could not do anything to strengthen it at a moment when there was a popular agitation against its powers. He believed it would be one of those mistakes which affected the destiny of nations if the present Parliament were allowed to pass away without such a reform of this House as would tend to insure the safe and smooth working of our Constitutional machinery for many a year to come.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he agreed most cordially with the words with which the noble Earl who had just sat down finished his speech. He thought it would be a great mistake if this Parliament were allowed to pass away without a reform in the House of Lords. He agreed entirely with the noble Lord who had just spoken that a reform of the House of Lords was most desirable. But some of the noble

Lord's arguments and even some of his conclusions appeared to him rather to point in the direction of leaving the House in its present condition. He would now adduce some reasons why the Government, if it could not accept all the provisions of the Bill, ought at least to allow it to be read a second time. The Bill embodied the first scheme of Constitutional reform that had been laid upon the Table of the House. He voted the other day for the Motion of the noble Earl below him, but at the same time he could not but admit that there was a good deal of force in the objection taken by the noble Marquess opposite, who said that, while he could not accede to any general proposition, such as that which had been laid before the House, he was perfectly prepared to give all due consideration to definite proposals for the reform of the House of Lords if they were made in the form of a Bill. For that reason he thought the noble Earl opposite took a wise course in preparing a Bill, and in submitting to their Lordships in a definite form proposals to which they ought, at any rate, to give full consideration. He knew that it had been said, and he dared say that it would be said again, that a Bill for the reform of the House of Lords ought to be brought in by the Government; but anyone who considered the question would probably conclude that it was very doubtful indeed whether that was necessarily the case. A Liberal Government could not hope to carry a Bill for the reform of the House of Lords. On the other hand, it would not be quite easy for a Conservative Government to carry such a measure, first, because it had many other Bills which it was naturally anxious to pass; and, secondly, because a considerable number of its supporters who did not perhaps interest themselves much in the Business of the House were opposed to any extensive reform of the House. He submitted that individual Peers were, in regard to the reform of the House of Lords, in a different position from that occupied by private Members of the other House of Parliament. The hereditary Members of their Lordships' House occupied a more independent position than members of the other House who might lose their seats at the next election. He thought they would all be of opinion that there was a general feeling in favour of a reform of the House of Lords. He was sure that that feeling was very strong among the Members of that House who attended to the Business and took part in the debates. He was also sure that that feeling prevailed in the country, and that there was a real desire for the improvement of that House, and not an angry demand for a fundamental change in its constitution. The present moment was, for that very reason, especially favourable for them to consider the question. He believed the country wished to stop the creation of an unlimited number of hereditary Legislators. That opinion was prevalent in Scotland, where that House was anything but unpopular. There was, however, a feeling in that country that important measures ought not to be liable to rejection by the votes of men who owed their seats in the House of Lords solely to the favour of the Crown, and who did not, as a rule, attend to the Business of the House. He contended that the present exclusively hereditary constitution of the House must break down by its own weight if it were not otherwise put an end to. The number of Peers was unlimited, as the noble Earl had told them. It was increasing very rapidly, and he wondered not that so many but that so few Peers were created. If one could get access to the pigeon-holes of the noble Marquess opposite, or knew all the secrets of the noble Earl on the Front Opposition Bench, a tale would be unfolded of requests ungratified which would exceed in number the sands of the seas. A strong argument for reform was the fact that so large a number of their Lordships took no part in the business of the debates of the House. Here was a House almost exclusively made up of landowners and persons interested in land. That being the case, one would have expected that a Bill dealing with railway rates would have commanded a large attendance. But when that Bill was in Committee only 132 out of 556 Peers were present. On the Motion of the noble Earl below him dealing with the same question as the House was now discussing only 147 Peers voted. On even the most interesting debates which had ever occurred —and he himself remembered no more striking instance than that on the Irish Church—the number scarcely attained

300. Moreover, the present hereditary constitution of the House would hereafter probably be a source of great political danger, because if on some occasion that House were to throw out a measure of first-rate importance, and the Government of the day were in consequence to appeal to the country, there would be great danger lest the appeal should turn, not on the measure so rejected by their Lordships, but upon the constitution of that House. Suppose, for example, that Mr. Gladstone's Bills in 1886 had been passed by the House of Commons, and brought up to that House, there was no doubt that their Lordships, whether acting as a Chamber of Review or from inclination, would almost unanimously have thrown out the Bill. If a Dissolution had followed such a course, was it not obvious that it would have turned much less on the merits of the rejected Bills than on the constitution of that House? The Bill, which he hoped would be read a second time, to a considerable extent preserved the hereditary principle. He did not wish to cry down that principle, but to see it modified in its application. Secondly, the Bill enabled Peers to sit and vote "elsewhere." The noble Earl said that the best men would never come to that House, but would go to the House of Commons, and he thought the noble Marquess had said the same thing. But was it absolutely certain that this would be so? He much doubted it. But if it were so the country would probably be all the better for it. In that House they wanted very little leading; ordinary good sense was enough. But in the House of Commons it was important that the ablest men should be present to defend measures which would have to be fought out chiefly in that House. It was not the duty of their Lordships to agree with the current of popular opinion. But they might insist on the country pronouncing its opinion, in which, when once expressed, it was their duty to acquiesce. He did not agree with the proposal in the Bill as to the creation of Life Peers, and thought it would not be wise to enact that there should be 10 for the Colonies, two for the Dissenters, two for the Roman Catholics, and so on. He would much prefer to leave the decision of the question to the Ministry of the day. The proposal to create Peers for a definite time was one which would have to be accepted in one form or another, although serious exception might be taken to it if the constitution of the House was to be settled on a permanent basis. It would be a good thing for the *personnel* of the House to be changed from time to time, and would enable it to keep in touch with the great industries of the country. Until they were more in touch with the country, the House would never command popular favour. For this reason he hoped that their Lordships would read the Bill a second time. No doubt, there were details to which objection might be taken; but if on this, the first occasion when a definite system of reform was placed before them, they were to throw out the Bill, their action would be thoroughly misunderstood in the country, and they would be playing into the hands of men who were opposed to a Second Chamber on the ground that it was an obstacle to the passing of measures which they promoted. All they had to consider was what changes would impart strength to the House and promote the good of the country; and their only duty was to promote reform which would give stability to the constitution of the House and increase the confidence of the country in it.

Earl COWPER said, that he agreed with the noble Earl who had just spoken that if the Bill were thrown out the public might think that those who voted against it were against all reform. He agreed with what the noble Earl had said about the House being in touch with the country; and he thought also that the general opinion—which he believed was much exaggerated—that it had so lost touch was more to be regretted than the fact itself. He also thought the present Government had an unexampled opportunity of dealing with this question if they had been willing to do so, and difficult though it was—and it was the more difficult the more it was looked at—he could not but regret that they had not held out some hope of initiating some improvements in the constitution of the House of Lords. The question was one for the responsible Government rather than a private Member to carry through, although, in his opinion, a Committee might, perhaps, have been useful in paving the way for reform. Probably the most important provision in the Bill was that for adding elected Peers to the Hereditary Peers, but while not suggesting that the principle of elected Peers was impossible to carry out in practice, he gravely doubted the wisdom of having elective Peers, sitting for the term of nine years, recommended by the proposed County Councils. Those were bodies which had not yet come into existence; and, even supposing they had, it was impossible to say what kind of bodies they would turn out to be. They did not know whether the best men would come forward for election to the County Councils, or what amount of popular confidence the Councils would draw to themselves, and therefore he was not prepared to delegate to those new bodies so important a function as the election of Members to this House. With regard to the plan of reducing by election the number of Hereditary Peers, he was aware that the idea met with a good deal of favour, yet he did not see the pressing necessity for such diminution, the attendance of Peers never being so overwhelming as to make the Assembly unmanageable. The only reason he could think of for reducing the number of Hereditary Peers was that by so reducing them, and by electing Life Peers in proportionate numbers, they might to a certain degree swamp the hereditary element by making the Assembly partly elective and partly non-elective. But this would require the nomination of Life Peers in very large numbers—a prospect which he could not contemplate with equanimity. Nor did he like the idea of picking out special representatives according to their religious views. The very suggestion was in these days an anomaly and an anachronism. His own view was that they should proceed to reform the constitution of the Chamber in a tentative way, making one or two small improvements with which everybody would agree. There was a general opinion that Life Peers in moderation would be a good thing, and also in favour of Colonial representation; and he believed that such simple changes, made in a tentative and gradual manner, would be useful and acceptable both to the House and the country.

The PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, I quite sympathize with my noble Friend who has just sat down in regretting that it is not possible for us to give a second reading to this Bill, so as to examine the whole question in Committee afterwards, which we might have done had the Bill been somewhat less extensive in its character. I had hoped that that course would have been possible for us; but it is idle to conceal from ourselves that the principle of the Bill consists in its most excessive changes. The two parts of the Bill which constitute its principle are the reduction of this House by the election of 180 of its number and the addition of some 130 Members elected by the County Councils and the great cities of this country. Now, my Lords, I am wholly unable to understand the advantage of the reduction of the number to 180. The noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Rosebery) again and again spoke of the necessity of reducing the numbers; but it seemed to me, when I was listening to him, that I must be dreaming. I have been a Member of this House for a great number of years, and I could count on my fingers the number of days on which it has been difficult to find a seat. What we have to complain of is rather a beggarly array of empty Benches. We have not to complain of overflowing attendance, or that our debates take up night after night, or any such symptoms of a plethoric House, and the remedy which the noble Earl proposes is the last one which I should have thought of applying to the complaint from which the House might be thought to suffer. It reminds me of the remedy of an exploded school of physicians, who used to bleed a man when he was suffering from either feverishness or weakness, and it is rather in the direction of too little than of too much that I should say the weakness of our constitution lies. Nor would it accomplish the object which my noble Friend behind me professed to seek. It would not exclude those whom we know as the black sheep. The House would be elected, I suppose, on the principles which guide elections everywhere else; and it would not always be the best or most virtuous who would find themselves among the 180. You would find people elected in consequence of great fortune, great name, or great connections, and some of these might form a portion of that ill-omened band to which reference has so frequently been made, and which, I suppose, still exists, though I have not the honour of its acquaintance. If you are to introduce any species of purification—a sort of Pride's Purge—if you are to get rid of a certain number of Members whose morality interferes with the higher morality of the House, I think you ought to turn your eyes to another defect to which Members of any House appointed for life must necessarily be subject, and that is the men—I know of none now, but there have been such on former occasions—who have continued their legislative functions after the decay of their intellects had set in, and whose presence was neither an ornament nor a credit to the Assembly to which they belonged. All this seems to me very hypothetical and hypercritical, for, as human nature goes, this House is as respectable a Body as any other Body which I know. But there are very serious objections to this election of Members. They have been referred to already, and I will not go at length into them; but it is undoubtedly the fact that if you allow those who are not elected to this House to sit in the House of Commons you will run this great danger—that your 180 will represent the weakest and not the strongest part of your Body. On the other hand, if you attempt to force men into the House of Lords by forbidding them to go into the House of Commons—if you make it true that only convicts, lunatics, and Peers are unable to gain admittance to either House of the Legislature—you will be inflicting an injustice which cannot be defended, which if you propose you will be unable pass, and if you pass you will be unable to maintain. Remember what our position is with respect to the House of Commons. We are excluded from two of the most essential and conspicuous powers which the House of Commons exercises. We have no voice in choosing the Executive Government or in determining how or on whom taxes shall be imposed, or how the taxes so raised shall be expended. These are two great disabilities. They are disabilities imposed on us at our birth. But the Constitution in exchange comes forward to the Peers and says—"In return for these great disabilities you shall have the great and conspicuous privilege of sitting in a Legislative Chamber without being elected, and have the same voice in dealing with all other laws as the elected Chamber." This bargain, if I may so call it, has come down to us with the tradition of ages. I shall not attempt to decide whether the bargain is for our advantage or not; it would be a very difficult question to decide; but if you take away the compensation and retribution which our Constitution gives; if you say to the Peers—"You shall be marked out; you alone shall not be allowed to have any share in the choice of the Executive Government by which you are to be ruled; you alone shall falsify the maxim that there shall be no taxation without representation; you shall pay taxes in the manner of imposing which you have neither vote nor voice, and for this we will give you no compensation; you shall simply have the choice of being elected to an Assembly to which these powers are not given by a constituency of some 400 men,"—I repeat the injustice would be so great that you could not make it a permanent part of your Constitution. You are, therefore, driven to this dilemma. If you make the House an elective body, choosing those who are to sit here, if you allow the residue to go to the House of Commons, you run the great danger that all who have had any practice in public life will sit in the House of Commons. I feel, therefore, that the proposal of the noble Earl, though to a certain extent it rests on an analogy with the arrangements in the case of Scotland and Ireland, is one which is not practicable. Now, my Lords, as to another proposal of my noble Friend, I think he can hardly be serious in suggesting it. We are setting up County Councils, which we are told are a great experiment. All kinds of different estimates have been formed as to their character, their power, and the work they will do. It is the great problem of the future in what manner they will be composed. Before they are even called into existence you are going to give to this unborn life the tremendous power of electing something like three-fifths of the Second Chamber of the Legislature. My Lords, it is difficult to understand the genesis of such an idea in any man's brain. I can only conclude that it has been suggested to his mind by the idea ever present in it of the Federal Senate in America. Here let me refer to a remark of the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) on the last occasion on which this subject was discussed, when he charged me with having said, "I wish we had a Senate here." I did not say that. What I said was, that I wished we had a state of things in which such a Senate was possible, that is to say, a state of things in which a Federal Constitution is possible, for that state of things is more favourable to good government than any other. But it is not a state of things you can command for yourselves or create by Act of Parliament. It is a stage, it is a phase in the growth of a community. At all events, you cannot command it here. You cannot sit down and write in an Act of Parliament that Kent and Lincoln shall be Sovereign States, and shall furnish their contributions to the Federal Assembly. We cannot make federations; they have consisted of agreements between so many independent States consenting to come together; it is a process of approximation, and not of division. That is the only account I can give of the origin of this strange idea. I am sure that if ever the elective element is used for the purpose of creating a Second Chamber, it will have to be found in some other way. But does the noble Earl believe that if half or two-thirds of the Chamber are made elective the rest would remain hereditary? It is an absolute change and revolution when, in place of the nomination of the Crown, which has hitherto given a right of sitting in this House, we substitute the right of election; and you may depend upon it that that new importation would soon destroy the old. Do not for a moment be misled by the idea that because there have been many reforms of the House of Commons therefore a reform of this kind is necessary for the House of Lords. I am repeating what I have said before, that it is not sufficiently recognized that all the reforms of the House of Commons have been within the confines of its original constitution with the idea of giving a more complete and literal meaning to the original theory upon which it is founded. But here you are proposing to make an entire change, and to abandon altogether the lines upon which this House was originally framed; you are abandoning the firm rock of experience and taking a plunge into the unknown. Have you the guidance of any other community to help you? Yes; you have one. There is one Body which my noble Friend seems to have had before him when he sat down to draw up this Bill. The Body whose power and vitality and permanence have apparently dazzled him is the present French Senate. The French Senate is framed very much on the lines which my noble Friend recommends. There are irremovable Members, the Life Peers, and other Members elected for 10 years by the Councils General of each Department—that is, exactly the County Councils of my noble Friend. What is the history of the French Senate? It was constituted in 1873; it was reformed in 1877 or 1878, and it is now the object of a revisionist movement. I do not wish to express any opinion on French politics; but, at all events, a very powerful party in France desires nothing better than already to sweep away this Body, on the model of which my noble Friend wishes to reform the House of Lords, which has lasted for many centuries. For these reasons I cannot think your Lordships ought to pass this Bill. I quite admit there are good features in it—for instance, the noble Lord's introduction of Life Peers, though I think, perhaps, its application would be too scanty. I must say that the Government, since resisting the Motion of the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Rosebery), have been considering this question; and, while very anxious to avoid the idea that they would undertake any great reform, they think that a measure for facilitating the entrance of Life Peers into this House is one which would be useful and which they ought to propose. Let us treat this question of Life Peers by itself. I am not quite sure that I am equal to the heroic measures of my noble Friend (the Earl of Pembroke), who thinks there should be a creation of 150 or 200 Life Peers. I hope if a Bill to create them should pass, my noble Friend will have the duty of selecting them. But, without professing at present to go the length of my noble Friend, I think that something might be done, and that we might make a beginning in that direction, and I shall be prepared to lay a Bill on the Table for that purpose. With respect to what may be called "the black sheep question," there is one peculiarity about this House which seems to want reforming. The House of Commons has the power of expelling a Member, but the House of Lords has not. I think the House of Lords ought to have that power; and when once we have got that power by Act of Parliament, it would be for us to determine, by consideration of the Standing Orders in Committee, the conditions under which we should exercise it. With respect to the question of a quorum, on which my noble Friend enlarged, and several other matters, I quite admit that our proceedings are open to criticism. I think it is probable that we shall ask the House to consider some of our Standing Orders in order to see whether any more advisable arrangements can be adopted. I make this statement because I am very anxious, like my noble Friend, that I should not be thought to imagine that this House has reached perfection, and that there is no room for improvement. I am anxious not to seem to adopt a *non possumus* attitude, and at the same time I am anxious to avoid the idea that a great, flaring, dramatic reform of the House is necessary. On the contrary, I think that by a cautious and tentative improvement we may remedy any defects which may exist, and confirm that strength which I believe this House has always possessed in the opinion of the country.

Earl GRANVILLE said, he was heartily glad to hear of any steps which should be taken in the direction of the creation of Life Peers to sit in that House. It was his firm belief that if, when the creation of Lord Wensleydale as a Life Peer was in question, the principle of Life Peerages had been accepted, it would have diverted very much of the attacks which were subsequently made on the House of Lords. He very much doubted whether at this moment a small Bill, merely deciding the question of Life Peers, however good it might be in itself, would be sufficient to settle a question of such Constitutional importance and to prevent further agitation on the subject. But, as far as it went, he heartily accepted the promise made by the noble Marquess on behalf of the Government that he would take a step in that direction.

The Earl of HARROWBY said, he hoped his noble Friend would, after the promise of the noble Marquess, withdraw his Motion. He could not himself accept the great changes which his noble Friend proposed; but, at the same time, he thought the House would be very ungrateful if it did not acknowledge the care, skill, and perseverance which his noble Friend had bestowed on the question.

The Earl of DUNRAVEN said, that after the speech of the Prime Minister it was obvious that he would better further the object he had in view if he were not to ask their Lordships to divide. His great desire was that the Government should take up the question, and he thought he should have a much better opportunity when the measure of the Government was proposed to improve the position of the House.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn:* Then the said Bill was (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

House adjourned at Eight o'clock, till
To-morrow, a quarter past
Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 26*th April*, 1888.

MINUTES.] — Public Bills — *Committee* — Customs and Inland Revenue [202]—R.P.

Committee—Report—Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment * [207]; Fishery Acts Amendment (Ireland) * [32].

QUESTIONS.

CRIMINAL LAW — SENTENCES OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

Mr. SALT (Stafford) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will approve the appointment of a Committee, either Parliamentary or Departmental, to consider the practicability (if sufficient evidence has not already been furnished) of an arrangement for the lapse, in all cases of capital punishment, of an interval of not less than seven days between the final announcement to the condemned man that the law must take its course and the day of execution?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): No, Sir; I am not prepared to recommend the appointment of such a Committee, as I am afraid the suggestion of my hon. Friend is impracticable. The Secretary of State could not refuse to receive representations in the convict's behalf up to the very last moment; and it would, therefore, be impossible to make any hard and fast rule as to what time should elapse between the final decision and the execution.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—RATHLIN ISLAND—COMMUNICATION WITH THE MAINLAND.

SIR CHARLES LEWIS (Antrim, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government is aware of the serious difficulties connected with social and business life endured by the 350 subjects of Her Majesty in Rathlin Island, situate in the County Antrim, about seven miles from the Giants' Causeway; whether the communication with the mainland is a matter of great danger and difficulty, especially in the winter, owing to the strong currents and tides running between the Island and main land, while the absence of any harbour not only aggravates that evil, but causes delay in the delivery of the mails, the mail boats being frequently obliged to return without delivery of the mails; whether he is aware that there is no resident medical man, and no little difficulty sometimes in providing one, owing to the danger and difficulty of communicating with the shore, while the fishing industry is seriously depressed by reason of these unfavourable conditions; and, whether the Government will secure the outlay of a moderate sum which would provide for the wants of the Island, in the construction of a sufficient fishery harbour?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries informed him that there was no sum available in their hands for providing for the work which had been suggested; and the Royal Commission on Public Works in Ireland did not, as he gathered, recommend this as one of the cases for expenditure.

INDIA—THE STATE OF HYDERABAD—CONCESSION OF MINING RIGHTS.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the consent of the Resident at Hyderabad, and of the Indian Government, was given in January, 1886, for 99 years, to the concession by the Nizam of all mining rights in the Deccan to Messrs. Watson and Stuart under the following conditions:—That they would promote a Company with a nominal capital of £1,000,000, but that not more than £150,000 should be first issued and £75,000 paid up, which sum was to be employed in working the coal-fields of Singiréni, and that the rest of the capital was only to be issued if it could be remuneratively employed in working other coal-fields or mines, or in building steel or iron works in the Deccan; and, if these were not the conditions, whether he can state what they were; whether the Concessionaires promoted a Company with a capital of £1,000,000, divided into 180,000 shares of £10, and, having issued at once the entire capital, allotted to themselves, to a Mr. Sharp, and to Mr. Winter, the solicitor of the Company, 85,000 shares, which were declared to be fully paid up, although nothing was paid on them; whether this was done with the approval of the British Resident at Hyderabad, or of the Indian Government; whether, in June last, one Abdul Huk, being in England as Jubilee Commissioner of the Nizam, purchased 10,000 shares for the Government of the Nizam at the price of £12 per share; and whether he is aware that it has been stated in *The Times* and other journals that the price of £12 per share was an artificial one caused by fictitious dealings between the Concessionaires and their nominees, and by eight brokers being sent into the Stock Exchange by Abdul Huk simultaneously to compete for shares, and that they were all, or almost all, bought in two blocks bearing consecutive numbers from one jobber; whether the Jubilee Commissioner telegraphed to Colonel Marshall, the British Secretary of the Nizam, on June 3, "Deccan's firmly held by public, therefore with greatest difficulty succeeded in purchasing" the shares in question; and that Colonel Marshall replied that this arrangement was "eminently satisfactory;" whether this arrangement is deemed satisfactory by the Indian Government, or by the Secretary of State for India; and, whether, in view of the above facts, and with the object of protecting the subjects of the Nizam from the loss of £850,000, and British investors from the loss of their money by investing in the "paper" shares of this Company under the impression that both its capital and the Stock Exchange operations connected with it were within the knowledge and had the approval of the Indian Government and Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, the Government will agree to the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the formation of the Company, the purchase of shares by an agent of the Nizam, and the approval of the purchase by Colonel Marshall; and to report whether there is sufficient cause for the Nizam to be advised to abrogate or modify the concession, and for the guilty parties, if fraud be proved, to be brought to justice?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Company in question was formed under a concession of His Highness the Nizam, which was approved by the Government of India, and little or no objection was raised to the wishes of the Nizam's Government to invest in the shares of the Company. The Secretary of State has no knowledge of the other circumstances alleged by the hon. Member. Colonel Marshall, whom he speaks of as a British Secretary, is not under the orders of the Government of India, and does not act as their agent in conducting the correspondence of the Nizam. Of course, the Secretary of State has no objection to any inquiry into the action of Her Majesty's Government, if, upon a Motion made in the ordinary way, the hon. Member can offer any *primâ facie* ground for believing that their conduct has been open to question. They do not think a Parliamentary inquiry would be desirable into the conduct of a Native Sovereign or his Ministers, for whose action in respect of matters of internal administration Her Majesty's Government are not responsible, and with which they are under a Treaty obligation not to interfere. If any request for inquiry upon the matter should reach the Government of India from the Nizam, of course the fullest assistance in their power will be given to him.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will allow me to say that I am not calling into account the conduct of the Government. But I would ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether he will afford me facilities for taking the sense of the House as to whether a Committee on this subject should be appointed. I wish inquiry to be made, not into the conduct of the Nizam or of the Government, but into the occurrences which took place in this country with regard to this Company under a species of guarantee by the Indian Government.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I may, perhaps, be allowed to inform him that I have had strong representations made to me from a leading Member of the Government of Hyderabad. I do not like to mention his name publicly, but he is a person occupying the highest possible position. He implored me to use any influence I may possess to protect the State of Hyderabad from a fraud of the most remarkable kind. Alluding to this matter under these circumstances, I hope the right hon. Gentleman will allow a Committee to be appointed to inquire into it without undue delay; because the loss threatened to the State is stated by my official informant as one of great magnitude.

MR. LABOUCHERE: If the right hon. Gentleman will grant me the facilities I ask for, I shall be perfectly ready to lay before the House what I believe to be a *primâ facie* case for inquiry.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): My hon. Friend (Sir John Gorst) has already stated that if a *primâ facie* case can be made out for an inquiry which Her Majesty's Government can properly institute, or for any inquiry which they can properly facilitate, the Government would be exceedingly glad to afford all possible assistance to the hon. Gentleman and to my noble Friend behind me for the purpose of accomplishing the object they have in view. The Government will welcome any assistance that can be obtained from any source in obtaining evidence that will expose "nefarious malpractices" in England.

Those are the words of the hon. Member. If the hon. Gentleman will, therefore, repeat his Question to-morrow, I will see if I can make an arrangement that will enable him to bring on a Motion in the usual way, at a time that will not unduly trespass upon the time of the House, in order to elicit the feeling of the House.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked, whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that there was a law prohibiting financial transactions between Native Princes and European subjects except with the sanction of the Government of India; and whether this transaction was initiated by the sanction, amounting to a positive sanction, of the Government of India to the transactions between the Nizam and the promoters of this Company?

SIR JOHN GORST: There is a law prohibiting the loan of money to Native Chiefs, but that law is not correctly described by the hon. Gentleman. With regard to the present transaction, it was not initiated by any sanction on the part of the Government of India.

BOARDS OF RIVER CONSERVATORS—THE CONFERENCE.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he can state when the results of the Conference, that was held at the Board of Trade on the 1st of February, 1887, of the Representatives of the Boards of River Conservators, under the Presidency of Lord Stanley of Preston, will be made public; and, whether, in consequence of that Conference, it is intended to give to Boards of Conservators the right to issue licences for river fishing?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): As I recently stated to the hon. Member for the Central Division of Sheffield (Colonel Howard Vincent), the Report of the Conference was printed and sent to the various Fishery Boards; and I do not think it would be worth while to go to the expense of further publication. As regards the latter part of the Question, Fishery Boards already have power to issue fishing licences for salmon, trout, and char; but no steps are at present being taken to extend their powers in this respect.

WAR OFFICE—CHARGES AGAINST AN OFFICER OF THE ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether grave charges have been brought against an officer of high rank in the Ordnance Department at Weedon; whether an inquiry has been made into the truth or otherwise of the charges; and, if so, whether the War Office gave an opportunity to the person making the charges to bring forward his evidence; whether that evidence was in any way sought or received; and, whether the officer in question is a gentleman who was recently the subject of severe strictures from the Daventry County Magistrates?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Charges were brought against one of the Ordnance Store officers at Weedon by a man who had been discharged from the Department under suspicious circumstances. The matter was referred to the General Officer Commanding, and Reports were received which satisfied me and the Commander-in-Chief that the charges were without foundation. It was not considered necessary to call upon the person who preferred the charges to produce his evidence. I have no knowledge of any proceedings before the Daventry County Magistrates.

MR. LABOUCHERE: If I submit a statement, will the right hon. Gentleman look into it?

MR. E. STANHOPE: Certainly, Sir.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS — PLEURO - PNEUMONIA IN DUBLIN.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true, as reported in *The Standard*, of the 21st instant, that 1,500 cattle have been condemned, and are now in process of slaughter in Dublin, for being in contact with others suffering from pleuro-pneumonia; whether careful note has been preserved of the date and period of the contact; and, whether the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council have taken steps to have an official examination made of the slaughtered animals, so as to obtain reliable information as to how many were actually affected with the disease, and in how many lung mischief had begun to appear without the veterinary surgeon being able to detect it during life?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): It is the case that between 1,400 and 1,500 cattle are in process of slaughter in Dublin as having been in contact with cattle affected with pleuro-pneumonia. A note is kept of the date and period of contact. The lungs of the slaughtered cattle are examined in every instance by Government Veterinary Inspectors, so as to ascertain how many were actually affected with disease, and whether they were old or recent cases which had not been detected during life.

Dr. FARQUHARSON: Is the same examination made in other parts of the United Kingdom?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Yes; it is.

MALTA — CHARGE AGAINST THE SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Secretary of State has approved the course taken by the Governor of Malta, in condoning the conduct of the Superintendent of Police, who admits that he made a payment out of the Government Secret Service Fund for the purpose of silencing, by a bribe, a newspaper which opposed the Government and supported the Opposition candidates at the elections to the Council of Government in February last?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Baron Henry de Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In answering the hon. Member I wish, in the first place, to remove a misconception to which the words of his Question might give rise. This was not a case of stopping opposition to the Government, there being no official candidates at the elections. There were two Parties contesting the unofficial seats, one of whom was called the "National Party," and the newspaper was attacking the candidates of this Party. Captain Casolani, fearing, as he says, a public disturbance, took the most improper course described in the Question; but it was not to silence opposition to the Government, who were absolutely neutral. On the matter becoming known, an inquiry was held, and explanations were called for from Captain Casolani, who had previously been obliged, from ill-health, to leave Malta. There is no dispute as to the facts, which Captain Casolani has admitted. The Governor did not condone Captain Casolani's conduct, but severely censured him, and ordered him to repay the £10. Looking to his good service for many years, and especially to the work he did during the recent epidemic of cholera, the Governor submitted that further punishment was not necessary. The Secretary of State has, under the circumstances, been disposed to think that Sir Lintorn Simmons's decision may be confirmed; but, having received a communication on the subject from Mr. Savona, one of the defeated candidates, he is again considering the question, and will await further explanations from the Governor before deciding whether Captain Casolani's conduct requires more severe notice than it has received.

WAR OFFICE (AUXILIARY FORCES)— INSTRUCTION IN FLAG SIGNALLING.

Colonel HAMBRO (Dorset, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War, What facilities, if any, are afforded to officers of the Yeomanry and Militia to learn flag signalling?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): As regards the Militia, no facilities are afforded. The regiments are out for so short a time that ordinary drill and musketry exercise require it all. For officers of Yeomanry and Volunteers it is proposed to form classes at certain stations, where they can be trained in signalling, on condition that the officers attending defray the cost of instruction and equipment.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION)—POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.

Mr. WODEHOUSE (Bath) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of the success of his Conversion Scheme, and having regard to the fact that the interest paid to the depositors in the Post Office Savings Banks added to the expenses of management makes the cost to the country more than £3 per cent, it is his intention to introduce a Bill reducing the rate of interest now paid to depositors in these banks?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Question assumes that the cost to the country of the deposits in Post Office Savings Banks is more than £3 per cent, including the expenses of management. But this is not so. The expenses of management are 11*s.* 5*d.* per cent; the interest paid to the depositors is at the average rate of £2 7*s.* 5*d.* per cent; so that the total cost to the country is £2 18*s.* 10*d.* per cent. The National Debt Commissioners will still be receiving, for another year, interest at the rate of 3 per cent on the depositors' money which they have invested in Consols and Reduced Three per Cent Stock, though future investments must, of course, be at the lower rate of interest. I do not, therefore, propose to introduce in the present Session a Bill affecting the interest paid to depositors, though, no doubt, some such step must be taken before long.

SAVINGS BANK ACT, 1887—THE REGULATIONS.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Postmaster General, When the Regulations under the Savings Bank Act of last Session will be laid upon the Table of the House, and at what date it is proposed that such Regulations shall come into force?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The Regulations as regards savings banks were settled by me, and transmitted to the Treasury on the 27th ultimo. The Regulations as regards investment in Stock and Insurance and Annuity Business have been approved by me and transmitted to the Treasury. Some slight alterations which have been suggested have also been approved, and the Regulations have again been sent to the Treasury. I hope that the three sets of Regulations will shortly be ready for presentation. They must remain on the Table of the House for 40 days before they can come into operation.

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS—THE ACT OF 1863.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Government will include in their forthcoming measure for regulating the interest payable to Trustee Banks such amendments of the Act of 1863 as shall give effect to the recommendations contained in the Report of the Commissioner appointed to investigate into the circumstances connected with the failure of the Cardiff Bank, and of the Registrar of Friendly Societies, as regards the use of the Government name by Trustee Banks; the maintenance of a proper audit; and the observance by Trustees and Managers of the legal limits of annual deposits, and of the maximum amount which can be deposited in such banks; whether the Government will consider what means can be devised for affording better security to depositors in Trustee Banks; and, whether some provision will be made for the more effectual and prompt enforcement of awards by the Registrar of Friendly Societies in favour of depositors in dispute with such banks?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Bill dealing with the interest payable to Trustee Savings Banks will be a purely financial measure, and will be confined to questions arising out of the conversion of the Debt. The administrative reforms to which the hon. Member's Question refers lie wholly outside the scope of such a measure. At the same time, the Government recognize that some of the recommendations contained in the Commissioner's Report deserve the most serious consideration with a view to further legislation; though it would be too optimistic to calculate on our having time to deal with them in the present Session. I may add that I trust that the degree to which public attention has been called to the case of the Cardiff Savings Bank may of itself act as a fresh stimulus to Trustees to discharge their responsible functions with the greatest vigilance.

MR HOWELL asked, whether some steps could not be taken to prevent the use of the Government name in such a way as to lure depositors into making deposits in these banks?

MR. GOSCHEN said, he did not think that could be done without fresh legislation. He hoped that the public attention which had been called to the matter would prove the best safeguard at present. He quite acknowledged the seriousness of the matter, which would have the most careful attention of the Government. If they could deal with it in the present Session they would do so; but he was anxious not to commit himself to a definite promise.

THE MAURITIUS—MARRIAGE AND ILLEGITIMACY.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If the Secretary of State will inquire further into the state of things in the Mauritius, under which the great majority of the children born of Indian parents are treated as legally illegitimate, and will endeavour to find a remedy for that state of things?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Baron Henry de Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Acting Governor will be requested, by the next mail, to report upon the points raised in this Question, and in that put to me by the hon. Member on Monday last.

POST OFFICE CONTRACTS—HALFPENNY POSTCARDS.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Postmaster General, What is the rate of the present contract for the manufacture of thick and thin halfpenny postcards respectively; and, who has the contract?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): The hon. Member is, no doubt, aware that it rests with the Inland Revenue Office to make arrangements for the manufacture and supply of stamps and postcards. According to the accounts furnished by the contractors, which, after being certified at the Inland Revenue Office, are sent to the Post Office for payment, the rates charged for cards are as follows:—Thin cards, cut, 4*s.* per 1,000; thin cards, in sheets of 42, 67*s.* 2*d.* per ream of 480 sheets; stout cards, cut, 12*s.* 6½*d.* per 1,000; stout cards, in sheets of 42, £12 per ream of 480 sheets; stout reply cards, 27*s.* per 1,000; thin reply cards, 8*s.* 6*d.* per 1,000; foreign postcards, 7*s.* per 1,000; foreign reply cards, 14*s.* per 1,000. These rates are subject to a discount of 10 per cent. The contractors are Messrs. De la Rue and Co., of Bunhill Row.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked, whether the charge to the public of 1*d.* per dozen for thin, and 2*d.* per dozen for stout cards, was not enormously in excess of the rate at which the cards were obtained?

Mr. RAIKES said, it did not appear to him to be an extraordinary profit over and above the profit of the contractors.

ADMIRALTY—H.M.S. "ANSON," "COLLINGWOOD," "CAMPERDOWN," AND "HOWE"—ARMAMENT.

Sir WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether it is the fact that Her Majesty's ships *Anson*, *Collingwood*, *Camperdown*, and *Howe* are practically completed for sea, but cannot be put in commission on account of there being no guns to put on board of them; if so, will the guns required for the armament of these ships be provided and put on board during the current year; if not, when is it expected that they will be; and, is it the fact also that the completion of the belted cruisers *Australia* and *Narcissus* is being delayed on account of their armament not yet being ready; and, if so, when will that armament be provided?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The *Collingwood* and the *Howe* are now waiting for their guns, which, according to the latest advice from the War Office, will be delivered in a month and five months respectively. The *Camperdown* and *Anson* are within a few months of their completion; but their heavy guns will not be delivered until the 31st of March, 1889. The *Australia* and *Narcissus* are also waiting for guns; but we are informed that they will be delivered in a month and three months respectively. This delay is not due to want of funds, but to a miscalculation on the part of the manufacturers (including the Royal Arsenal, Messrs. Armstrong, and Messrs. Whitworth) as to the date of completion, and to certain difficulties experienced in connection with the liners of the heavy guns. In that portion of my Official Memorandum, which I laid upon the Table of the House, relating to Naval Ordnance, I pointed out the extreme inconvenience of the delay already experienced in the delivery of guns, and the disarrangement of the shipbuilding programme which it entailed. Her Majesty's Government are now closely inquiring into the causes of the extra delay now brought to their notice; and they will be ready, so soon as they can complete their inquiry, to take such measures as will tend to remove or prevent for the future the causes of miscalculations in the past.

SIR CHARLES PALMER (Durham, Jarrow): Does the delay arise from the guns themselves, or from their linings?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: From the guns themselves.

ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the noble Lord, whether these vessels are among those upon which the country is relying, on the strength of official representations, as being ready within 48 hours in the case of a sudden outbreak of war?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Certainly not.

ADMIRAL MAYNE: Is not the *Collingwood* one of the ships in the First Reserve stated in the Mobilization Scheme to be ready at two or three days' notice?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: All the vessels now waiting for their guns are in a distinct class of the First Reserve, and would not be ready in 48 hours. The *Collingwood* is now armed with two 43-ton guns of a type similar to those on the *Colossus*, one of which burst some time back. The new guns are of a different make, and will be on board in a month.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked, whether the designs were not furnished at Woolwich? Did the fault lie with the contractor, or with the designs?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The Gun Factory is not under the Admiralty; and any Question of this kind should be addressed to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War.

MR. MUNDELLA: Perhaps, then, the right hon. Gentleman will answer it?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I think the right hon. Gentleman had better not ask the Question now. If he will put it on the Paper I will answer it.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—ARREARS OF RENT.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether he can state, by Provinces, how many of the 5,806 notices of eviction, filed up to the 31st of March last, are in respect of arrears of rent accrued before the year 1887? He hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would understand that the notices referred to were issued under the 7th section of the land Act of last year.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University), in reply, said, that in order to obtain the information sought for in this Question, it would be necessary to examine in detail the papers in each of the cases in which notices had been issued. This would obviously be a work of considerable time and labour; and he was not, therefore, in a position to afford the hon. Gentleman the information desired.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked, whether the House was to understand that the hon. and learned Gentleman refused to undertake that labour, or merely that he had not time?

MR. MADDEN said, he had been asked by the hon. Member to say whether he could give the information for which he asked. Of course, if any notice of a Return were put on the Paper in the usual way, it would be considered.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—LONDONDERRY CITY PETTY SESSIONS—BERNARD KERR.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Londonderry City) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whehe has yet instituted the further inquiry, which he promised on a former occasion, into the case of the boy Bernard Kerr, convicted at Londonderry City Petty Sessions, on the 29th of December last, of stealing some small pieces of pig-iron, and sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment and five years in a reformatory; whether the boy has been found to be of weak intellect; whether he is still in Derry gaol, in hospital; and, whether he is now prepared to recommend the remission of what remains of the sentence?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The medical officer of the prison reports that he has examined the juvenile offender referred to, and that he is not of weak intellect. At no time has he been under treatment in the prison hospital. He has been treated for bronchial asthma; and the medical officer has advised his remaining in the prison until the weather becomes sufficiently fine to admit of his undertaking the long journey to the reformatory. I do not see that these circumstances would afford grounds for recommending his discharge.

METALLIFEROUS MINES ACT, 1872—LEGISLATION.

Mr. AINSLIE (Lancashire, N. Lonsdale) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he can state the intentions of Her Majesty's Government as to their bringing in a Bill during the present Session to deal with the Metalliferous Mines Act of 1872; or, if not during this Session, then in the next?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): These Acts require to be amended in certain particulars; but there is no intention on the part of the Government to deal with them this Session. It would be premature to give any pledge for next Session.

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—THE DISTURBANCE AT ENNIS—COLONEL TURNER.

Mr. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has seen in *The Freeman's Journal* of Dublin the following telegram from District Inspector Hill from Ennis for "C. T." (Colonel Turner) to the District Inspector at Killaloe:—

> "To District Inspector, R.I.C., Killaloe.
>
> "Follow up successful police action of Sunday last, and permit no local League meetings to-day; disperse at once where force sufficient, and where insufficient note speeches and names of persons present.
>
> "Wire all details immediately. Wm. O'Brien arrested yesterday.
>
> "Hill, D.I., for C.T."

Whether this telegram was forwarded, as alleged, by the direction of Colonel Turner in the exercise of his own discretion, or at the instigation of the Executive Government; and whether he can state what was meant by the "successful police action on Sunday," and for what purpose the news that "William O'Brien arrested yesterday" was conveyed to the District Inspector at Killaloe?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The telegram referred to was neither forwarded by the direction of Colonel Turner, nor does it purport to have been. The successful action referred to was obviously the prevention of the proposed holding of illegal meetings. I am not aware for what purposes the arrest was notified.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Was the telegram forwarded at all?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Certainly; I believe it was.

INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT—PROMOTION.

Mr. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, for some time past, promotion in the Inland Revenue Department has been practically suspended, owing to the retention in the Service of a number of aged collectors, inspectors, and supervisors, and that, as a consequence, the official prospects of the junior officers are materially injured; and whether, as a remedy, and to cause that flow of promotion held out to candidates as an inducement to enter the Department, the Commissioners of Inland Revenue will call upon all officers of upwards of 40 years' service to retire on superannuation?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, that promotion in the Inland Revenue Department had not been suspended owing to the cause suggested in the Question. There were men who had served 40 years in the Department; but they could not be retired before they reached the age of 60, and they had not reached that age, and were still very efficient public servants. Promotion was now slack, in consequence of the abnormal promotion that occurred some time ago. In answer to the second paragraph of the hon. Member's Question, it would be sufficient to say that at the present moment there was nothing about which the House of Commons was more sensitive than the retirement of public officers on superannuation before the expiration of the ordinary term of service.

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—DISTURBANCE AT LETTERKENNY.

Mr. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether two policemen were charged with having broken the law and refusing to give their names when asked, at Letterkenny, on the 18th instant; whether Mr. Smith, who seemed to be in charge of the forces of the Crown, also refused to give his Christian name, after having been told such was needed to assist in the prosecution of the two policemen; and, whether he will state the grounds of Smith's refusal to furnish the prosecutors with his Christian name? In putting the Question, the hon. Member complained that half of the Question of which he had given Notice was omitted from the Paper; and desired to know whether the Chief Secretary was prepared to answer the full Question or not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am afraid I have no cognizance of the part of the Question which has been left out of the Paper, nor can I answer a Question of which I do not know the exact terms.

Mr. O'HANLON: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the remaining part?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the Question upon the Paper, the Inspector General of Constabulary reports that on the occasion in question a disorderly crowd, headed by a band, approached the police, who were drawn across the street to prevent bands from playing in proximity to the Letterkenny Court House, where a trial was proceeding. The names of the two policemen referred to were refused, as no charge was preferred against them. The names were subsequently given by direction of the County Inspector. They were charged with assault for having prevented their ranks from being broken through. Mr. Smith, Resident Magistrate, was in charge of the police. He was asked whether he had witnessed the alleged assault? He replied he had not seen any person assaulted. He mentioned who he was; that he was in charge of the police; and that any communication addressed to him at Letterkenny would be delivered to him, and that he saw no necessity to give his Christian name.

Mr. O'HANLON: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us now what Mr. Smith's Christian name really is?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know; but I understand he is the only Resident Magistrate of the name of Smith in Ireland, and he lives at Letterkenny.

Mr. O'HANLON: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us the reason for Mr. Smith's refusing his Christian name; and is it legal for any person to address a gentleman without his Christian name?

[No reply.]

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT—CONVICTION OF J. MAGUIRE AT SWORDS PETTY SESSIONS.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in May, 1885, the magistrates at Swords Petty Sessions, in the County of Dublin, convicted a man named John Maguire of two offences against the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, and fined him in the sum of £50 and costs with the alternative of two months' imprisonment; whether, on appeal to the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice, this decision was affirmed with costs; whether, owing to the impossibility of executing the judgment against his goods, a warrant was issued for the arrest of Maguire at the instance of the Balrothery Board of Guardians as the Local Authority; whether Maguire thereupon fled the country and remained away for a year; whether the warrant for his arrest was re-issued in March this year, he having meanwhile returned to the district of Swords; whether this warrant has been executed; and, if not, why; and, whether this John Maguire is one of the persons said to be specially protected by police in the County of Dublin?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The facts are substantially as stated. The execution of the warrant recently issued has been suspended, owing to the result of a Memorial addressed by Maguire to the Executive.

Mr. CLANCY: What is the date of the Memorial?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I do not know.

Subsequently,

MR. CLANCY said: Perhaps I may, Sir, be allowed to ask a Question with reference to the answer which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary gave in reference to this Question, and that is, whether any precedent whatever exists for refusing to execute the warrant in this case? This is a case of a man against whom a Bench of Magistrates in the first place, and the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice in the second place, have successively decided; and a warrant for his arrest was issued against him a second time on the 3rd of March, and from that time up to the present the warrant has not been executed, and we are now told that its execution has been suspended pending the consideration of a Memorial to the Lord Lieutenant. What I want to ask, Mr. Speaker, is whether any precedent whatever exists for refusing to execute the decree of a Court of Justice on such a ground?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman must give Notice of that Question.

MR. CLANCY: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will answer the last paragraph of the Question; whether this man is one of the persons said to be specially protected by the police?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir; I believe Maguire has been specially protected by the police, because he is Boycotted by the National League.

MR. CLANCY: May I ask the Postmaster General whether this Maguire is Postmaster of Swords?

[No reply.]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With reference to my answer, I may explain that Maguire has been under police protection; but I do not know if he is now.

MR. CLANCY: May I ask whether, in the case of a Boycotted man, the fact of his being under police protection is any reason why he should not be arrested according to a decree of a Court of Justice?

[No reply.]

WAR OFFICE—MANUFACTURING DEPARTMENTS—THE ACCOUNTS.

MR. BOORD (Greenwich) asked the Secretary of State of War, What amount has been included in the Estimates for the purpose of defraying the cost of the investigation of the accounts of the War Office Manufacturing Departments by the professional accountants who were appointed last year; what is the general nature of their Report; and, particularly, whether they have pronounced an opinion on the system of account hitherto adopted in those Departments, as to whether it has or has not shown the accurate cost to the country of the productions of the Government Factories at Woolwich and elsewhere?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The charge referred to will fall upon the Estimates of this House, and I have no information as to the amount involved. The Report of Messrs. Whinny and Waterhouse will be published in the Appendix to the Report of the Committee on the Army Estimates; and I would prefer that hon. Members should deduce their own conclusions as to the general nature of the Accountants' Report. With regard to their opinion on the system of account hitherto adopted in the Manufacturing Departments, I will make the following short quotation from their Report:—

> "The accounts of the Manufacturing Establishments are, as a rule, kept with care, and show, with as much accuracy as is needful, the cost of the articles manufactured."

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE SUB-POST OFFICE AT CARNDONAGH.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) (for Mr. O'DOHERTY) (Donegal, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Has the sub-post office at Carndonagh been filled yet; have the Treasury recommended one Devers for the office; is it a fact that Devers resisted and obstructed the Sheriff's officer in the execution of a writ against his goods, and that he has not yet settled with his creditors; and, had the insolvency of Devers anything to do with the delay in filling the office?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I have had some correspondence with the hon. Gentleman on this subject, and I was in hopes he had received the information which he asks for. Mr. Devers was nominated by the Treasury in December last; but upon hearing he was in pecuniary difficulties at that time I deferred acting on the nomination until I was informed he had settled with his creditors, and was considered to be solvent. I was not aware till the hon. Gentleman's Question that Devers had acted as alleged in the third paragraph of the Question; but I have directed inquiries to be made on this point, and he will not be placed in office until I am satisfied about this matter, and until he has obtained satisfactory security and entered into the usual bond.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—SERVICE OF REQUISITION FORMS.

Mr. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the practice observed by the Poor Law Unions in regard to the conveying of the requisition forms to the ratepayers; is it the practice in some of the Unions to send these forms through the post, and in others by the rate collectors; and, in how many Unions either mode is adopted?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am unable to give a definite reply to this Question; but I am aware that in some Unions at least—whether they be the majority or otherwise I cannot say—the practice exists of sending these forms through the post. To obtain precise information as to the general practice it would be necessary to call for Reports from each of the 162 Unions, and would take about a week or 10 days to complete.

Mr. H. CAMPBELL: How long would it take to obtain the precise information? Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that I put this Question down this day week; and that he refused to answer it on Friday, on the ground that he had not had sufficient time? I again put it down on Monday, and the right hon. Gentleman also refused to answer it for the same reason; and now he comes forward to-day and gives us practically no information. Are the telegraph wires not at his disposal; and is it impossible for him to get the information?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: This is not information to be got by telegraph.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked, if it was the practice in Unions to send these forms by post and hand?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is the practice in some Unions.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Having found that out, and being the Head of the Local Government Board, will the right hon. Gentleman cause inquiry to be made as to how many Unions this practice obtains in, and will he cause it to be discontinued?

[No reply.]

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, considering that every person who did not make a return in accordance with these forms was liable to a penalty of £2 for such omission, he would discontinue the practice of sending them by post?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was not aware that it was illegal; but if the hon. Gentleman desired he would obtain information as to the general practice in serving.

Mr. CLANCY: Did I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say the practice of sending them by post was illegal?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No.

Mr. CLANCY: May I ask that, considering there is a penalty of £2 for every omission to return the form to be filled up, will the right hon. Gentleman consider the propriety of the rate collectors distributing them by hand instead of sending them by post?

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the right hon. Gentleman, was he aware that, under the Representation of the People Act of 1884, the duty was cast on the Clerk of the Union to have these requisitions served, and a penalty was imposed for neglecting to perform the duty; and that by the Act of 1884 the rate collectors were obliged to assist the Clerks of the Unions in serving them; and if, under these circumstances, he would take steps to have these requisitions served in future by the rate collector instead of money being wasted?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot promise to take the action mentioned; but I can promise to look into the matter, if the hon. Gentleman will put a Question on the Paper.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—THE CHRIST'S HOSPITAL SCHEME.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, What action the

Education Department proposes to take with reference to the new scheme for Christ's Hospital, which was submitted for their approval by the Charity Commissioners more than two years ago?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford), in reply, said, the new scheme for Christ's Hospital involved most complicated considerations. He regretted as much as the hon. Member could the delay that had occurred with regard to this question; but he hoped shortly to be able to announce a decision upon it.

MR. BRYCE: Will the right hon. Gentleman be able to tell us anything upon the matter in the course of a month?

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE: I hope so.

WAR OFFICE (STORES, &c.)—SALE OF CONDEMNED ARMY AND MILITIA CLOTHING.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether tenders have recently been issued for the "purchase of condemned Army and Militia clothing in Great Britain and Ireland;" whether this clothing includes some 350 different kinds of articles, many of which each amount annually to tens of thousands in number, the blue tweed trousers of the Infantry alone being 140,000 annually, or 420,000 in the three years of the contract; whether the whole of this enormous quantity of clothing (with the possible exception of great-coats which may, if specially directed, be sold in a separate contract) is to be sold in one lot; whether it is to be sold in advance for three years ahead from the 1st of June, 1888; whether the system of selling for long periods in advance articles of which neither the quality nor the exact quantity can be known beforehand is found in practice to be economical; whether the system of selling enormous quantities in one lot is found to tend to limit competition, and also limit the prices which the Government might otherwise receive; and whether, before accepting any such tenders, he will consider the possible advantage of selling Government stores as they actually become condemned, in quantities which will admit of competition, and where possible in the neighbourhood of the various depôts, with a view to affording Volunteers and others, who now purchase from the contractor, an opportunity of purchasing at fair prices direct?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: The facts as stated in my hon. Friend's Question are correct. The business is a peculiar one. The Army has not storehouses where used clothing can be stored. To construct them and appoint the necessary storekeepers would involve heavy expense. The contractor is required to pay for, and remove, all such used clothing, whether worth removal or not, whenever called upon, from any Home Station. For this purpose it is found to be convenient, and believed to be economical, to have the whole transaction in the hands of one contractor, who can be held responsible for promptly carrying out the contract wherever action may be required.

MAURITIUS (FINANCE, &c.)—EDUCATION.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is the fact that the Revenue of the Mauritius is mainly derived from Customs and Licences, the chief part of which falls on the general population, of which more than two-thirds are Indians; whether, under the present Constitution, the Crown, through *ex officio* and nominated Members, is still able to exercise a preponderating influence, while the Indian population is very little represented; and, whether, under these circumstances, the Secretary of State will use the influence of the Crown to secure the fair treatment of the Indians in the matter of elementary education?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): A great part of the Revenue of Mauritius is derived from Customs and Licences. The Indians, forming more than two-thirds of the population, no doubt contribute largely to the Revenue from these sources. At the present time, the elected Members and the nominated Members who are not public officers constitute the majority of the Council of Government. The Crown is, therefore, unable to exercise a preponderating influence. At the only election which has yet been held under the new Constitution very few Indians voted. One of the nominated Members of the Council is an Indian. The Secretary of State will do all in his power to obtain more adequate provision for the elementary education of the Indians.

METROPOLITAN BUILDING ACTS—THE NEW BUILDINGS AT ALBERT GATE.

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether, as the Rules and Regulations of the Metropolitan Board of Works provide that—

> "No application relative to any building, structure, or erection proposed to be erected beyond the general line of fronts of buildings under Section 75 of 'The Metropolitan Local Management Amendment Act, 1862,' or Section 26 of the Metropolitan Building Act, will be granted, unless a notice that such application is to be made shall have been given or left by an officer of the Board for the occupiers of the two adjoining buildings on each side of the proposed building,"

notice of the last amended application to that Board, made by those interested in the proposed new buildings near Albert Gate, was duly given, or whether, as stated in a letter in *The Standard* newspaper, of the 24th instant, the adjoining owners had no knowledge thereof until they were informed that the application had been granted; whether he will state the names of those members of the Board who voted on the three occasions on which the application was under consideration, and which way they then voted on each occasion; whether any members of the Board are directly or indirectly interested in the proposed new buildings near Albert Gate; whether he is aware that, on the occasion of the second hearing of the application, the surveyor for the promoters said, in the hearing of Mr. B. G. Lake and a client of that gentleman—

> "I don't care a —— for your opposition. I have influence enough at the Board to carry anything I please;"

and, whether that Board intend to call upon this surveyor to explain the nature of this influence, and to justify the statement which he then made, and, on his failure to do so, proposes to take any step to relieve itself of the very grave charge made against it by him?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): In answer to the hon. Member, I have to inform him that notice with respect to the proposed new buildings near Albert Gate having twice been given to the occupiers of the adjoining buildings, and the Board having been made acquainted with their views, it was not deemed necessary to give notice of the last amended application, which the Board thought was one which might properly be acceded to. I am unable to give the names of the members of the Board who voted on the occasions referred to, as the voting was by show of hands, and the names were, consequently, not recorded. I have no reason to think that any member of the Board is directly or indirectly interested in the proposed new buildings near Albert Gate; and I am not aware, beyond the statement in *The Standard*, that the surveyor for the promoters made any such observation as that specified in the Question. It is not the custom of the Board to take notice of statements made in the street about its proceedings; and, consequently, it is not at all likely that the Board will call upon the surveyor, who is said to have made this particular statement outside the precincts of the Board, to explain or to justify it.

METROPOLITAN BUILDING ACTS — THE NEW BUILDINGS AT ALBERT GATE.

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he has seen a letter published in *The Standard* newspaper of the 25th instant, and signed by Messrs. Bonner, Wright, Thompson, and Co., in which it was stated that, unless the freeholder of the site of the Albert Gate buildings should make a reduction in its price, and he (the First Commissioner) should give "a sum in aid," the promoters intend, regardless of the serious danger to public safety and public health, and of the great injury to Hyde Park, to carry the buildings there, now in course of erection, to a height of over 180 feet; and, whether, in view of the fact that he will thus be unable to obtain any substantial undertaking that the buildings will be kept down to a proper height only, and as the only protection now possible for the public in the matter lies in his hands, by preventing all access of light from the Park front, he will now state his determination to do that which would practically put an end to the scheme, unless such modifications in it should be made as would wholly prevent permanent injury being done to the Park and the neighbourhood?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): So far as I am concerned, the case as to the proposed mansions at Albert Gate stands as follows:—Hon. Members will remember that on the 16th of this month I stated in the House that I was in communication with the solicitors and architects with a view to obtaining some diminution of the height, which, as I understood, was intended to be 130 feet; but that I had not then received any satisfactory answer. On the 20th of April I wrote a letter to the effect that, as they seemed to decline to enter into any conference on the subject, I had given orders to have the Park wall raised, and required them to remove some of their scaffolding, which projects over the wall, so that my contractors might go to work at once. On the following day I received a letter from their solicitors apologizing for delay, and asking me to take no further steps towards building the threatened wall until I should again hear from them. On the 23rd the solicitors and architects called at the Office of Works, and asked that we should stay further action until they should send us their completed designs, which were being lithographed. We agreed, but said that we should expect those designs to be sent within a few days; and the House may rest assured that, unless I am satisfied on the subject of the height of the proposed mansions, I shall proceed with the erection of my wall, which will, to a considerable extent, prevent access of light to the buildings on the Park side. I have, of course, no wish to interfere unreasonably with the persons who have bought this site in turning their bargain to the best advantage; but the interests of the public must not be sacrificed. The idea that the Government should contribute money to recoup them for any diminution of their profits seems to me to be absurd.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked, how much public money it was intended to waste in erecting a wall to obstruct the light of these buildings?

Mr. PLUNKET said, he did not consider it would be a waste of money. He hoped, however, it would not be necessary to erect the wall at all.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether the blank wall would not be just as unsightly?

Mr. PLUNKET said, the wall would only be erected if the mansions were erected to the threatened height.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he should certainly oppose any expenditure for such a purpose.

LOTTERY ACT—THE CHURCH CONSERVATIVE CLUB.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that the lottery of the Church Conservative Club was actually drawn a few days ago; whether this is in direct breach of a promise from the Club that such lottery would be withdrawn; whether he is aware that the tickets for this lottery have since the 13th of March been sold in various parts of England; and, why no steps whatever have been taken by the Director of Public Prosecutions, to whom the matter had been referred by the Government on the 13th of March?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Constable of Lancashire that although there are rumours at Church that the lottery of the Church Conservative Club has been drawn, the police have not yet been able to ascertain that such is the case, and are making inquiry. I was informed by the Chief Constable on the 16th instant that the promoters had caused the announcement of the lottery to be withdrawn, and that the sale of tickets had been stopped. I have since had information to a contrary effect from the hon. Member; and this information I forwarded at once to the Chief Constable, who told me on the 21st instant that the police of the district named would take further steps. I have not yet heard what has been the result of their action. The Director of Public Prosecutions communicated with the Clerk to the Justices, advising him that the lottery was illegal, and that summonses, if applied for, should be granted. At present the police have not been able to obtain such evidence as will lead to a conviction; but if this drawing has actually taken place, and tickets have been widely distributed, there ought to be no difficulty in obtaining sufficient evidence. I have asked the Chief Constable to report to me fully on the whole matter when his inquiries are complete.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he would put a further Question on the subject.

FACTORIES ACTS—THE SWEATING SYSTEM.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will inquire as to the facts stated in *The Lancet* of the 14th instant, in regard to the "Sweating dens" of Liverpool, Manchester, and other places, in connection with the tailoring trade, with a view to some means being devised by Government intervention to ameliorate the condition of the victims of the system, especially with reference to the unsanitary places in which they have to live and work?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Inspector of Factories that his attention had been called to this article, and that the principal evils alleged are beyond the control of the Inspector of Factories under the existing law. A waistcoat maker, somewhat answering the description given in *The Lancet*, has recently been discovered, and immediate steps have been taken to remove some of the girls to other rooms. But the migration of the sweaters from one street to another makes it very difficult in many cases for the Inspectors to discover their whereabouts, and to secure the enforcement of the law. As the hon. Member is aware, the question is now engaging the ottention of a Select Committee; and after their Report has been received it will be for the consideration of the Government whether, by legislation or otherwise, the evil complained of can be ameliorated.

Sir HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) put a further Question on the same subject.

Mr. MATTHEWS asked for Notice.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES—HERTFORD AND ST. ALBAN'S QUARTER SESSIONS.

Baron DIMSDALE (Herts, Hitchin) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the provisions of "The County of Hertford and Liberty of St. Alban's Act, 1874," 37 & 38 *Vict.* c. 45, which requires the Justices to cause an original Court of Quarter Sessions to be held within the Hertford Division of the county, and also an adjourned Court to be held within the Liberty of St. Alban's Division; and, whether, seeing that these enactments would serve to make it imperative to hold an original Session on a Monday, although it may be Easter Monday or Bank Holiday, he will, with a view to the public convenience, introduce such amendment into the Quarter Sessions Bill now before Parliament as may enable the Justices to fix the holding of Quarter Sessions on some other day when they happen to fall on either Easter Monday or Bank Holiday?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have consulted the Lord Chancellor as to the Question of my hon. Friend; and I am informed by him that the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill, as it now stands, would enable Justices to fix Quarter Sessions, when they fall on either Easter Monday or Bank Holiday, on any day that they think most convenient.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—SENTENCES ON PATRICK FERRITER, A NEWS-AGENT AT DINGLE.

Mr. J. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Patrick Ferriter, newsagent, of Dingle, whose sentence of three months' imprisonment with hard labour was on Saturday last confirmed on appeal by Judge Curran, has ever been convicted of, or even charged with, any offences other than offences under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887?"

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): Yes, Sir; on five different occasions he has been sentenced for the following offences:—1. Sentenced to two months' imprisonment on February 18, 1887, for inciting a crowd to attack a Government note-taker. 2. Fined on August 5, 1887, for being on licensed premises during prohibited hours. 3. Fined £1 on November 4, 1887, for assaulting a constable. 4. Sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment on December 2, 1887, for assaulting the police. 5. Sentenced to seven days' imprisonment on January 20, 1888, for assaulting police. Cases 4 and 5 were tried under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, but, of course, are offences quite irrespective of that Act. The three others were inflicted by ordinary tribunals.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): May I be permitted to ask the Chief Secretary whether the first case—that of February, 1887, for which he alleged two months were given—was simply for calling out to a Government reporter at a meeting while the hon. Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall (Mr. Conybeare) was speaking, "Take that down, Stringer;" and, whether no evidence was brought against this man; whether, with regard to the case against the Licensing Laws, Mr. Ferriter, himself a teetotaller, was not in the house of a gentleman who was also a teetotaller, and who has since given up the public-house, and——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is now making a counter statement. If he wishes for further information he had better put a Notice on the Paper in the usual way.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Might I not, with your permission, go through all these facts, and then ask the Chief Secretary whether he agrees with my statement or not?

MR. SPEAKER said, the hon. Gentleman was making a counter statement, to which it was not possible for a Minister to reply.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I would ask if I shall be in Order in asking this Question — whether the assault on the police was not a technical one on the occasion of Ferriter going into his own house and pushing a constable from the door?

[No reply.]

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, as my name has been mentioned, whether he is aware that at the time when the first charge was brought against Ferriter last year I put several Questions to his Predecessor in the Chief Secretaryship (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), and offered personally to give evidence, as I was present on the occasion, which would afford him a proof of the falsity of the statements of the police, and utterly disprove the charge made against Ferriter?

[No reply.]

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I wish to put a very simple Question, which I think the Chief Secretary will have no difficulty in answering. It is this—whether the assertion that this man was a bad character arises simply from the cases he has mentioned?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the cases I have mentioned would be sufficient; but, besides these, I believe this gentleman has been connected as a high official—as acting Secretary, I think—of two branches of the League most notorious for the worst forms of Boycotting.

MR. CONYBEARE said he must press for an answer to his previous Question; but he wished now to ask, whether Ferriter had, in addition to the high offices mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman, held office as a rate collector, or overseer, or something of that kind, in the district in which he lived?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is possible; but I cannot say.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —"OFFICIAL LETTERS."

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been called to the following letter, which appears as an advertisement in the supplement to *The Drapers' Record*, of the 10th of March, 1888:—

> "Lord Wolseley begs to acknowledge, with many thanks, the box of bootlaces which Messrs. Farre and Co. have been so good as to send him, and have so flatteringly named 'Sir Garnet' bootlaces. War Office, 6th Feb. 1883;"

whether the above letter was sent in an envelope, as represented in the same supplement, stamped "Horse Guards, War Office, official paid;" whether it is the recognized practice for servants of the State to write to their tradesmen, on matters not connected with the Public

Service, at the public expense; whether he can give any estimate of the loss to the Revenue entailed by such practice; and, whether there is any reason why a highly paid officer of the State should enjoy such immunity from the expense of stamping his private letters, any more than the unpaid servants of the public who are Members of Parliament?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University), in reply, said, his attention had not, before the Question of the hon. Member, been called to the advertisement referred to by the hon. Member. He had no means of knowing the contents of any letters which were certified by other Departments as being on the Public Service; and the Post Office was not in a position to ascertain whether servants of the State did conduct their private correspondence at the expense of the public. If he might hazard an opinion with regard to these particular bootlaces, in which the hon. Gentleman seemed to take a particular interest, he would say that it seemed to him probable that Lord Wolseley, in writing on the subject, was acknowledging apparently some sample which had been sent to him for the Public Service.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—CAMP ALLOWANCES TO VOLUNTEERS.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the maximum amount assigned to a Volunteer corps for camp allowance includes the travelling expenses, or whether, as in previous years, an allowance will be made for travelling expenses to and from camp; and, whether the reduction of 25 per cent in the amount of the camping allowance in the case of Volunteer corps involves a corresponding reduction in the issue of tents and camping stores?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: The maximum amount assigned to Volunteer corps for camp allowance does not include travelling expenses. As in previous years, the additional camp allowance to cover travelling expenses will be issuable under the Volunteer Regulations. Camp equipment, in the proportion laid down in the Regulations, will be issued for the number of men attending the camp.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—DISTURBANCE AT ENNIS — COLONEL TURNER.

MR. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) (for Mr. MURPHY) (Dublin, St. Patrick's) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the evidence of Colonel Turner, in which he is reported to have stated that the Hussar who wounded Mr. Hill, the reporter of *The Irish Times*, with sword-cuts at Ennis on Sunday the 15th instant, had left the ranks and charged amongst the people without any orders, and that he (Colonel Turner) had to ask Captain Chalmers, who was in command of the Hussars, to order the man to retire; what punishment has been imposed on this man for this breach of discipline; and, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the whole circumstances of this case, and particularly as to the allegations of Colonel Turner, from which it would appear that no effort was made to restrain the Hussar by his officer until Colonel Turner interfered?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I have read the report of Colonel Turner's evidence in *The Times*. I observe that the account is different from that implied in the Question, inasmuch as there is no statement in it that the Hussar who left his post was the man who wounded Mr. Hill. It further appears that this Hussar had been ordered by his officer to return to his post before Colonel Turner intervened. With regard to the Hussar who rode forward, his conduct would be considered, and, if necessary, dealt with by the Military Authorities on the spot, who had full discretion to act in the matter.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Arising out of this Question, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether the troops in singing through the streets of Ennis did not act directly contrary to the Army Regulations?

MR. E. STANHOPE: That is a new point, which is not raised in the Question on the Paper; but if the hon. Gentleman will put a Question on the Paper I will look into it.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT NEWMARKET, CO. CORK.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he knows anything of the circumstances under which a police inquiry was held at the police barrack, Newmarket, County Cork, on or about the 10th instant; whether he is aware that two police constables named Coffey and Corallis, charged with being guilty of disorderly conduct in the town of Newmarket, were brought up before the said private inquiry, held under the presidency of Inspector Yeates; can he state what was the result of this inquiry; and, if it is a fact that the two constables have been dismissed from the Force after being provided with letters of recommendation from the Sub-Inspector?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Inspector General of Constabulary reported that District Inspector Yeates stated that no inquiry had been held by him as alleged in the Question, nor did he provide the two constables named with letters of recommendation. These men were charged with being drunk while on duty, and with losing their arms. They admitted the charge, and were accordingly dismissed.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CHARGE OF ASSAULT AT CLONMORLAN.

Mr. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has had it reported to him that Patrick Kelly, farmer and carpenter, was assaulted at Clonmorlan, on the road between Portumna and his house, near Woodford, by two constables, on the night of Saturday the 14th of April; whether, while Kelly was holding his horse's head, the constables kicked him, and struck him with their fists and with their rifles; whether the constables fired two shots; whether Bridget Kelly begged for mercy, and John Tuohy, who was with Kelly and his sister, ran away, for fear of his life, to the house of Thomas Porter; whether the shots were heard by Thomas Porter, William Feanagan, and James Lyons; whether Kelly reported the circumstances to the sergeant at Rossmore Barracks; whether Kelly has sworn an information before John K. Burt, J.P., of Woodford, who refused to issue warrants; and, what action is going to be taken in the matter?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, that the County Inspector, Royal Irish Constabulary, reported that having proceeded to Kelly's house he found no marks on him, nor had he the appearance of having been assaulted. The two constables denied having interfered with Kelly, or having discharged their rifles. Both constables were regular in their return off duty, and they both had their proper number of rounds of ammunition. It was true that Mr. Burke, J.P., refused to issue a warrant; but he told Kelly that he might summon the police constable if he chose.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION AT ANTRIM.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to his reply on the 12th instant, Whether he can now state at what time the next sitting of a Sub-Commission will be held to hear fair rent applications in the County of Antrim; whether, considering that nearly 4,000 applications remain unheard in the County of Down, it is still the intention of the Government to send to the County of Antrim after the 1st of May next the Sub-Commission at present sitting in the County of Down; and, what steps will then be taken to relieve the farmers of Down of the rents demanded by the landlords, pending the hearing of the fair rent applications of the tenants made before the 1st of November last?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners report that a Sub-Commission sat in the County of Antrim in February and March last, and no date has yet been fixed for a further sitting for that county; but it is probable that the Commission now in County Down will be moved to Antrim in July. It is intended that the Sub-Commission at present sitting in the County Down shall continue working in that county during the months of May and June next.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked whether, seeing that the Government admitted a block in the Land Court, and had introduced the Land Commission Bill for the purpose of relieving that block, when they proposed to enable the House to come to a decision upon the matter?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): There is every hope, Sir, that we shall be able to ask the House to consider the Bill on Monday; but I am not able to say precisely, owing to the present state of the Paper.

MR. M'CARTAN pointed out that the Chief Secretary had not answered the last paragraph of his Question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he would be glad if the hon. Member would be good enough to give him any instances that had come within his knowledge in which landlords had exacted the full rent due, quite irrespective of the character of the reduction which might be made?

MR. M'CARTAN: If the right hon. Gentleman will tell me what he will do, in that case I will give him the information of a certain estate where the landlord gave a reduction of 40 per cent to the tenants who did not enter Court; while in the cases of the tenants who did go into Court, and whose rents were not fixed, he got decrees of ejectment, and they were not now in a position to get fair rents fixed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think that that could legally happen; but as these questions of law are rather complicated, perhaps the hon. Gentleman will put a Question on the Paper, though I think, as he stated it, that the hardship to which he alluded could not arise.

MR. M'CARTAN: I wish to state to the right hon. Gentleman that in the case to which I have referred it is a fact that——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—CONTRACTS.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, How many contracts the Metropolitan Board of Works have entered into since the introduction of the Local Government Bill; the period for which such contracts have been entered into; the amount of the liabilities to which the ratepayers of the Metropolis have been committed by such contracts; and, whether, taking into consideration the proposal contained in the Local Government Bill for the establishment of another form of government for the Metropolis, the Metropolitan Board of Works will, pending the decision of Parliament upon the Local Government Bill, refrain from entering into any contracts for a longer period than one year, and will not commit the ratepayers to any further liabilities than are absolutely necessary for the pressing needs of the Board?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): The Metropolitan Board of Works has entered into about a dozen contracts since the introduction of the Local Government Bill. Most of these are for special works or supplies, the only one of them which extends over a period being that for maintaining and cleansing the thoroughfare of the Victoria Embankment, which is for three years. The liabilities to which the ratepayers have been committed by these contracts amount to about £73,000; the largest amount, which is £42,567, being for the machinery for the sewage purification works at Barking. The Board must continue to perform the duties which devolve upon it by Statute, until it pleases Parliament to relieve it of those duties by transferring them to some other authority. It will neither go beyond, nor fall short of, its obligations; and it may be relied upon to act with judgment and discretion in incurring liabilities on behalf of the ratepayers.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—THE CHARING CROSS ROAD.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether any steps are being taken by the Metropolitan Board of Works to remove the curve which juts out from the eastern end of the National Gallery into the Charing Cross Road; whether any attempt has been made to secure for that purpose the space of ground which is now surrounded by a hoarding; and, whether any negotiations have taken place with the Government upon the subject; and, if so, what has been the result of such negotiations?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): The Board's officers are in communication with Her Majesty's Office of Works and Public Buildings with a view to seeing whether an arrangement can be made for improving the thoroughfare between the western end of the National Gallery and St. Martin's Church; but no arrangement has yet been come to.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —CARRIAGE OF LETTERS BY RAILWAY COMPANIES.

Mr. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that the Regulation now being put in force to prevent Railway Companies from carrying and delivering letters causes great inconvenience to the public, particularly in districts where there is only one postal delivery daily; and, whether he will endeavour to adopt means to continue such deliveries, either by issuing stamps to the Railway Companies or otherwise?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): The conveyance by Railway Companies and others of letters, which have not passed through the post, being an infringement of the monopoly which Parliament has seen fit to confer on the Postmaster General, I have had no option but to explain to the Railway Companies and public carriers what is the law on this subject. At the same time, I have been glad to consider the means of remedying within my legal powers any cases of real inconvenience which the discontinuance of the practice referred to may be found to have occasioned. I see considerable difficulty in the way of issuing special stamps to Railway Companies and others; but, should any great demand arise for such a course, I will gladly give the matter my further and best consideration.

LICENSED HOUSES IN ENGLAND—RETURN.

Mr. W. A. M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he would present to the House a Return showing the number of houses licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquors in England, and the number of those houses which are in independent hands, and the number which are in the hands of firms of brewers and distillers?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am afraid that I cannot present the Return the hon. Gentleman asks for. We have no such information, and no means of obtaining it.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE VAN AND WHEEL TAX.

Sir ALGERNON BORTHWICK (Kensington, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can now state whether he proposes to make any modification in the Van and Wheel Tax?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): My hon. Friend's Question is almost identical with one which has been put down by the hon. Member for West Southwark (Mr. Causton). The hon. Member for West Southwark and his friends have given me fair notice that nothing will satisfy them but a total withdrawal of the tax; and if I had no one to deal with except opponents of that kind, I should have no choice but to fight the matter out on the proposal as it at present stands. But I have not only to deal with the hon. Member for West Southwark. A number of hon. Members, representing important constituencies, while objecting to the proposal as it at present stands, have been willing to treat it as a whole in a more reasonable spirit. In deference to their representations, and to others which have been made to me from many quarters, I am prepared to offer a compromise, and I will, on Monday, move a Resolution raising the limit of weight and reducing the rate of duty. I shall propose to tax no vehicle under 10 cwt., and to place a duty on all over that weight as follows:—Two wheels, 10*s.*; four, or more wheels, £1. In order to settle the question, I shall bring this Resolution before the House on Monday next, and in such a form that a distinct issue may be raised between the supporters of the tax as amended and those who are opposed to the tax altogether.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to give Notice that when the right hon. Gentleman introduces that Resolution I shall oppose it.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked, when the Bill would be in the hands of hon. Members, and on what date the second reading would be taken?

MR. GOSCHEN: It is impossible to state on what day the second reading will be taken; but the Bill will be in the hands of hon. Members as soon as possible. I should certainly desire to bring this matter to as early an issue as possible, in order to relieve hon. Members of the enormous correspondence which has fallen on them, which, however, is quite insignificant compared with that which has rained upon myself.

MR. CAUSTON asked, with reference to the deputation that waited on the Chancellor of the Exchequer a few days ago, how the number of London vans was ascertained; whether the Return included light and heavy vans; and, whether it was for the whole Metropolitan area?

MR. GOSCHEN replied that the Return was made by the Excise officers. It included light as well as heavy vans, and covered the Metropolitan area. He accepted the assurance of the Department that the Return had been properly prepared. He should be extremely pleased, however, if the revenue to be derived from the tax proved to be larger than was estimated.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked, whether Scotland would be exempted from the tax or not?

MR. GOSCHEN said, he would endeavour to make a statement to-morrow; but he would prefer to make it on Monday.

MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us whether he has calculated the difference that will be made in the yield of the tax by the alteration he has just given Notice of?

MR. GOSCHEN: I should say rather more than £100,000.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): May I ask my right hon. Friend, whether it would make any considerable difference if the minimum weight were raised from 10 cwt. to 12 cwt., in accordance with a wish that has been very generally expressed?

MR. GOSCHEN: I am afraid that I cannot undertake to make any further modification of the tax.

MR. COCHRANE-BAILLIE (St. Pancras, N.): On what basis will the allocation be made for local purposes?

MR. GOSCHEN: I must refer the hon. Gentleman to the Local Government Bill, in which the allocation is given.

THE CONSULAR SERVICE—THE HOSPITALS AT CONSTANTINOPLE AND SMYRNA—FEES.

COLONEL HILL (Bristol, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in reference to a Parliamentary Return, dated the 9th of September, 1887, respecting compulsory fees for hospitals in Constantinople and Smyrna, Whether the average number of patients, in respect of whom a sum of £4,789 15*s*. 5*d*. was levied in Constantinople, and a sum of £1,451 10*s*. 4½*d*. at Smyrna, is about 858 and 50 respectively, one-half being in-patients; what was the amount of surplus which, after defraying all expenses in connection with the hospitals, has been received by Her Majesty's Government in diminution of the Vote for Consular Service in 1886 and in 1887, and what is the total amount received during the last seven years; whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared to devote this sum, together with any other sum that may be found to have been previously received, or the interest thereof, to the purpose for which they were collected—namely, the maintenance of hospitals at Constantinople and Smyrna for British seamen; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will at once cause the tax levied upon British ships to be reduced, so that, with the assistance of the before-referred to surpluses, it may yield the sum needful for the efficient maintenance of the hospitals, and no more?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The total number of patients treated at Constantinople during the period covered by the Return was 739—namely, 230 indoor and 509 outdoor. At Smyrna, 224—namely, 35 indoor and 189 outdoor. The gross surplus for 1886, at Constantinople, was £3,023 16*s*. 8*d*.; that at Smyrna, £833 12*s*.; for 1887, at Constantinople, £4,310 3*s*. 1*d*.; at Smyrna, £577 7*s*. 6*d*. The Foreign Office is in communication with the Treasury and the Office of Works with respect to the remainder of my hon. Friend's Question; and until accurate information has been received in regard to the charges on account of building and maintenance I cannot properly reply to it.

EJECTMENTS (IRELAND)—TRALEE QUARTER SESSIONS.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following remarks of Judge Curran, reported to have been made on the hearing of certain ejectment cases from Mr. William Lunn's estate at the Tralee Quarter Sessions on Saturday last—namely—

> "This was taking not alone a pound of flesh, but more than a pound of flesh. They must look upon a tenant as something more than a mere rent-making machine. . . . Because the Government is pressing the landlords (for payment of drainage and improvement charges), that is no reason why the landlords should crush the tenants. No wonder the people would be irritated when brought up there and saddled with costs. The landlords of Kerry were treating their tenants considerately, with, unfortunately, a few exceptions. He and other men were trying to restore law and order, and certainly they did not receive much assistance from landlords such as the present one;"

and, if so, whether the Government intend to take any steps to remedy the grievances alleged by the Judge to exist in certain cases?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): My attention has only been called to the alleged remarks of the County Court Judge by this Question, which is, apparently, founded on a newspaper report. The Question appearing for the first time on the Notice Paper circulated this morning, I have been unable to ascertain whether the remarks attributed to the Judge are substantially correct, or to acquire a knowledge of the circumstances of the case alluded to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—OFFICE AND STYLE OF MAYOR.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If the Local Government Bill will have the effect of extinguishing the office and style of mayor in a large number of ancient boroughs, and of merging that office in the new one of Chairman of the County Councils?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Bill will have no such effect as that indicated in the Question.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS — THE FRENCH PROTESTANT CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND—THE LIBRARY.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the Charity Commissioners directed that the Library of the French Protestant Church of St. Martin's-le-Grand was to be deposited in the Guildhall Library pending the re-building of the church, or the publication of a new scheme by the Charity Commissioners for a different appropriation of the funds of the church; whether he is aware that the Library is still suffered to be in the hands of the pastor, and that the Trustees of the church can neither obtain access to it nor learn where it is; and, whether he will say under what circumstances the directions of the Charity Commissioners are allowed to be set at defiance, and who is responsible for any loss of, or injury to, the books?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): The question of the custody of the Library of the French Protestant Church in St. Martin's-le-Grand was considered by the Charity Commissioners. The matter has since been before me as Attorney General; and steps have been taken by my solicitor to secure the safe custody of the books, pending the settlement of schemes which will, I trust, deal with the whole property.

MINISTERIAL PENSIONS.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether a Member of the House of Commons, before he is entitled to receive a Ministerial pension, has to make a solemn declaration to the effect that his means are otherwise insufficient to maintain his position; and, whether such a declaration has been made by every Member now in receipt of such a pension?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Every Member receiving a Ministerial pension has to make a declaration as to the insufficiency of his means; and every Member of this House now in receipt of such a pension has so declared.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to state whether it is left to the ex-Minister to form his own conclusions as to what means are sufficient to maintain his position; or whether there is an average estimate made by the Treasury?

MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Gentleman asks me a Question which, as I have had very little experience in the matter, is, perhaps, hardly a fair one. But I should have very little doubt that, if it was left to an ex-Minister to make a statement of this kind, such a statement might be received with perfect confidence.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): The Question is not put to me; but as I have had several cases during a number of years in which I have had to administer this difficult law, I may say that, when I have been Prime Minister, I have always considered the declaration of the person who was to be the holder of the pension as a declaration expressing his own conscientious and honourable view, although, at the same time, it would be that of the known party interested. I never considered, however, that that declaration exempted the Prime Minister from the duty of forming his own estimate; and I have felt myself undoubtedly responsible for every pension of this description I have sanctioned.

MR. JENNINGS (Stockport): I should like to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, if it was well-known that an ex-Minister had received a considerable accession to his income after the pension had been received, would it then be the duty of the recipient to give the pension up?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I think it is undesirable to answer Questions of this character. It is a matter in which the honour of the Minister himself is concerned; and I have no doubt whatever that any Minister or ex-Minister who received a considerable and permanent addition to his income would resign his pension.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I refer to a lengthened experience; and I may say that in two instances, I think, in which pensions were given by my advice I obtained from the receivers an engagement to the effect that, in the event of an accession to their fortune, they would surrender the pension. I believe such a case has been forgotten.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Will the House allow me to state the most recent instance—I believe it is the only one to my knowledge—that the Duke of Rutland, who was allotted a pension of this character some time ago, resigned it on his accession to the Dukedom.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.) asked, When the Motion standing in the name of the Attorney General, with reference to the new Judge, would be taken?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, he had already stated that he hoped it might be reached that evening. He had promised not to take the Motion after half-past 10; and if it were not reached that evening he was not able to say when it would be taken.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) asked as to the Business for next week, in addition to that announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for Monday?

MR. W. H. SMITH asked to be allowed to reserve any statement as to the Business for next week until to-morrow. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would see the absolute necessity for pressing forward the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. He wished, however, to see what progress was made with that Bill before making his statement.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WINE DUTIES — REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether any representations had been received from the French Government with reference to the proposed increase in the Wine Duties?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, he thought it was a Question which should be directed to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He believed that some representations had been received.

MR. ILLINGWORTH repeated the Question to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Man-

chester, N.E.): Perhaps the Question would be more properly answered when the clause of the Bill dealing with the Wine Duty is under discussion. But I can tell the hon. Member that a remonstrance has been addressed to Her Majesty's Government by the French Ambassador, pointing out, in temperate and moderate language, that the proposed duties will inflict an injury upon an article of French import.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE HAWKERS' LICENCE.

Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether any representations had been made to him with regard to the Hawkers' Licence; and whether it was his intention to propose any modification; and, if so, what?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, he had received a large number of suggestions from many quarters against the abolition of the licence. It would, however, be better to discuss the matter when the clause dealing with the duty on hawkers' licenses came on.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.—[Bill 202.]

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Short title) *agreed to.*

PART I.

Customs.

Clause 2 (Import duties on tea).

Mr. PICTON (Leicester), in rising to move the omission of the clause, said, the other night the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) was good enough to say that an opportunity would be afforded for discussing any point of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill when the House was in Committee. He (Mr. Picton) did not consider that that was a convenient stage for raising any question such as that which he desired to bring before the Committee. It was not, however, his fault. His Notice in regard to the Tea Duties was placed on the Table before that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in reference to the Succession and Death Duties. Of course, when he found that the right hon. Gentleman had given such Notice he at once felt it his duty to accede to the prior claim of the right hon. Gentleman. Under the circumstances, he trusted that hon. Members would excuse him if he felt himself compelled to detain them for a short time on a point which would have been much better discussed earlier. He thought that the history of the consumption of tea in this country illustrated how financial reform might convert an article of luxury, and what had been an article even of extravagant luxury, into a necessary of life. If hon. Members would look back over the history of the consumption of tea in this country—a subject which had been too much forgotten of late years—they would find that the extension of the consumption of tea to the general mass of the people had been in almost steady proportion to the relaxation and diminution of the Customs Duties. At every successive step in the diminution of the Customs Duties there had been a large increase in the consumption, although after a while the consumption had shown a tendency to remain steady so long as a particular duty was levied. When another diminution came a fresh impulse was given to the consumption, and after a while that impulse died out. They had arrived at such a stage at the present moment. When the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1865 he reduced the Tea Duty to 6*d.*, and at once an enormous impulse was given to the consumption; whereas the consumption between 1857 and 1863, with a duty of 1*s.* 5*d.* a-pound, was almost stationary, having been 77,000,000 lbs., rising to 77,437,000 lbs. As soon as the duty was lowered to 1*s.* the consumption sprung up to upwards of 96,000,000 lbs. When the duty was reduced to 6*d.* the consumption still further increased, until at the present moment it was from 178,000,000 lbs. to 180,000,000 lbs. per annum. On closer consideration, however, the increase in the consumption of tea was not quite so satisfactory as might be thought. He was not referring to the impulse given to consumption when the Duties were first lowered; but of late years the increase had done little more than keep pace with the growth of the population. It was shown by the Statistical Abstract of the imports and exports of the United Kingdom that during the last 14 years, from 1872 to 1886, the consumption of tea per head of the population had barely increased by one pound —in 1872 it was 4·01 per head, and it was 4·87 in 1886. Hon. Members might think that nearly 5 lbs. per head was a respectable consumption; but in New Zealand the consumption was 7·23 per head, and in the Australian Colonies it was 7·66. Therefore, the consumption at home was considerably less than it was in the Colonies, where the Tea Duties were, for the most part, less than those levied here. In most of the Colonies and in New Zealand the duty was only 3*d.* per pound. He thought these figures showed that the increase in the consumption had not been as healthy as might have been desired; and he was, therefore, not surprised to find the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), in the course of his remarks upon the Budget, informing the House that the Tea Duties "were fairly, though not remarkably, progressive." In 1856-7 the receipts from tea were £4,515,000, and in 1866-7, £4,618,000, or an increase of £103,000. The right hon. Gentleman pointed out that this was somewhat more than in proportion to the increase of population, but he could not say that it was a revenue which showed much elasticity. This was all the more remarkable when it was borne in mind that the price of tea had gone down very considerably within the last 15 years. The total amount of tea imported, including all which was brought into this country, whether exported or not, in 1872 was 180,000,000 lbs., the value being £12,933,000. In 1886 the total imports had increased to 230,000,000 lbs., including what was brought in for export; but the total value of that much larger amount decreased, and was only £11,317,000, so that prices had dropped very considerably. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the decrease of price, the consumption was not what might have been expected. It might be said that in moving the omission of the clause he did not show much concern for the Revenue. He, however, had no desire to cripple the Revenue; but he simply wished to see it derived from other items than the necessaries of life. He admitted that his reason for referring to the facts he had just detailed had nothing whatever to do with the growth or diminution of the Revenue. The facts tended to show that while a wise commercial policy had converted tea from an article of luxury into a necessary of life, the consumption of that article had become nearly stationary, and that the duty for a long time past had been out of all proportion to the value of the article. He would now proceed to establish the first main objection to the continuance of the Tea Duty—namely, that it was burdensome to the poor, inasmuch as it taxed the necessaries of life. He wished to emphasize this point as much as possible—namely, that tea had become a necessary of life. He presumed the people must drink something, and that they would not be content with water, or even milk. They were told by the hon. Baronet the Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) that alcoholic drinks were not necessary; but surely tea and cocoa or coffee must be considered among the articles that were essential to the consumption of even the poorest man. In 1857, when the standard of wages among the wage-earning class was distinctly lower than it was now, it was stated in the Parliamentary Paper No. 184 for that year that the consumption of tea had steadily and largely increased among the working classes. Indeed, it had increased to such an extent that tea and sugar, next to bread, had now become the prime necessaries of life. When he thought of the mode of life among the poor, and especially among the very poor in the present day, he felt that these words were emphatically true. How many were there now in this great Metropolis who had to be content for their mid-day meal with a few slices of bread and butter and a cup of tea? Surely when people had to live upon so little, and were so reduced that they were compelled to dine on tea and bread and butter, it became a positive cruelty to take 6*d.* for every pound of tea that they consumed. The Report to which he referred said that in London there were poor needlewomen whose miserable condition admitted neither the means or the time necessary to purchase butcher's meat, and who were compelled to sustain life on dry bread and tea, the latter affording a gentle stimulant to the exhausted frame. It must be conceded that to take 6*d.* for every pound of tea these poor creatures consumed was not only oppressive, but cruel, especially when they bore in mind the proportion of the duty to the cost of the article. That proportion would be found to be greatest in the case of the very poor. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian reduced the duty, the duty in proportion to the cost of the article was much less than it was now that prices had fallen. Sir Charles Dilke said in 1885 that it amounted to 50 per cent upon the cost of the article. The hon. Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) said in an earlier year it was as much as 75 per cent; but there were instances now where the duty amounted to very much more than 100 per cent upon the cost of the article imported. He (Mr. Picton) had learnt from a tea merchant in active business in the City of London that there was now tea in bond which had only cost 4½*d.* per pound, and some which cost only 3¾*d.* per pound without the duty; and yet upon such an article a duty of 6*d.* a pound had to be paid. In addition to these facts, he might say that very much more of the revenue derived from tea was paid by the labouring classes than was taken from other portions of the community. The Parliamentary Paper of 1857—to which he had already referred—estimated that certainly more than one-half of the tea consumed by the country was used by the labouring classes, and probably two-thirds. He maintained that this was a rational argument to use against the continuation of the duty—namely, that the proportion between the duty and the actual cost of the article had very much increased, and it was now, more than ever it was before, a revenue derived from labour and not from the comfortable classes. Surely these were very serious arguments against the continuance; at any rate, they went to show that it was a tax on the necessaries of life. John Stuart Mill, in the second volume of his *Political Economy*, told us that taxes on necessaries must have one of two effects—they must either tend to depress the standard of comfort among the labouring classes, or they must lessen the profits on capital. In his (Mr. Picton's) opinion, taxes on the necessaries of life almost invariably tended to depress the standard of comfort among the poor, without materially lessening the profits on capital. He was sure the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth would agree with him when he said that he believed the tax on tea was, to a considerable extent, a hindrance to the progress of temperance. He did not deny that the law might do something indirectly to promote temperance, but he believed that general habits of decent comfort would do very much more, and whatever alterations in their financial arrangements tended to make the people comfortable would tend to promote temperance. People could not yet get a good cup of tea as cheaply and as easily as they ought to do. When he himself was a total abstainer—he was not so now—he had experienced much difficulty in getting temperance drinks as easily or as cheaply as other people could get a glass of ale. He knew that something had been done to remove this difficulty by the establishment of coffee and cocoa shops; but, apart from such efforts, it was found that in travelling to strange towns it was much cheaper to get a glass of beer, or other alcoholic drinks, than to get a good cup of tea. He could not but think that much of the difficulty arose from the excessive duty which was imposed. He further maintained that the continuance of the Tea Duty was a considerable hindrance to the expansion of our commerce. Where duties had to be paid, there were always difficulties with the Customs House, and where the transactions were extensive commerce was necessarily hampered. Of course, if the consumption of tea was kept down, as he contended it was, seeing that it was steady, or nearly so, it was manifest that commerce was hindered to that extent. There was one point in connection with this part of the subject to which he would ask the earnest attention of the Committee, and that was the bearing of the Tea Duty upon our trade with India. It was only within comparatively recent years that India had become a tea growing country or a tea exporting country. In 1836 the first pound of tea was brought from Assam to this country; in the next year about 5 lbs. were brought; but in 1872 upwards of 17,000,000 lbs. came in; and in 1887, 80,500,000 lbs. odd. In fact, India was in a fair way to out-rival China as far as the export of tea to this country and many others was concerned. Then, he would ask, were we treating India fairly when we imposed a duty of 6*d.* on every pound of a commodity which formed so large a part of the exports from that great Dependency? Not long ago we compelled India to do away with all duties on British manufactures, and we now insisted on sending our cotton goods free of all duty to India. Then was it fair or right that we should show such want of consideration in this matter as to continue a duty of 6*d.* a-pound on all the tea which India sent to this country? The same thing applied to Ceylon, only, of course, in a smaller degree. The exports from Ceylon had now risen to 8,000,000 lbs. per annum, and the Cingalese charged us with discouraging their commerce as much as we could by imposing upon tea a duty of 6*d.* a-pound. He (Mr. Picton) contended financially that the continuance of the duty was absolutely inconsistent with all sound principles of taxation; it was bleeding industry just when it needed strength. A wealthy nation such as this ought not in a time of peace to tax industry for the necessaries of life. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian had referred the other day to a Return made to the House in 1885 of the amount of realty and personalty in this country which was subjected to taxation. The total amount at that time was £9,411,000,000 sterling, and it could not be doubted that at this time it had increased to £10,000,000,000 sterling. Then the amount of taxation on that tremendous wealth was just one-fifth per cent. Of course, he was aware that other taxes had to be paid both by realty and realized personalty, but he did not think that the taxation imposed upon it was as much as the realized wealth of the country could bear. At any rate, he did not think that in a time of peace we were at all justified in imposing such burdens upon labour. He should probably be told, as an audience was told the other day by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that it would be a very unsafe thing to remove from the labouring classes all responsibility from the finances of the country, or the cost of carrying on the Government. That, however, was not a correct way of stating the case; the labouring classes must always pay a considerable sum towards the expenses of Government so long as they drank beer and smoked tobacco, and, notwithstanding the efforts of the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth, he (Mr. Picton) expected that they would continue to do so for a very considerable period yet. What he maintained was that, apart from luxuries, the working classes should receive the necessaries of life without taxation. Then it might be asked—"What are you to do in a time of stress and danger?" Well, there was such a thing as a War Tax. In 1856 the Tea Duty was raised from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 1*s.* 9*d.* a-pound as a War Tax, and he did not think that anybody complained of it at the time. He was not going to enter into the question whether that war was justifiable; but, at any rate, the people were very willing to pay in order to satiate the savage passions of the time, and, whenever in such a mood of the country war taxes were imposed, nobody grumbled at them. That had been the case hitherto, and would be the case in future, and if people chose to go to war let them pay the cost of it. It would be placing a very good premium on peace to show the labouring classes that as long as peace was preserved labour would escape certain taxes. If they went to war, then let the imperious Chancellor of the Exchequer impose taxes on tea or anything else. He might be asked what substitute he would propose for the Tea Duty. That was not his business. It was the business of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had financial ability and sufficient ingenuity to devise some substitute for the Tea Duty if it were given up. He (Mr. Picton) would only name one which he was afraid had not been sufficiently thought of—that was retrenchment. He only wished that the people would compel the Government to retrench the expenditure of the country, or determine to refuse unreasonable taxes, so that the Government would be obliged to lessen the extravagant expenditure of the present day. If it could be shown that retrenchment was impossible, he hoped hon. Gentlemen opposite would bear with him if he ventured to suggest that the land did not bear its full quota of the expenses of Government—[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"]—No; it certainly did not. When they remembered that land was the territory of the whole people, and the privileged possession of the few, they must be aware that it did not pay its fair proportion. Of course, he knew he should be out of Order in going into that matter, but he mentioned it as one means by which the burdens of the people might be reduced. Whatever might be the consequence at the present moment, he was quite sure that the time would come when the duty on tea would have to be abolished, and when the tax-gatherer would have to keep his hand from the pocket and breakfast table of the poor man, and from the tea-caddy of the poor widow. He begged to move the omission of Clause 2.

Amendment proposed, "To leave out Clause 2."—(*Mr. Picton.*)

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said, he did not rise for the purpose of seconding the Motion. It would be in the recollection of the House that on the last occasion, when the motion for the renewal of the Tea Duty was before the Committee, he had entered an emphatic protest against the principle of a duty on a non-competing import, which had become almost a necessity to the great mass of the population, and an export of considerable importance to our only free market—British India. He had determined not to take further action in the matter in the present Session, and for this reason—that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) had attempted so much in the present Budget for the reduction of both Imperial and local taxation, and much more might be confidently anticipated hereafter. He ventured to hope that in the coming year the encouragement which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given to one branch of British industry — namely, the bottling trade, would be extended to other branches. He had been much edified by the speech of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton), and he ventured to congratulate the hon. Member most heartily on his conversion to one of the principal points of what was generally known as the Fair Trade programme. He could not help thinking that that was due to some extent to a meeting which was held at Leicester on the 1st of February, and which was addressed with great ability by the hon. Member for the Malden Division of Essex (Mr. C. W. Gray). He maintained that any hon. Member who proposed that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer should abolish the tax upon tea, coffee, and cocoa was absolutely bound to show from what source the right hon. Gentleman would obtain the revenue of £5,000,000 sterling a-year at present obtained from this source. The hon. Member had avoided that point by saying that it was the function of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he had pointed out that the land might be still further taxed. Upon that point he joined issue himself emphatically with the hon. Member. He had no intention of following the hon. Member at any great length on that point, for he had risen merely to congratulate him on his conversion to the principle of Fair Trade. He had intended, if an opportunity permitted, to have taken the sense of the Committee on the Tea Duties, but he thought the present opportunity was not favourable to such a course. The establishment of a free breakfast table which the hon. Member for Leicester now advocated had been frequently brought before the House, and had been advocated upon many public platforms by hon. Members who sat on the Conservative side of the House. The remarks of the hon. Member for Leicester appeared to show that he was beginning to sympathize with the struggle which was being made in defence of the employment of labour at home, to prevent the further reduction of wages by the one-sided system of Free Trade under which we now laboured. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer could, if he wished to do so, find ample resources from which to obtain the revenue now contributed by the Tea Duties. He (Mr. Vincent) trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would turn his attention in the coming year to the absolute necessity which lay upon the Government of giving to British labour that fair play which labour enjoyed in every other country, and that fair play which it had secured for itself within the United Kingdom by trades unionism and legislation. If the right hon. Gentleman would, as he hoped, turn his attention to this matter, he would soon be able to find not only an equivalent for the £5,000,000 now derived from tea, coffee, and cocoa, but an ample surplus which might enable him to relieve the duties on tobacco and many of the excise licenses which now pressed heavily upon many trades. By so doing, the right hon. Gentleman would give a stimulus to industry in every part of the United Kingdom, and that, in the present state of commercial depression, was what the country really wanted.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he did not intend to detain the House at any length. He was not sure that he had very great sympathy with the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) in the proposal he had submitted to the House; but he desired to express sympathy with the general principle that some relief ought to be given to the taxation on labour as compared with the taxation upon property. The result of the changes now proposed was to make an adjustment of taxation with regard to different kinds of property by transferring several millions of taxes on property to the local authorities. Consequently, when they came to look to Imperial taxation, they would find that a large proportion of the Imperial taxation which had hitherto been charged on property was cut away, and that it would be in future less by several millions than it had been. In addition, there was some remission of Income Tax which, although not entirely taxation upon property, would give considerable relief to property. The result was, so far as Imperial taxation was concerned, that while almost the whole of the excise and the Customs Duties and a large portion of the Income Tax fall almost entirely as a tax on labour and industry, the Imperial taxes upon property would be comparatively small. A large slice of the Death Duties were to be cut away from the Imperial taxation, and also a considerable portion of the Licensing and other Duties. He therefore, quite agreed with his hon. Friend, that although up to the present time the taxes on property compared with those upon labour and industry had been inadequate, the inadequacy would now be increased and exaggerated. He was, therefore, of opinion that some adjustment should be made such as his hon. Friend the Member for Leicester had suggested. For his own part, he thought the first step towards an adjustment would be to abolish the taxes upon currants and raisins, so as to leave the poor man's plum pudding free. He would suggest this matter to the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, he wished to say a word with reference to the somewhat bold proposal of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton). He was quite in sympathy with the hon. Member as to the free breakfast table of the poor man, and he hoped the time would come when he would be able to get a cheaper breakfast than he got to-day, and when the duty upon tea would be reduced. He failed, however, to understand why the Tea Duties should be reduced and additional taxation put upon the land. Until the hon. Member had some better material by which to fill up the financial void, which the reduction of the duty upon tea would cause, than increased contributions from the land, he should certainly be unable to support his proposal. At the same time, he hoped that as time went on, such a duty as the present Tea Duty would, at any rate, be reduced; but the remedy should be a very different one from that of increasing the taxation upon land.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, he wished to give a hearty support to the principles of the proposal of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton). The proposal to establish a free breakfast table was not a new one; but his right hon. Friend the Member for Central Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) had long been heartily in accord with it. He thought hon. Members should bear in mind how large a share the working classes contributed to the Imperial revenue. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) told them that the increase upon the Excise Duties last year amounted to at least £300,000, and it must be admitted that the main part of that increase came directly from the working classes, and only a comparatively small share from the classes above. In addition to the sum they contributed upon the beer they consumed, the working classes consumed a large amount of spirits as well. These taxes were frequently in greater proportion to the cost of the article. So far as tobacco was concerned, it was now regarded by the working classes as a necessity. An enormous portion of the Imperial taxation upon tea, spirits, beer, and tobacco, articles of consumption that were necessary to the working classes of England, came from the working classes themselves, and he thought that his hon. Friend had hit a right item when he attempted first to assail the Tea Duty. The reasons his hon. Friend had given for the omission of this clause were certainly sufficiently weighty to demand the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The experience of the country in reference to the taxation of articles of trade showed that every reduction of duty had a tendency to increase the trade between the home country and other countries. It was stated that trade was languishing; it was, therefore, necessary to give it a stimulus. The hon. Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) said that the hon. Member for Leicester had gone one step in the direction of Fair Trade; but his hon. Friend had only followed the policy of the soundest free traders in that House. They had removed the duties from hundreds of articles of consumption, but it was not to be assumed that by those removals they had taken a single step in the direction of Fair Trade. Parliament had for many years set its face firmly against anything in the direction of so-called Fair Trade. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would, no doubt, ask how it was proposed to recoup him for the enormous sum of £5,000,000 which would be got rid of by the abolition of the Tea Duty. He did not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be left altogether in the dark as to what was in the minds of the English people on this question. At this moment the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was proposing to increase duties in a certain direction, mainly for the purpose of making a present to the payers of Income Tax. If he might give a hint to the right hon. Gentleman he would advise him to leave the Income Tax as it stood, and, if necessary, to replace the 1*d.* which was taken off last year, in order that he might accomplish the object the hon. Member for Leicester had in view. The Government had complete control over the Income Tax, and an important machinery for its collection existed, and there was no reason why substantial use should not be made of it in order that taxation on the necessaries of life might be removed. The only excuse which the right hon. Gentleman had given for proposing a further reduction of the Income Tax was that he wished to see it exercised as a War Tax. Now, in his (Mr. Illingworth's) opinion, it was equally essential, and far more so, to let taxation lie lightly on the working classes, seeing that if ever a war did come upon us they would be the principal sufferers both directly and indirectly. The working classes had not yet sufficiently appreciated what was due to them in regard to this question of Imperial and local taxation. He maintained that there could not be a more inviting policy than to remove items of taxation that pressed on the general working classes of the country. Tea was a necessary of life among the working classes, and it would be an act of equity and true wisdom to abolish, or, at any rate, reduce the excessively high tax now placed upon it. If the habits of the working classes, as well as the other classes, were to be improved, especially in regard to excessive drinking, he did not see what better opportunity could be afforded than by making tea as cheap and as plentiful as possible. It had been suggested by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) that some possible harm might come from the excessive drinking of tea; but if that were so the people would soon find it out for themselves. It was most unwise, he thought, to place excessive duties on articles that were necessary in order to secure the comfort of the working classes. It was absolutely essential, he thought, that all such burdens should be removed, especially when they remembered the enormous disproportion between the taxation and the cost of the article. To abolish or reduce the Tea Duty would bring the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer quite as much popularity as he could secure by reducing the Income Tax. It was true, however, that the payers of Income Tax were much more in touch with the right hon. Gentleman than the working classes, and were better able to make their feelings and views known. Unfortunately the working classes had not hitherto secured that attention to their reasonable demands and that alleviation of their burdens which other classes invariably did. The hon. Member for Leicester suggested as an alternative that there should be a further imposition of taxation upon the land. Now, he (Mr. Illingworth) was an owner of property himself, and he did not hesitate to say that he had no objection whatever to transfer a portion of the burdens on articles of consumption from the shoulders of the working classes to property, and he was prepared to pay his share of the transfer. His view was, that so long as these duties remained they had a tendency to affect the value of property, and that if they were removed the owners of property would receive advantage by the impetus which would be given to trade. In the large community with which he was connected he knew very well that the reduction of taxation, instead of being detrimental to property, would be the very reverse. Larger sums would at once be spent in the improvement of property and in making the conditions of life more tolerable. The continuance of taxes upon necessaries of life was a most unwise policy, and he should like to see the day come when neither Customs nor Excise Duties would be levied as a source of taxation upon the country. No doubt, that would be an enormous change, even a revolution ; but he believed that in the end it would be the most economical as well as the most just system of taxation. For these reasons he heartily supported the proposal of his hon. Friend.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I cannot complain for a moment of the tone in which this discussion has been conducted ; but I wish to say, in reply to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), that no pressure has been brought to bear by the payers of Income Tax upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer, although they are, in fact, the most long suffering of all taxpayers. It ought always to be borne in mind, however, in reply to most of the arguments which come from the hon. Members opposite, in favour of the reduction of the Tea Duty and the augmentation of the Income Tax, that the Income Tax has been successfully raised for the purpose of meeting an emergency. Quite apart from any question of popularity, to which the hon. Member for West Bradford has referred, it seems to me only to be just that, if in times of emergency the Income Tax has been raised, when the emergency is passed it should have a fair claim to be lowered. I quite admit that if the question were merely one of popularity it would be more popular to reduce the duty on tea, and would have rendered the Government more popular in the country than the reduction of the Income Tax. I, therefore, hope it will be conceived that the Government, in the proposal they have made, have considered simply what was the best in the interests of the country, and that they have not been influenced by any of the considerations as to popularity which have been suggested by the hon. Member for West Bradford. The hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton), who initiated the discussion, and who spoke in a most temperate manner, alluded with regret that the consumption of tea had not shown as much increase as might be desired, although it has increased more in proportion than the population. The hon. Member has correctly quoted a saying of my own on a former occasion—that the increase is fairly satisfactory, but not altogether satisfactory. I called attention to the fact that this was due, in some degree, to the supercession of China teas by Indian teas, and to the fact that Indian teas are much stronger. I am informed that one pound of Indian tea will go much further than a pound of China tea, and that a pound of Indian tea produces a larger number of cups of tea than a pound of Chinese tea would produce; and this has naturally had some effect in diminishing the quantity of tea used. The hon. Member also called attention to the consumption in the Colonies. I believe that tea is, to a much greater extent, an article of general beverage at all meals in many parts of the Australian Colonies than in this country. Hon. Members must also remember that wages generally are higher in Australia than here, and that the people are consequently able to consume a larger number of pounds of tea. I do not wish for a single moment, in any remark I may make, to depreciate the importance of the suggestion which has been made by the hon. Member. I think it is extremely desirable that we should keep our eyes on the Tea Duty—if not on its total abolition, at all events upon its reduction. I should deprecate—and I hope that there I shall have the support of all those who have had any experience of finance—I should deprecate the cutting down of any of our present sources of revenue. For instance, if I had a certain number of millions to spare, I would sooner reduce the Tea Duty and take off a portion of the Tobacco Duty, than to abolish the Tea Duty altogether, because, when you once abolish a duty, the whole of the machinery for raising that duty on that article is gone. Therefore, I should prefer a reduction to a total abolition. If I have said that a preference ought to be given on this occasion to the payers of Income Tax, it was because the payers of Income Tax have been paying an additional burden for some time past. Perhaps it is convenient in this connection that I should allude to a suggestion which has been made by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell). The hon. Member spoke as if there were a growing tendency to throw taxation on the working classes, and to relieve property at the expense of the working classes. The hon. Member for West Bradford spoke in the same direction in reference to beer and spirits; but I will place figures before the Committee—not in a controvertial spirit, but in order that the facts may be known. The total taxes on consumable articles have fallen from about £43,300,000 in 1876-7 to £41,370,000 in 1887-8, or a fall of nearly £2,000,000. The taxation per head on consumable articles has fallen from £1 6*s.* to £1 2*s.* 3*d.* I rejoice in that fact; but I do not put it forward in order to raise any question. At the same time, I would call the attention of the Committee to the fact that the taxation on property—I mean the Death Duties, stamps on transfers, House Tax, and Income Tax—has increased from £17,400,000 to £29,500,000, showing an increase of £12,000,000, or 71 per cent.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: Is that calculation made after allowing for the transfer of the Death Duties and other duties to local taxation?

Mr. GOSCHEN: I will come to that presently. As I have pointed out, the taxation upon consumable articles has fallen from £29,500,000 to £17,500,000 between the year 1876-7 and the year 1877-8. That was after the reductions had been made on the Sugar Duties and other reductions. I am taking a time when the taxation on the working classes became law and had decreased by £2,000,000, whereas the taxation on property had increased by £12,000,000. At the same time there has been an increase in rates which fall to a great extent on the owners of property, and therefore swell the increase in the aggregate charge borne by the wealthy classes. I am glad to think that from that expenditure on rates the working classes have derived a very considerable advantage; for instance, in the matter of education the whole increase of taxation has gone to the advantage of the working classes. I have not used these arguments in order to lay down any proposition which would tend to prevent us from moving in the direction which has been indicated—namely, relieving the taxation of the working classes; but what I have been answering is the allegation that we have been going so far in the wrong direction. So far we have only to a slight extent been relieving the wealthy classes from some of the additional burdens which have been imposed during the last few years. It may be asked—"How do we stand now?" I make a proposal this year to relieve the Income taxpayers of £1,500,000, a large proportion of which will go to the benefit of persons with small incomes, but a portion will go to relieve the wealthy classes on whom additional taxation has been imposed. On the other hand, we impose duties on wine, on foreign securities, and other transactions, amounting to more than £500,000, which will fall exclusively upon the wealthy classes. Therefore, I may fairly contend that we have not been drawn in the direction of relieving the well-to-do at the expense of the working classes, which would be entirely contrary to the financial principles we profess. Looking at the large amount of additional burdens which has been placed upon the payers of Income Tax, we think that our proposals are just. I have used an argument to which I will adhere—namely, that the Income Tax is a valuable reserve in times of emergency, and there, I think, I shall have the assent of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). The position of my hon. Friend the Member for West Bradford is a different one. He says—"Rely on the Income Tax in times of peace, and, then, if necessary, put taxation on consumable articles as a preparation for war." There is this great difference between the two propositions—that Income Tax can be put on at a moment's notice; whereas, in the case of piling in additional duties on consumable articles, it is generally some time before you can reap the full effect of them. I think there is some force in that argument. The hon. Member for Leicester has received a compliment from my hon. Friend the Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent), which I am afraid I must share, for the compliment also applies to me. I am not, however, able to accept it, because my hon. Friend has treated as an intentional act on my part that which was only incidental. There does not appear to be any agreement whatever between the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) and the hon. Member for Central Sheffield. There exists the greatest difference of opinion as to the manner in which the gap left by taking off taxes on consumable articles should be met. One hon. Member suggests that additional taxation should be imposed on the land, and the hon. Member for Leicester himself suggested retrenchment. Now, the Government are only too anxious to economize, but they find great difficulty in resisting the demands which are made for increased expenditure from very influential quarters. Of course, a certain amount of expenditure is necessary in order to secure the efficient administration of the affairs of the State; but the Government will resist as much as any hon. Member of this Committee any extravagance beyond that point. But I imagine that even the most sanguine person can hardly believe that it is possible by any retrenchment to fill up the gap which would be produced if the Amendment now before the House were adopted. The hon. Member for Leicester quoted some statistics as to consumption. It would be impossible, I fear, in taxing any article, to avoid some of the hardships which attention has been called to. The hon. Member used the argument, that—"In proportion as the duty has fallen, so the price has fallen also, and therefore you ought to abolish the duty altogether." Hard cases have been put where persons spend a portion of their trade earnings upon tea, but such cases occur under almost every duty. It appears to me that the consumer of tea has had a great advantage — an advantage in which we all rejoice—in finding his tea infinitely cheaper than it was formerly. If the consumer has to pay less for his tea he is not entitled to look upon it as a grievance that the duty has remained the same as before. He is certainly brought nearer to the cheap breakfast table which is desired. In fact, I showed last year, and I am able to show again, that with the duty at 6*d.* the working man can buy his tea cheaper than he could have done a few years ago, even if the duty had been removed altogether. The value of the article was then so great that it would more than compensate for the whole of the Duty. One hon. Member has informed the Committee that tea can be bought for 4½*d.* and even 3½*d.* a-pound, but I am afraid that a very few poor persons have the benefit of that extra cheapness. I know that in country districts the prices are proportionately very much higher than that, and I am afraid that a great portion of the cheapness in the wholesale price of tea goes into the pockets of the middle man, and does not reach the extreme poor. Having now answered the points which have been brought before the Committee by hon. Members who have taken part in the discussion, I may add that it will be satisfactory to me if it should happen that, during my tenure of the Office I now hold, I can make a reduction in the taxes upon consumable articles.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): Of course, it is impossible that a Committee can refuse the Tea Duty to the Government without undertaking to replace it by some substitute. At the same time, I think my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) is quite entitled to emphasize the subject. We all feel that it is an unfortunate thing that there should be in the Budget a proposal of which the relief goes almost exclusively to the propertied classes—[*Cries of* "No, no!"] Hon. Members say "No, no;" but the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) has pointed out why it is inevitable. Has he denied the fact? Nobody denies it, and the right hon. Gentleman has given a reason of more or less cogency why it ought to be the case, and why there ought to be some relief. Unquestionably it is a circumstance in which this Budget is distinguished from former Budgets, where considerable surpluses have existed, and large reliefs of taxation have been made. As a rule such reliefs have been given in common to all classes of the community. The practice of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was as far as possible to afford equal relief between the two classes; while relief was given on the one hand to the propertied class consideration was also given to the claims of the consuming class. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has referred to the increase of contribution of what may be called the wealthier classes of late years, and the diminution of the contribution on the part of the consuming classes; but it must be remembered what is the point from which we started. Some years ago the injustice between the contribution of the two classes was monstrous. The contribution of the wealthy classes was infinitely below what it ought to have been, while that of the consuming classes was much higher than was justifiable. No doubt, something has been done to redress that injustice and inequality. There is now a larger contribution made on the part of the classes who possess property, but no great reduction has been made in the contribution of the consuming classes. Some few years ago I called attention to a large reduction in alcoholic revenue. The people of this country had endeavoured to recoup themselves for the additional taxation imposed by consuming less spirits and increasing the consumption of beer as well as tobacco and tea. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer does not controvert the view of the hon. Member for Leicester. He admits that the Tea Duty forms a proper subject of reduction, and I cannot admit that there is any force in his objection to removing the tax, because there may be some difficulty in reimposing it. If I might quote an authority, I would quote himself, because he is removing the tax upon hawkers without any thought of a difficulty in resuming it, if necessary. I believe that no greater social advantage has ever been conferred upon the community than the arrangements of the Tea Duties by my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian. I should be glad to see that work completed. I only rose to say that I entirely sympathize with the principle mentioned by the hon. Member for Leicester. We cannot, of course, vote for the refusal or the reduction of this Duty without making other arrangements; but I think that it is necessary, all the same, to enter our protest against the principle of the Budget, in which reduction of taxation appears not to be divided in the proportions adhered to by former financial arrangements.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I hope I may be allowed to say one word. I waited until the right hon. Gentleman had completed his remarks, in order to point out that there is nothing unusual in the course which we have taken. Relief is given not only to the Income Tax payers, but to the ratepayers who may be considered to be a general and wide class of the community. If we have given relief mainly to the Income Tax payers, it is because of late years the old principle has not been followed of relieving the Income Tax from burdens imposed upon it in the time of emergency when we have a surplus in ordinary times. The Income Tax payer alone has been hit by the late increase of duty, and the reason of the expenditure we have now made is that we find ourselves in the extraordinary position of having to deal with the whole of local finance. Hon. Members will recollect that last year I afforded substantial relief to working classes.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): I wish to know what becomes of the tea which comes to England in a broken state, and is not allowed to be sold because it is considered unfit for consumption? I am informed it is sent to Germany, where a large business is carried on in making cafféine out of broken tea after it has been sprinkled with petroleum? I believe that the manufacturers of this country could make a great deal of money if this broken tea could be obtained without paying the 6*d*. duty.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has called attention to the fact that of recent years in times of emergency it has been the Income Tax that has been increased, and not the other taxes. Now, in 1885, the proposal of the Government was not only that the Income Tax should be increased, but that there should also be an increase in the duty on articles of consumption. That proposal, however, was rejected by the Party who now sit opposite. It must, therefore, not be charged upon us that when the occasion arose we proposed to add largely to the Income Tax without making any addition to the duties on articles of consumption. I do not blame the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what occurred then, for he was among our supporters in 1885, and approved the Budget which was then brought in. My right hon. Friend will remember that the arguments used for and against that Budget were exactly the same arguments which have been used now—that it is not proper to add solely to one kind of burden, but to treat direct and indirect taxation as two sisters alike. Unfortunately, althought I had then the support of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I did not succeed in obtaining the support of those hon. Members who act and vote with him now.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I am afraid I cannot answer the technical question which has been put to me by my hon. Friend the Member for the Uxbridge Division of Middlesex (Mr. Dixon-Hartland). All I understand is that some business is carried on in Germany of a complicated character which permits the use of bad tea.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND: It is not a complicated business, and if the bad tea were left here a large trade would spring up. It is impossible, however, to establish that trade owing to the imposition of a duty of 6*d*. a-pound. The tea is sent abroad and sprinkled with petroleum before the cafféine is extracted.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I do not think the tea of that nature would be very attractive to tea drinkers of this country. With regard to the observations of my right hon. Friend opposite, I would remind him that the only way in which it is possible for him or his Friends to propose a tax on consumable articles is to put themselves in alliance with the Temperance Party, and to propose an increase of the Beer Duty.

Mr. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.) said, that under the last Budget the working classes had contributed £40,000,000 out of £76,000,000 of the total taxation. He considered that proportion altogether too heavy upon the working classes of the country, and he was glad to hear that they might look forward to some relief in respect to the Tea Duty next year. He drew the attention of the Committee to an article which appeared in *The Westminster Review* a short time ago, and which showed that the working classes paid 4 per cent, the lower middle classes paid 3 per cent, the owners of shops and warehouses and that class of the community, from 2½ to 10 per cent, and the very wealthy classes as low as ½ per cent, and rarely as much as 2 per cent, of the taxation of the country. That showed that the contribution of the working classes was out of all proportion, and he contended that, if taxation was to be imposed according to their means, the working classes must have some relief. He thought that the tax on Chinese tea was a most unjust one. Even at the risk of repeating what he had said a week ago in that House, he would point out that the tax, which amounted to 60 per cent on the export from China, was one which ought not to continue. It was only because China was a weak country that that system was in operation; it was a system which the Government dare not carry out with regard to any Continental Power or any Power that was strong. The effect of it acted prejudically on our own trade, and the reduction of the Tea Duty would, to a certain extent, benefit ourselves by increasing the purchasing power of China for our manufactures.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said, he had hoped that even if the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not prepared to accept to its full extent the Amendment of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton), he would have gone some distance to meet it, and made some suggestion, perhaps, that the hon. Member should have modified the form in which his Amendment stood on the Paper. The right hon. Gentleman had done something to meet the requirements of agriculture in the present Budget; he had also given a reduction of the Income Tax; but he had not taken a single step in the direction of lightening the burden which fell so heavily upon the working classes of the country. The only consolation they had received from the right hon. Gentleman was that tea was an article on which he admitted that he ought to keep his eye. He (Mr. Fenwick) would ask the right hon. Gentleman how long he intended to keep his eye upon it before he reduced the duty? Surely, the right hon. Gentleman must admit that 1*d.* in the Income Tax could be more easily paid by a man whose income was over £150 a-year, than 6*d.* a-pound duty could be paid on a staple article by the labouring classes of the country, whose wages did not average more than £50 or £60 per annum, and yet the latter class were those who bore the largest portion of the burden of taxation. However, although the right hon. Gentleman had not seen his way to accept even in a modified form the Amendment before the Committee, he was glad to hear that he could not accept the suggestion made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent), whose courage on questions of this kind they always admired, even when they failed to discover the wisdom of his proposals. The hon. Gentleman would increase the comfort of the working classes by limiting the number of their comforts. He (Mr. Fenwick) pointed out that, heavy as the burden had been upon the Income Tax payers, they would have shared and been considerable gainers by the reduction of the duty on tea. He could have wished that the right hon. Gentleman had given them a more definite promise that they would in future see a reduction of duty upon the article in question. Under the circumstances, he certainly had no hesitation in supporting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton).

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) said, the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) had proposed to reduce the duty on tea, and to put it to a certain extent on land. During the time he (Major Rasch) had sat in the House of Commons he had never heard a more extraordinary suggestion. They were accustomed to abnormal statements with reference to agriculture from Gentlemen sitting on the opposite side of the House, and they had been informed by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) that, if they only knew it, land had gone up in value during the last 40 years, and that they ought to be paying £40,000,000 instead of £2,000,000 taxation. The argument of the hon. Member for Leicester being based on those lines, he (Major Rasch) as an agricultural Member, representing in that House not so much the squires as the agricultural labourers, should certainly vote against the Amendment.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I wish to explain to my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) that, although I agree with the views he has expressed, it will be impossible for me to accompany him into the Lobby in support of his Amendment. The question before us is purely a question of providing for the necessities of the Government, and I cannot think that it would be useful or desirable to take a Division on the question before the Committee for that reason. The Chancellor of the Exchequer brings forward these Resolutions not with the view of having changes made, but to maintain the Prerogative of the House. I have never given a vote which would reduce the income of the country below its expenditure, and I never will. I do not think my hon. Friend will do well to press his Amendment. I feel confident that there are a great number of hon. Members believing in the soundness of the principles underlying the Amendment, who would gladly join my hon. Friend in a Division, but who are unable to do so because it is absolutely necessary to find the means required by the Government.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, that if the Committee determined to modify the Tea Duty, the gap in the Revenue which it would cause might be filled up by arresting reduction of the Income Tax. For his part, he did not hold the principle of direct taxation to be altogether sound. There had been two Budgets in which reduction of Income Tax had been made, but there had been no reduction of taxation on the working classes, and he thought hon. Members who represented them were entitled to raise their voice against the present opportunity for reducing the taxation of the working classes being lost. He would certainly prefer that a reduction should be made now rather than rely upon the glorious promises held out for the future. For his part, he had a very strong objection to the principle laid down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer—namely, that the Income Tax was an engine of taxation to be reserved for indefinite application in the future.

Mr. PICTON said, that while it went sorely against the grain with him to resist any suggestion from the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Liberal Party, yet he felt so deeply the importance of his Amendment that he was unable to give way. The right hon. Gentleman knew very well how it had come to pass that he (Mr. Picton) had been obliged to bring forward this question at the present stage of the Bill. He would have no other opportunity of making the proposal, and he felt that it would not be right to allow the Session to go by without ascertaining how many Members of the House were in favour of the Tea Duties and how many were opposed to them. With regard to the deficiency which might be created in the Budget by the adoption of his Amendment, he felt convinced that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able to replace it in other ways, even, if it were necessary, to reimpose the amount by which the Income Tax was proposed to be reduced, inasmuch as those who paid the Income Tax would feel that they effected an equivalent saving in the cost of their tea.

Mr. W. E. GDADSTONE: I understand the Motion before us is a Motion for the omission of the clause—that is to say, for the removal of the whole of the Tea Duty, and that there would be no means for us to fill up the chasm thereby made. If the hon. Gentleman were to raise the question as between reduction of Income Tax and the reduction of the duty on tea—if the question were to lower the duty on tea from 6*d.* to 4*d.* a-pound, my objection would be removed, and I should assert that the Tea Duty was entitled to preference over the Income Tax.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I should wish to add this to my argument. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) speaks of the injustice of the Tea Duties, I wish to know whether that view could have been anticipated as the general view of those who have been responsible for the finances of the country for so long a period? I am now called upon to reduce the Tea Duties, rather than reduce to 6*d.* the Income Tax, which was raised two years ago to 8*d.* The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian once proposed to abolish the Income Tax altogether [Mr. W. E. Gladstone: In 1874.]. But during the whole of the period in which the right hon. Gentleman held Office, he did not touch the Tea Duties in the slightest degree. Why we should be called upon to make this alteration, I, for my part, cannot understand. I submit, with all respect to the right hon. Gentleman, he is meting out somewhat hard measure to the Government on this question. He has never proposed a reduction of the Tea Duty during the whole of his career; while the Income Tax has remained.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I beg to say that I reduced the Tea Duty to 6*d.* If I did not abolish it altogether, it was because I had not a surplus to enable me to do so; but the right hon. Gentleman has a surplus, and the question is how it is to be disposed of.

Mr. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman had to raise the Income Tax in order to lower the Tea Duty, and but for that the disparity would not have been so great as it was with the Income Tax at 7*d.*

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) said, he was anxious to adopt the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, if possible. He would ask if it was competent to him to withdraw his Amendment and afterwards substitute another to reduce the Tea Duty to 4*d.*? If so, he would ask permission to withdraw his Amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The Clause having been proposed from the Chair, it cannot be withdrawn; and it is therefore not competent to the hon. Member to do what he has proposed.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Can my hon. Friend move a reduction now?

The CHAIRMAN: No, Sir.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 259; Noes 98: Majority 161.—(Div. List, No. 80.)

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Additional import duties on wines in bottles).

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): As the reason which induced me to vote for the Government on the last Division does not exist in the present case, my hands are so far free, and I wish to make upon this clause one preliminary remark, which is, that I think that as far as we have gone we have kept any discussion upon the proposals of the Budget entirely apart from questions of Party politics, and I shall say nothing or do nothing on the present occasion which can give a character to this portion of the discussion different from that which has preceded it. I do not intend in this discussion to take the first place, because I am in a particular position with regard to the Liberal Party, but on the ground that I have been much more than any man in the House connected with Wine Duty legislation, and not only that, but with the whole of the French Treaty arrangements, which, I fear, are brought into prejudice and into danger by the proposal now made. I will look at this simply as a proposal of trade, and I remind the House that before 1860 there was no such thing as any pure or even any tolerable wine to be got in this country from one end of it to another at a cheap or moderate rate. A revolution was then made in the wine trade, and that revolution was so conducted as not to introduce into this important question anything of a protective element; but it was so framed as to allow the transactions of trade to follow as far as might be their natural course. The duties upon such wine as is the subject of the present proposal were reduced in almost all cases from 5*s.* 10*d.* a-gallon to 1*s.* a-gallon. That 1*s.* it is now proposed, in the case of bottled wine, to be raised to 3*s.* 6*d.* Now I have great fear, in the first place, that this will prove to be a prohibitive rate as regards lower qualities of wine. In the speech of my right hon. Friend this question was handled as if the tax about to be laid would be upon champagne alone. I have no doubt that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he could, would have put some such limitation, so as to prevent the tax falling upon low qualities of wine; but I am convinced that I speak the truth when I say that by far the larger proportion of gallons of wine which will be struck with this tax are of wines of low quality, and I am afraid on that account that it will tend to reintroduce the practice of adulteration. On that ground I object to the proposal; but I object still more strongly, considered as a mere trade proposal, on the ground of the protective element which it contains. Bottled wine of all descriptions, though large quantities of it are sold under 20*s.* a-dozen, and much of it at 15*s.*, and even if not as low as 12s., will be liable to pay a tax of 5*s.* a-dozen or 2*s.* 6*d.* a-gallon. No doubt, the Chancellor of the Exchequer will say there will not be a corresponding increase in price; because wines brought in wood will be bottled in this country. But I think he is now proposing—at any rate, he has pointed out to us—that one effect of this will be to enable the trader in this country to charge a fictitious or fancy price for bottling. I do not know what the limit of that fictitious price will be within the 5*s.* a-dozen. It appears to me that it may be somewhat lower than the cost of wine imported from abroad in bottles; probably about 4*s.* a-dozen will be the addition which the trader will be able to place on wines of lower quality. But all that, from a purely economical point of view, appears to me to be highly inexpedient, and so inexpedient that even were it upon that ground alone it would be most unwise to attempt such an operation for the sake of the small sum of £125,000 a-year I may be told that there was a duty upon bottled wines in the early days after 1860. No doubt, at one period there was; but the truth is that after 1860, and with reference to the then undeveloped circumstances of the trade, the wines imported in bottle were all of them high-priced wines. There was no such thing as low-priced wines imported in bottles into this country; and if that had been the present state of the trade, no doubt a great deal might be said in favour of the duty now proposed. But, Sir, I regard the importance of the matter we have before us as rather beyond the scope of the observations I have been making. There is much, I believe, which may be said on the subject of Colonial wines. I am told that this proposal of the Government will be a heavy blow to the production of wine in Australia, and that it is of the utmost consequence with reference to that trade. I do not believe that at this moment it is a very large trade; I think it is probable that the high value of labour in Australia may for some time prevent any great development of that trade, but there is no doubt of this—that extremely fine wine can be grown and has been grown in Australia, and if that trade should be checked in its development by the incidence of this duty, it is certainly a misfortune, and upon that ground, the broad balance of expediency and policy appears to me to be decidedly against the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. But the real question which opens to us a dark and formidable prospect, if we are to go forward in this rash attempt to obtain £125,000, is as to its effect upon our commercial relations with other countries. It will be borne in mind that before 1860, the commerce with France was high as to price and trivial in amount. But the augmentation of that commerce has been enormous. It has been augmented ten-fold, and that increase represented by figures is as 3,000 to 30,000 French tons. It is not only that a serious blow will be struck at an important trade, and a considerable alteration brought about in that trade; the really important question here to be considered is the bearing of the proposal upon the Free Trade policy of the country. Now, before the Treaty of 1860 there was hardly a Free Trade Party in France; there were individuals in France who were sound economists, and who were therefore Free Traders, but the ideas and doctrines of Free Trade had not taken an effective hold upon the French public, or upon any considerable or influential portion of the French public. When the Treaty was brought into operation it increased, I may say something like six-fold, the commerce between this country and France, and it led to the adoption of partial measures of Free Trade in other countries, even notwithstanding the reaction in favour of Protection which has more recently taken place. I believe that in consequence of the Treaty, and in consequence of that legislation, and of that alone, most of the tariffs of European countries are at this moment in a state considerably more favourable to us than they were before 1860. The progress we then made with France was the spring and centre of the whole of that movement. What was its subsequent history? That Treaty had not only the effect of extending our trade, which, I think, now stands at something like £20,000,000 a-year of exports, and £32,000,000 a-year imports; but it did much to develop the Free Trade sentiment, or, as I should say, to enlighten the public mind of France. Free Trade became a powerful and important conviction in the minds of a large portion of the French people; and I think I may now, at this distance of time, remind the Committee of a circumstance which I do not think was of a confidential nature, but which I believe has never been brought before Parliament. It is well known that, when that most distinguished statesman, M. Thiers, came forward to a most prominent position in France, in the last years of his life, when unquestionably he rendered to his country illustrious services, notwithstanding that he was a resolute and extreme Protectionist, he endeavoured to turn to account the high position which he held in relation to this country. M. Thiers endeavoured to induce the English Government, of which I was the head, to consent to large modifications of the Treaty of 1860, in a Protective sense. He said to us—"What I am offering you is really for the benefit of Free Trade, for if you do not accept it, so strong is the Protectionist Party in this country, that your Treaty will disappear altogether, and enactments far stronger than I am asking for may and will be passed in France against you." Sir, we steadily resisted those proposals of M. Thiers; we would not consent to reinstate the French Treaty on a comparatively protective basis; we chose rather to trust to the sentiment of the French public and the convictions which had grown up in favour of Free Trade; and the result was that we ceased to negotiate with M. Thiers; the matter was negotiated with the French nation, and the French nation has allowed us from that day to this practically to enjoy "the Most Favoured Nation" Clause, and with that the arrangement which was in substance the arrangement of the Treaty of 1860. Those communications took place in 1871 and 1872, and they formed a most important chapter in the commercial history of this country. How does the matter stand now? Since that time unquestionably protective ideas have progressed in France as they have progressed in this country. They have made progress to my astonishment—such is the fatal habit which the human race, unfortunately, has to relapse into barbarism even after they have basked in the sunshine of civilization. Let me, however, point out that we have a good deal more light here still than there is in France—that is to say, I recognize with regret that the Protective Party in France are in such a position that it requires very little to give it the upper hand. I was in Paris at the end of December, and had the power of communication with high authorities on this subject; and from one in particular, who summed up in himself the pure Free Trade principle in France, I learned with dismay, though not with surprise, that the Protectionist Party there was as nearly as possible becoming triumphant. I learned that the best chance, and almost the only chance, of maintaining the substance of the system established in 1860 was the successful issue of the negotiations which were pending between France and Italy. Those negotiations have continued, and I am sorry to say they have come to no favourable issue. I do not know that they are hopeless, but unquestionably no progress has been made, and since last December ground has been lost. Now, my apprehension is that a retrograde step taken by this country will have a fatal effect upon the fiscal deliberations and policy of France. I have not the smallest doubt that this proposal has been hailed with joy by the Protectionist Party in France, and that it has struck terror and dismay into the minds of the Free Traders of the country. The wines which we import in bottles constitute a very large portion of the total import of wine from France—not a moiety, but not very far short of it, for they represented 135,000 hectolitres as against 205,000 hectolitres, or about two-fifths of the whole quantity. But I do not stand upon this or that effect upon a particular trade. It is the effect upon the public mind of France and the public policy of France that I regard with apprehension. I have no disposition to take a hostile course individually, or in any other way with regard to these proposals; but the prospect is so dark and so dangerous, and the perils we are going to incur are so enormously out of proportion to the frivolous and insignificant amount to be obtained from this tax, that if I did not raise my voice in protestation against its imposition, I should feel that I had failed in a great, an obvious, and an imperative duty. It is quite unnecessary to detain the House at any length. I have said, I think, enough to open to the House the nature of the apprehensions with which my mind is filled. They have been confirmed by what has come from the Treasury Bench to-night. We have been told already that the French Government has made a representation to the British Government on the subject. What is the meaning of that representation? I gather from the statement of the Under Secretary of State that it was couched in terms studiously courteous and respectful, as I am quite certain that every representation of the Government of France would be, but it is a step of international comity and duty, and manifestly intended to lay the ground for future action, and that future action, if determined by the spirit existing in France, and foreign in no way to that which prevails in a certain section in this country—though not in the majority—will be action distinctly tending to retrogression; and, as the example of that country is of enormous consequence to the other countries of the Continent, I fear it will be the beginning of an unsound and regrettable course in the general commercial relations of Europe. I should be glad if the Government can remove these apprehensions of mine; but I doubt very much whether my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be able to use the language which I should like to hear from him. I should be glad to see him get up, and say—"My information is better than yours. I know more of what is going on in France than you know; I have better means of knowing. I tell you that your alarms are idle, and that there will be no retaliatory legislation in France, and that the commercial relations with France are not in a state of insecurity at the moment." I believe that such is the relation between France and this country, that, notwithstanding the protective tendency which prevails, that national amity would continue on our side, and preserve for us the present state of things for a long and, possibly, an indefinite period; but that the one thing wanted to make the Protectionist Party, now strong in France, becomes irresistible, was an act of England, who was a party to the arrangement of 1860, which constituted the first provocation to enter upon a different course. I have spoken of the insignificance of this sum of £125,000—it is a contemptible sum when it is put in contrast for one moment with the enormous considerations to which it leads. In the first place, I regard this as a retroactive step which is sure to leave an impress on our commercial policy; and, in the second place, I must say that nothing has done more to place the relations of England and France on a sound basis than the Treaty of 1860. The sentiments which prevail now between England and France are totally different from those which prevailed 40 or 50 years ago. They are the sentiments of thorough and cordial friendship, and reciprocal attachment, and the growth of these sentiments I do not scruple to say is mainly due to the innumerable relations of private and personal intercourse, and of the interchange of beneficial offices through the operation of commerce in consequence of the legislation of 1860. It is not only upon the ground of the commercial disadvantage and mischief connected with this unfortunate proposal; it is not even only upon grounds connected with the retroactive character that it is likely to import into our future transactions; but it is also, if possible, still more upon the higher ground that Free Trade between the two countries has made friendship and affection between the two countries, that I can be no party to any step which tends to cool the friendship between the two nations, or relax the bonds which bind them together. Although I make no accusation against Her Majesty's Government, but simply have endeavoured to discuss this question on its merits, it appears to me I could not, without a violation of solemn duty, have refrained from the course I have taken. What did you do in relation to Spain? The question of the Spanish Market in comparison with that of France is trumpery; the influence of Spain, outside of Spain, upon the legislation of Europe generally is almost *nil*; the feeling of Spain had always been friendly —I mean apart from trade; I am not aware anything was to be done in respect of those feelings; but, notwithstanding that the Spanish Market was very limited, you consented to give, in order to obtain the privilege of the Most Favoured Nation Clause, and, I believe, nothing else but that—not all the favourable terms we obtained in the French Treaty—but in order to get admitted on the same terms as other nations into a highly restrictive and very limited market we sacrificed £160,000 a-year. That was done by the Government with which I was connected. I am not going to take any great credit to that Government for what it did, for I must say that, according to my recollection, it only acted in conformity with a strong public opinion in this country. Is it possible to conceive a more gross national inconsistency than first of all to give away £160,000 a-year, in order to obtain a limited access to a limited market, regulated by highly protective principles, and then, when you have got with France this comparatively open state of trade and the enormous extension with it of commercial relations and great and weighty moral and political consequences connected with it, to hazard, if not to sacrifice, all this for the sake of £125,000 a-year? Now, this is not a Party question—at least, I hope it is not. I know perfectly well, if it was a Party question, what would happen; nothing said by me—it does not signify what—would be of any avail. I know that in the opinion of some Gentlemen I cannot speak language of good sense in connection with Party. Now, I have made no reproach or insinuation of any sort against the Government; I do not believe that they have protective intentions; I do not believe that they are insensible—they cannot be insensible—to the enormous importance of our commercial relations with France, and of the moral consequences depending upon them. I believe my right hon. Friend (Mr. Goschen) has been driven into this proposal simply in his anxiety to find a means of keeping together a number of little taxes, representing, as it were, separate pebbles, which, piled together, will make a cairn sufficient in their collective import to satisfy his needs. I can find no fault with the Government on the subject. I entreat them to consider this protest on its merits; I entreat them to forget; I entreat Members who sit behind them, and to whom I appeal quite as much as to them—I entreat them to forget that I am in a political position in this country. I should not have found it necessary to open my mouth—I would gladly have left the argument upon this question to other persons—were it not for the fact that there is no man alive who knows what I know about the history of 1860, and about the enormous consequences, both moral and political as well as economical, which followed upon the adoption of the legislation of that year. You are now in a most critical position; the conflicting interests are trembling in the scale; the parties have been engaged in a hard-fought struggle, carried on thus far upon such terms, that Protection, strong as it is, has not been able to obtain a practical triumph against Free Trade; but it is holding its own, and possibly doing more, and just at this moment you are going to put into the mouth of every Protectionist in France the very plea and argument which will serve his purpose and most discomfit his antagonists. It is possible that such things shall be done for no vital interest of this country, under no pressing necessity of this country, but for a sum with which you can easily part without inconvenience, and which is a sum in itself, whatever the circumstances of our finances may be, totally insignificant with reference alike to your responsibilities and to your power.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): My right hon. Friend has said we are putting into the mouth of every Protectionist in France an argument with which to discomfit his antagonists; but it is not I who have put this argument into his mouth. I should deny, and I do deny, the protective character of the proposal of Her Majesty's Government. My right hon. Friend was perfectly correct in saying that he did not believe the proposal was devised in a protective sense; it is not a protective proposal, and I deeply regret that my right hon. Friend, with his great authority, should have used arguments which, I believe, I was going to say, are erroneous arguments, but, I will say, are certainly most exaggerated arguments, and which will have this effect—that from this day forth the French will be able to say this proposal has the character which is ascribed to it by the right hon. Gentleman, but which, I believe, it does not possess. I believe that there is a considerable responsibility in making this proposal, and that responsibility I admit at once, has been increased, and the difficulties of the situation have been enormously increased by the speech which my right hon. Friend has delivered. If he tells the French that that which we can prove is not Protection is Protection, if he puts this argument into their mouths, I admit there is some danger of it being believed to a much greater extent than it otherwise would. I had come down to the House hoping to prove to the French how exaggerated have been their fears. [Mr. GLADSTONE here entered into a conversation.] I gave my right hon. Friend full attention while he was speaking. I know he says it is sometimes necessary that conversation should be conducted during a reply, but I am anxious to have his attention. There is no person in this House who is so much entitled to speak—I admit it to the full—as the right hon. Gentleman upon questions of this kind. We all know—we all feel—the services which he rendered to the country in 1860; we know the services he rendered in connection with the wine trade at large, and I should be the last person who would wish to undervalue for one moment the moral and political advantages which have resulted from the negotiations with which the name of the right hon. Gentleman will always be connected. But all his endeavours and the events of the last 27 years have, I am sorry to say, not brought about that which the right hon. Gentleman stated was Free Trade existing between the two countries. I think, perhaps, it was a slip of the tongue of my right hon. Friend opposite; he spoke as if we now enjoyed the benefits of Free Trade with France, MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I meant to say comparative free trade.

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes; very comparative Free Trade. But I do not wish to enter into that matter, because I am most anxious not to treat this in a controversial sense as beween ourselves and France. If we were to examine the amount of duty which is charged upon British manufactures by France, and compare that with the duty—with the increased duty—we are proposing, we could not say that the present state of things is so entirely satisfactory as the right hon. Gentleman would indicate. I do not wish to pursue that course of argument; the course of argument I wish to pursue is this—that there has been from the first an enormous exaggeration with regard to the effects of this proposal upon French trade. One might have thought from the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian that this was a proposal to put a heavy tax upon French wine, an almost prohibitive tax; and I admit it is in that way that the matter has been treated at the first blush by the French interest which is mainly struck by this proposal. Now, what is this proposal? It is a proposal to put a different duty on bottled wine to that imposed upon wine in cask. The House is aware, from the manner in which I introduced the proposal, that the object is, in the absence of the possibility of putting an *ad valorem* duty upon the higher and the lower classes of wine, to impose on the higher class of wine a somewhat higher duty than on the lower class; and I think the right hon. Gentleman would not object to that principle apart from the foreign aspect of the question. I do not think he would object, if we could establish roughly a distinction between the higher classes of wine and the lower classes, to the imposition of a higher duty upon the more expensive wines, which are generally consumed by the wealthier section of the community. Well, now, it was difficult to establish an *ad valorem* scale; but there is one method by which we can draw a broad distinction, and that is to make a difference between bottled wines and other wines. Now, is this system in itself a bad one? Does my right hon. Friend only object to the system because it is objected to by France, and may affect French interests to a slight degree, or does he think it a retrograde movement in itself? Is it wrong to put a different tax upon the higher class of wines? If not, you effect your object to a very large extent by the system of taxing bottled wines. It is a system which prevails in France itself. In France itself, higher municipal duties are levied upon bottled wines than upon wines in cask; and the objection which is now being made by the French is to a system which they themselves maintain in their own country. Well, but is that distinction not made elsewhere? In Germany—[Mr. GLADSTONE was here again engaged in conversation.]—I wish I could hear the arguments of my right hon. Friend, because I could then answer them at once; if I could only enjoy the running commentary of my right hon. Friend, I should be prepared to meet it. In Germany there is this distinction between wine in casks and wine in bottles—there is a duty of 24 marks per 100 kilos on wine in casks, and 80 marks upon sparkling wines, and 48 marks upon other wines which are in bottles. In Italy wine in casks pays 20 lire per hectolitre, and 60 lire per 100 bottles of one litre. In Sweden wine in casks pays about 4*d.* per litre, and wine in bottles about 8*d.* per litre. In the United States sparkling wines pay seven dollars per dozen quarts, still wines in casks pay 50 cents per gallon, and wine in bottles pays one dollar 60 cents per dozen quarts, which in practice makes a slight difference against wine in bottles. In Austria sparkling wines pay 50fl. per 100 kilos, and other wines 20fl. It is not quite certain what is the present practice in Russia; but there seems to be a difference between the duty on sparkling and other wines. It will be seen, therefore, that this is no new proposal, but that it is one known to France and to most European countries, and yet the adoption of this proposal with regard to this country is described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian as a step of such a grave character as to shake the political and the social relations between the two countries. We retain but a slight degree of our fiscal liberty if a proposal of this kind cannot be made and be treated by our neighbours with moderation, and with a real examination of the facts of the case. But the French have argued as if this increased duty, this duty of 5*s.* a dozen bottles, will be paid on wines which are imported in bottles now, some of which are offered for sale at 24*s.* per dozen. The obvious answer to that—and it has been foreseen by my right hon. Friend—is that a great portion of this wine will be imported as before into this country, but that it will not pay the increased duty, because it will be imported in casks. So far as the bottling trade is concerned, there is some force in the observation of the right hon. Gentleman, and I will deal with that in a moment. But the calculation of the French, that this duty is going to be placed on inferior wines, is a calculation which breaks down entirely, because it is well known that the inferior wines can be and will be imported in casks. Therefore it is surely a totally erroneous calculation to assume that cheap bottled wines will bear this duty, which, I admit, would be too high a duty to impose upon them. The French complain of losing the bottling trade, and, at the same time, of having to pay an increased duty on the lower class of wines. Now, it is quite certain that it is only one of these two results that can happen. Either they will lose the bottling trade, in which case there will be but the present duty of 1*s.* per gallon paid on the cheaper class of wines, or else the wines will continue to be imported in bottle. It is quite plain which of the two will happen—that is, that cheap wines will be imported in casks into this country. Now, is it an offence against Free Trade to say we will put a different duty upon bottled wines and upon wines in casks? I ask any Free Trader is that, in itself, a breach of Free Trade? No one in the House can say it is; and, therefore, the question arises, is it a breach of Free Trade if incidentally the effect of this proposal is that a portion of the wine which is now bottled in France will have to be bottled in this country? I am desirous of re-assuring the French that there is no intention of imposing a protective duty at all. As regards wine, there cannot be an idea of Protection, and we are simply carrying out the system which the French carry out—namely, the putting of a higher duty on wine in bottles, not because it is in bottles, and not because we wish the consumption of it to be checked, but because the transporting of wine in casks, instead of in bottles, affords a test of the value of the wine. The higher class of wine must continue to be bottled in France, and this will have to pay the higher duty; the lower class of wine will be bottled in this country, and the French will not have to pay the higher duty upon it. I have calculated that the increased duty will yield £125,000 a-year; the French have erroneously calculated that the extra duty will yield £400,000 a-year, and it is against this that they are rising in arms. They think the duty will be a large and important amount; but that is on the assumption that the cheaper wine will continue to be brought to us in bottles. I say again that that will not be the case, and consequently the increased duty which the French fear will be paid on only a moderate proportion of the wine now imported in bottle. Then the right hon. Gentleman says this proposal has a protective character on account of the fact that the wine will have to be bottled in this country. No one will believe that it was for the sake of the bottling in England that such a change as this has been proposed; the change is proposed in order to strike at the higher class of wines. That is the simple object for which it is proposed, and it is a legitimate object. The argument must be pushed to this point—that it is on account of the difference in bottling; it is because the bottling trade will, to a certain extent, be conducted in this country instead of in France; it is on that account we are to abandon that which would otherwise be a perfectly legitimate fiscal proposal. I will reduce the matter to its proper proportions. I admit the French are startled by the proposal; but then, in the first place, they have not had these explanations, and, in the next place, of course they would have preferred that matters should stand as they are. I can quite understand that; but I ask again, are we to forego our fiscal rights in this matter, not from any fear that we should strike a real blow at France, but upon the insignificant question of transferring the bottling of Bordeaux wines from Bordeaux to London? My right hon. Friend has spoken of the effect this will have upon the wines from our Colonies. As regards Australia, I made inquiries before I made this proposal, and the result of my inquiries was that I found that Australian wines are quite capable of being imported in cask. I thought it essentially important to make these inquiries, and my information is diametrically opposite to that of the right hon. Gentleman. As I said, it is to the effect that the greater proportion of Australian wine is now imported in cask, and that it is of that alcoholic strength that freely admits of its importation in cask. [Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): White wine?] Australian wines generally. The right hon. Gentleman asks about white wine. There is a fallacy about white wine that it cannot be imported in cask. I was asked a question on the subject the other day; but I dare say a great many Members of the House have already received circulars from their wine merchants, if they have ever had wine from abroad, in which the wine merchants say they are in a position to supply the same Hocks as heretofore at the same prices, because arrangements will be made for bottling them in England. The view that white wine cannot be brought in cask is, I believe, an entirely erroneous one. I admit there are a few kinds of cheap wine, the very cheap champagnes, which cannot be bottled in England, and which, therefore, will be heavily struck by this mode of taxation; but in every case in which you levy a tax you create some grievance. There is a line where the inferior or commoner article has to bear the same taxation as the higher or more valuable article. At present, common clarets and the cheapest wines of France are taxed the same as the more valuable Lafittes and valuable champagnes; that is a grievance which exists at the present moment. For the future, most cheap wines will stand on a favourable footing as compared with the highher class of wines, and the grievance of inequality of taxation will be greatly reduced. The hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton), earlier in the evening, called attention to the fact that cheap teas were taxed higher than they ought to be in proportion to their value. Now, if my proposal is accepted, the cheaper champagnes—the cheapest you can find, which, although they are called cheap champagnes, fast become dear champagnes when they come to this country—will not bear nearly so high a taxation in proportion to their value as the pound of cheap tea to which the hon. Member for Leicester alluded. I regret there is a certain class of wine on which the taxation will fall heavily; but, on the whole, I believe this will not be the case, because the trade will adjust itself to altered conditions. I do sincerely hope that this matter will not cause that excitement in France which has been feared by my right hon. Friend; and I hope it will not do so, notwithstanding the speech which my right hon. Friend has made, and which, I am bound to say, as endorsed by the cheers of his followers, has aggravated the difficulties with which the Government had to deal. He said he did not know whether we had got different information from what he had in regard to the feeling in France. His information is most valuable, and I admit to the full the fact that there is a strong Protectionist Party in France, and that the Free Trade cause has gone back? If this were a Protectionist proposal there would be force in his fears, but the proposal is not a Protectionist proposal, and it cannot be so regarded. Let me call attention to the letter from the Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce to the French Ministry, complaining of this tax, but drawing certain conclusions from it. What is the conclusion which the parties most interested, the Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce, draw? Do they say they ought to regard our action as a blow at Free Trade, and that they ought to resort to reprisals? The very opposite moral is what they draw; the moral they draw is, that there ought to be a Commercial Treaty with this country; that their own system is unsatisfactory, and leaves them open to a country like ours exercising its right, which they do not dispute. I will not detain the Committee any longer upon the matter; but, if they will allow me, I will give them a translation—a very halting translation I fear—of the communication of the Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce. The Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce say that it "would be repugnant to them to call for a system of reprisals," the first effect of which would be to raise the price of coal in France, of iron, and of all that was necessary for their industry. The Chamber "asserts its confidence in the necessity of exchange being facilitated between the two countries by reciprocally moderate tariffs, and thus bringing about the prosperity of their agriculture, their commerce, and their industry." They certainly do not think the occasion ought to be taken advantage of for resorting to a system of reprisals or of Protection. They consider that England is "perfectly at liberty to take the action she has taken; but it would have been impossible to have done so had a Commercial Treaty existed between the two countries." The Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce are Free Traders—[Mr. Mundella: Always have been.]—and they did not take the view which other Free Traders had addressed to us to-night, that the result of our action would be to bring about reprisals. On the contrary, they think it is a proof of the necessity for settling questions which may be pending between the two countries in a manner which will be satisfactory to both. I venture to say that the discussion has assumed dimensions which our proposal does not justify; it is a small matter, and I think the principle at stake is not large. We have simply made proposals similar to the fiscal proposals of other countries, not with the desire for Protection, but simply with the object of putting upon a more satisfactory footing the relative duties paid upon the dearer and cheaper wines. I confess I do not see in this proposal that monstrous danger which has been pointed out by my right hon. Friend. I trust we shall be able to convince the French, by friendly argument, when the matter comes to be thrashed out, that they have enormously exaggerated the consequences of this new tax. We shall certainly meet all remonstrances they may make in the most friendly spirit, and I trust that nothing said this evenin the House, and nothing said in France or in this country, will tend for one moment to disturb the good feeling existing between the two countries, a good feeling to which every Party in the House, and every Party in the country, attaches the very highest importance.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he was sure every Member of the Committee would gladly re-echo the sentiment which had just been expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer—namely, that nothing should be done or said in the House that would in any way tend to ruffle or disturb the good feeling which existed between France and this country at the present moment. Let him (Mr. Mundella) remind the right hon. Gentleman that there would be no danger of this disturbance if there had not been a departure from the *status quo*. What was deplored was that the right hon. Gentleman could not let well alone. In his speech the Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to the opinion of the Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce; but the reference was not quite *à propos*. The Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce had always been a Free Trade Chamber. Bordeaux and Lyons had been the centre of the Free Trade agitation in France. But it was not from Bordeaux that we got our champagne; it was the cheap claret which Bordeaux sent us, and the Bordeaux people were interested in the importation of a cheap coal, and that accounted for what had always been the feeling of Bordeaux on this question.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, the Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce protested against the increased duty; but they drew a different conclusion from it than hon. Gentlemen opposite.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he quite understood the Chamber protested against the change, but urged the French Government not to be driven into any course of retaliation, or, in other words, into a war of tariffs. In that he thought the Bordeaux Chamber took a very wise view. Now, the right hon. Gentleman based his argument throughout the whole of his speech that France always discriminated between wine in bottle and wine in cask in the duty she imposed. That was perfectly true; but let him ask the right hon. Gentleman why that was done in France? It was because the wine that France imported to such an enormous extent was the raw material.

Mr. GOSCHEN: It is not an import duty at all; it is the *octroi*.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he would admit that there was a great difference between material coming from the exterior and material coming from the country, into Paris, for instance. There were differential duties between the higher class and the lower class wines. Nearly every Frenchman was accustomed to his bottle. There was another reason. Everyone knew the enormous growth of the trade beween France and Spain and France and Italy, which very largely consisted of the importation of wine into France for the purpose of French manufacture. [Mr. GOSCHEN dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman shook his head; but had he ever been in Italy during the vintage? If he had, he would have seen enormous quantities of wine being carried across the passes of the Mont Cenis and St. Gothard, and, again, from Piedmont and Central Italy, into France. Wine was carried from Italy to France just as coals were carried from Newcastle to London. There was an enormous import of wine from Italy to France. The same was the case with regard to Spain. He believed the trade between France and Spain had doubled within the last 10 years, simply through the enormous interchange from the importation of wine. But what was to be so much regretted was that the right hon. Gentleman, for so small an amount, should have disturbed the whole settlement of the wine question of this country. £125,000 a-year was probably the outside sum which would be realized. He (Mr. Mundella) quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that we should get the cheap clarets just as now. They would come in casks, and would be bottled in this country, as they had been to a large extent already; but there were certain wines which would be practically excluded from this country by the imposition of this 5*s.* duty. Would the Italian wines come into this country at all? Could the Tuscan wines come into this country under this regulation?

Mr. GOSCHEN: If they do, they will pay a somewhat higher duty, and I have already shown the Committee that there will be similar hardships precisely as in the case of tobacco and tea.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, that was a confession on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. The Tuscan wines which had been coming into this country for the last few years, and increasing in quantity, would be practically excluded. They would have to compete with the French wines which came in at 1*s.* a-gallon, and very little chance they would have. By this extra duty of 5*s.* a dozen bottles, they would strike a very heavy blow at Italian wines, and at many of the light wines of France. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer could deal exclusively with champagne and high-class wine, there would not be so much objection to the tax, but he could not do that. He would exclude light wines, such as Saumur, which were now sold in the clubs as low as 2*s.* 6*d.* a bottle. The right hon. Gentleman put an additional duty on these articles of something like 20 per cent. Was it to be wondered at that French equanimity was therefore disturbed? The Chancellor of the Exchequer said the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had very much tended to aggravate the disturbance. The Chancellor of the Exchequer must remember that Mons. Goblet had already pronounced upon this question in the Chamber of Deputies. The feeling in France was independent of anything expressed in the House of Commons. Hon. Members had carefully refrained up to the present from expressing any opinion upon the subject, because they had no desire to aggravate the feeling; but Mons. Goblet, in answer to Mons. Faure, said France would have to take retaliatory steps if this measure were carried. Was it not the fact that some of the cheap hocks would have to bear this heavy duty? What about Moselle and Chablis? Italian and Tuscany wines the right hon. Gentleman admits——

Mr. GOSCHEN: Not all Italian wines.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, that, of course, the Sicilian wines, the stronger wines, would come in just as they did now. But the lighter wines which were coming into consumption in this country would be heavily hit. Certainly the wines from Queensland would be hardly effected unless they were specially exempted. The tendency of all this legislation was to disturb trade and to produce adulteration. There was no doubt there would be a large manufacture of champagne in London, which would be taken away and then brought again to this country. There would also be a large manufacture of adulterated and speculative wines. That was sincerely to be regretted. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman knew that they had hitherto respected him as a financier, but they could not approve a change which involved an interference with the most Favoured Nation Clause, which had been the sheet anchor of our commercial success. If they disturbed that clause, they would strike a blow at our commerce. All the gains they would reap by a paltry tax like this were insignificent and infinitesimal. His right hon. Friend had referred to the fact that in 1886, they, who now sat on the Opposition Benches, settled the Spanish wine trade by a concession, which cost the country £160,000 a-year. The arguments in favour of the course they took were overwhelming. He (Mr. Mundella), had no idea, until he went to the Board of Trade, that there was so much to be said for that concession. What was the fact? They found our trade in Spain had dwindled down from £10,000,000 or £11,000,000 sterling to £6,000,000 sterling, while in the same time the Germans had increased their trade eight or ten-fold, and the French had increased theirs 100 per cent, and all because we had maintained a high tariff against Spanish wines. They diminished that tariff, and the result was an increase of business with Spain. It would take some time, no doubt, to place us in our former position of supremacy in Spain; but he believed we should retain it if we did not let out the water, as it were, by levying this small tax. It was really much to be regretted that the right hon. Gentleman should have taken this departure from the *status quo*, and he jeopardised, as he (Mr. Mundella) believed the right hon. Gentleman had done, English trade by the course he had adopted. He sincerely hoped that even now it was not too late to abandon this tax; that no false pride or the fear of a confession of failure would restrain the Chancellor of the Exchequer from taking a step which was very much to be regretted, and which he would, upon reflection, feel was a mistake, and which in former years he would not have allowed any Conservative Government to take without a protest on his part. He (Mr. Mundella) knew the right hon. Gentleman thought that he would impose a heavy duty on the rich man's wine. That was a mistake. They were going to put a heavier tax on light wines than they put on the valuable and strong wines of Portugal, Spain and Madeira. Not one of these light wines ever did or ever would come to this country in barrel, but the fine high class ports and sherries and Madeira came in casks and were bottled in this country. The right hon. Gentleman is striking a blow at the higher light wines coming from Greece, Italy, Austria, Hungary, and from France. The right hon. Gentleman was striking a blow at that trade which might be very small in the beginning. He did not think that seven years ago a dozen bottles of Chiante or Boroglio or of the light Tuscan wines were brought to this country; but our trade with Italy was increasing. It was very necessary it should, and it was deplorable that anything should be done that should disturb in any way the trade we were doing with Italy or with France or with any other Continental country. He was afraid the right hon. Gentleman had put in the thin edge of a very dangerous principle, which would lead to very serious results. He appealed to the House of Commons to help the Chancellor of the Exchequer to retrace the step he had taken.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) expressed the earnest hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would maintain this tax in its integrity with one exception, which he would presently submit to the Committee. He did not think that we had any cause whatever to be afraid of France in this matter. Of course, it was the wish of every Member of the Committee that we should live on the best possible terms of goodwill with France; but hon. Members had to bear in mind this one most important fact that Free Trade meant free exchange, and that the Free Trade which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) referred to as that which we now possessed was entirely a one-sided Free Trade, and was in no sense whatever a free exchange. We admitted the goods of France absolutely free, with the one exception of wine, whereas there was hardly a single import of British production that was not heavily taxed upon entering a French port. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian dwelt upon the figures as to the imports and exports to and from France. Those figures brought out the fact most clearly, that the exports from

France to the United Kingdom nearly doubled the exports of British goods to France. The right hon. Gentleman showed that we exported to France goods to the value of £20,000,000 sterling, while we imported from France goods valued at £32,000,000 sterling. [Mr. MUNDELLA: Not double.] He said, "nearly double." He did not think that the figure £20,000,000 was exactly right; the exports of British goods to France were considerably less than £20,000,000 sterling in value, and much nearer £15,000,000, when Colonial produce was deducted. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) had referred to the case of Spain. He (Mr. Howard Vincent) was sure the right hon. Gentleman would remember the action of Germany a few years ago in regard to the Spanish trade. Spain put duties on the imports from Germany on a higher scale than those upon the goods of other countries. What did Germany do? She said at once that the imports from Spain should be more heavily taxed, unless the new duties as regarded German goods entering Spain were removed. What was the result? The prohibition was at once removed. He noticed that his right hon. Colleague (Mr. Mundella) in the representation of Sheffield assented to that view. They had heard that night from the lips of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) the first whisper of reciprocity from the Benches opposite, and he (Mr. Howard Vincent) felt certain that we had nothing whatever to be afraid of when we bore in mind the figures of the importation of foreign goods into this country and the exportation of British production to foreign states. He would not detain the Committee, but the suggestion he was anxious to make to the Chancellor of the Exchequer had reference to Colonial wines. He was sure the Committee heard with great satisfaction that before deciding upon this duty the Chancellor of the Exchequer made particular inquiries as to the effect the proposal would have upon the Australian wine trade. The Committee had no other desire than to do everything it possibly could to develope and improve our commercial relations with Australia and the other great British Colonies. The importation of wine from Australia was undoubtedly small at present, but he hoped it was growing, and as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, the importation of Australian wine in bottle was conducted on a still smaller scale, therefore the suggestion he had to make would not materially interfere with the revenue the right hon. Gentleman expected to derive from the tax. He wished to suggest to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he should add at the end of the clause some such words as these—

> "All wines produced in any British colony or possession shall be exempted from this additional duty on wine in bottle."

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer in dealing with this matter in his Budget speech anticipated the very remonstrances which had come from abroad. If he (Mr. Bradlaugh) gathered the right hon. Gentleman's words rightly, he expressed the view that our remonstrances with Foreign Powers on the subject of fiscal imposts had very little effect, therefore, we need to pay very little attention to remonstrances from them. That was not quite a correct repetition of the words he listened to, but he thought it was a correct repetition of the sense of what he listened to.

MR. GOSCHEN: I think I put it in a much more conciliatory form.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he would read the right hon. Gentleman's words—

> "It is very possible that the extra tax imposed on these high-class wines may lead to some remonstrances from Foreign Powers, but I am bound to say that remonstrances of ours to Foreign Powers with regard to the imposition of duties on British goods have not been so entirely successful as to make it necessary for us, beyond what is compatible with our interest, to look beyond the fiscal merits of the question."

He thought he also heard the right hon. Gentleman say that reprisals were to be avoided if possible, but what he (Mr. Bradlaugh) rose for was to call attention to a much narrower question, one involving pure matter of fact. Although his experience was very limited upon the point, it was very conclusive. German wines at 12 marks a-dozen bottles he had bought for many years. He had read in a paper conducted by his very able Colleague (Mr. Labouchere) that those wines were sour and bad; but they were good enough for him to drink. He had occasionally seen wines in hotels priced at 8s. the bottle which had not been nearly as good as the wines he spoke of. In France he had bought wine at 1f. 25c. and at 1f. 80c. the bottle. He was now speaking of the price at the place of purchase, and was not reckoning any carriage and duty. He did not think it was true that these wines would be brought here in wood. When wines as good as these he spoke of were brought in wood the dealers would take care they became higher priced wines before they reached the purchaser, or they would cook them—that was hardly the word to use; they would transform them in a fashion injurious to those who consumed them. He urged on the Chancellor of the Exchequer that, if imposed on such wines as the German wines, and on such wines as the French wines, and on some of the Italian wines—wines which he never saw in wood at all in this country —this duty would be absolutely prohibitive. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said the higher class wines would pay a higher duty than the lower class wines. That was not correct so far as the wines he (Mr. Bradlaugh) had mentioned were concerned. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that the duty he was imposing would be too heavy a duty to impose on wines to which he (Mr. Bradlaugh) alluded. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might say, and say truly, that the trade in bottled wine of the class he (Mr. Bradlaugh) spoke of had been a comparatively small trade. The right hon. Gentleman might say the Wine Trade here agreed with him in his proposal. He admitted they did; but they agreed with the right hon. Gentleman because when they got decent wine of the price he spoke of, they converted them into dearer wines to the English consumer. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) did not know he would do wisely to detain the Committee with more than the point he had put, but he was bound to say that what had been urged by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) was being urged in a very strong fashion in France, and not as the result of any sort of provocation coming from the right hon. Gentleman. It had been impossible to take up a French newspaper during the last fortnight without finding the feeling against this proposal expressed in very strong language, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not ignore the fact that there had been a great feeling of irritability and suspicion towards England during the last 12 or 18 months in France. A feeling of irritation and suspicion had sprung up which had been specially marked within the last 8 or 10 months. He did not think there was any real foundation for it, but he thought we, in this country, ought to avoid giving anything in the shape of excuse for it. He thought that was an unfortunate duty, especially as the result to us was only to put a small amount into the pocket of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that without touching the luxuries of the rich, of which the right hon. Gentleman had spoken, and only affecting an article consumed by the class to which he (Mr. Bradlaugh) had called attention.

MR. GOSCHEN: In order that there may be no mistake on this subject, I wish to say that I do not charge the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian with having provoked the feeling in France to which the hon. Gentleman opposite has just referred, because I know that it had previously existed, and it would have been unjust to have done that. My point was this. I came to the House prepared to prove that there was not an atom of Protection in our proposals, that they were not designed with that intention. I contend that the French people will now quote the argument of the right hon. Gentleman as conclusively showing that the proposals are based upon the principles of Protection, and will, therefore, render it more difficult for me to succeed in my object.

MR. MUNDELLA: The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer surely would not have desired that my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian who has taken so important a part in promoting the importation of French wines into this country should have sat silent while this debate was taking place. [MR. GOSCHEN: I desired no such thing.] I hold that he could not have done less than make the protest which he has made.

SIR JOHN SIMON (Dewsbury) said, he rose with some hesitation after the powerful and comprehensive speech delivered in the earlier part of the discussion by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone.) The right hon. Gentleman had spoken with all the authority of one who was perfectly familiar with this question; more so, perhaps, as he himself had said, than any living man. The right hon. Gentleman had taken the wide, broad ground of national policy, and had shown the terrible effects which this proposed increase of duty on foreign wine was likely to produce as between France and this country. He (Sir John Simon) at an earlier stage of this discussion had called attention to what took place in the Chamber of Deputies in France last week. Therefore, it could not be said that anything which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian to-night could put any complaint into the mouths of Protectionists in France, or could induce them in any way to resort to retaliative measures. The Protectionist note in France was struck as soon as this proposal was made known. Day after day the French newspapers had teemed with threats of retaliation and accounts of the excitement and agitation which this new proposal had created in that country, and last Saturday the matter was brought before the Chamber of Deputies. Questions were put to the Prime Minister of France, and every one was familiar with the answers which he had given. Therefore, it was clear that this note was struck long before the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had addressed the House on the subject. From the moment he (Sir John Simon) had read this proposal in the papers, and had heard it in the Budget speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) he had been struck with its impolicy. He had feared that it would breed a spirit of retaliation in France, and that it would lessen the commercial relations between the two countries, and considerably damage the friendly attitude of France towards us. He took no sentimental view of the question when he said that, because he knew that nations in their intercourse did not proceed on sentiment, but on policy, upon what suited their interests. He viewed the matter solely from that point. As a matter between the two nations it had seemed to him a most unwise and impolitic proposal, and one, too, made at a time of all others most unfavourable for it, for we had been for years past representing to France and other countries the injury being done to commerce and our sugar industry by the sugar bounties. By dint of great effort the present Government, to their credit be it said, had induced these foreign nations to meet here in conference with a view to the abolition of the sugar bounties, and it now appeared that at the very time we were succeeding in getting France, Germany, and other nations to put an end to the bounty system, we were putting a duty, which amounted to a protective duty, on one of the principal products of one of those countries. He held in his hand a letter which he had received from one of the greatest wine producers in France, and he would quote from it, as it was well that the sentiment of France, so far as its interests in the wine growing trade were concerned, should be known. This wine grower stated that he sincerely hoped this proposal would be withdrawn as a tariff war was certain to follow its adoption. Such a war would be insisted upon by Deputies, friends of his, which gentlemen were, in fact, taking steps in that direction. This gentleman stated further on that his business was by far the largest which would be affected by the proposed duty on bottled wines. He declared that his firm shipped to this country 55,000 dozens annually, the bulk of which was invoiced at from 13*s.* to 15*s.* a-dozen, so that the tax in his case would bring about almost entire ruin. At this moment 3,000,000 bottles were being shipped, when it appeared that the market was to be suddenly shut against them. This gentleman also stated that this duty would fall most unpleasantly upon the middle class, by whom his wines were mostly consumed. He (Sir John Simon) had on this subject made an observation which seemed to excite almost the contempt of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had said that this new impost would affect chiefly the middle classes. The right hon. Gentleman had contended, on the other hand, that the impost would be a tax on luxuries. Under that plea, it was supposed that the country at large would approve the tax; but, as a matter of fact, the impost was one which would not affect the rich. Who were the rich? Why, your men of £20,000 or £30,000 a-year. These people would not feel 5*s.*, more or less, on a dozen of their champagne. It was your middle class, your respectable middle class, who were not so fortunate as to possess such large incomes—persons of moderate means—who ought to enjoy these small luxuries, if luxuries they were, without undue taxation. This class were the largest contributors to the Revenue, and this gentleman, who wrote to him from France upon the proposed duties, declared that they were the largest consumers of French wines. This gentleman stated that, to say nothing of very cheap sparkling wines, over 100,000 dozens of pure sparkling Saumur was exported by his firm, and that the trade was steadily increasing owing to the recognized genuineness, exhilarating quality, and moderate price of these wines; and yet the trade suddenly found itself face to face with ruin. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had declared that the tax would not affect the middle class, because in the future they would import their wines in bulk. Well, he was sure the right hon. Gentleman did not mean to say that people were going to import champagne in bulk. But, putting aside the question of champagne, he would take the moderately-priced clarets, which persons of the position of life of Members of that House were in the habit of drinking. Supposing that they did import their clarets and other wines in bulk, then what became of the right hon. Gentleman's argument as to the increase of the Revenue? This additional impost on bottled wines was to supply a contribution of £125,000 towards the Revenue; but what became of the argument based on that, if it were anticipated that the impost was going to be largely evaded? If a large proportion of the wines imported in bottles would in future be imported in bulk, how would the Chancellor of the Exchequer get the contribution to the Revenue which he expected by laying these duties on foreign wines? He (Sir John Simon) confessed he did not see how the right hon. Gentleman could get out of the dilemma. But, after all, the great point was not whether they would be able to get cheap wines, but it was the effect it would have on trade and the mercantile relations between this country and France, and the effect it would have upon that great system of Free Trade which had been contended for for so many years, but which was being assailed more and more in this country. If this system of increasing imposts was adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, France, Italy, Germany, and every other country would avail themselves of the system; but he would not go further into the question. He was intensely opposed to this tax. He thought the new duty would be a serious impediment to trade and to a continuance of friendly relations between ourselves and France. It would strike a deadly blow to the principles of Free Trade, which were being assailed by a few misguided Gentlemen opposite. He thought, moreover, that this was the worst time for such a proposal to have been made. The right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) had told them that not only through the Chamber of Deputies, but through the Executive Government of France, representations had been made to us against this new impost. He maintained that that was an appeal which could not be neglected, and when the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer told them that this system of a differential duty on wine in bulk and in bottle existed in France and Germany and other places, he said that that was no answer to the objection he had raised to the proposal. What other Governments did amongst themselves, they did with the consent of those amongst whom they lived. Unfortunately, most of the nations of Europe were Protectionists; therefore, it did not shock them when their Governments amongst themselves carried out that policy, but it would shock them when they saw England, which professed Free Trade principles, putting on protective duties in the manner proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford) said, he had great pleasure in following the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dewsbury (Sir John Simon), for the reason that he had entirely disagreed with every single proposition he had laid down. In the first place, as to the effect this proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) would have upon the relations of the two countries, he (Mr. Staveley Hill) had first come into this House in 1868 on the ground of being strongly opposed to the French

Treaty of 1860; and it was, therefore, with thorough pleasure that he found this policy taken up by Her Majesty's Government, as it was the first step towards setting aside the policy of that Treaty of 1860. Under that Treaty, the industry of the town he then represented—namely, Coventry—was absolutely ruined. The whole silk trade of this country, in Spitalfields as well as Coventry and other places, was simply destroyed, and it was clearly shown in those days that nothing was given to England in return for the enormous privileges conceded to France. France had the opportunity of sending into England all her goods duty free; and what did she give us in return? Why, she put a prohibitive duty upon many of our importations, and a 30 per cent duty upon everything imported into France. Now, when we were able to take a line of our own, and proposed a small Import Duty upon certain French goods, it came with a very bad grace from France when they cried out—"You are ruining us." They had not the slightest objection to ruining our English trade, but now that they themselves were affected they came on their bended knees, declaring that we were bringing utter destruction on their bottling interest. That was the state of the case with regard to the introduction of these wines from France. "But," said the hon. and learned Gentleman, "you are ruining the interests of our own people; the middle classes of England will not be able to drink their champagne if it is put under an extra charge of 6*d.* a bottle more than they have hitherto been accustomed to pay." What utter nonsense. How could the middle classes of England, who were able to drink their quart bottle or their pint bottle of champagne, be so dreadfully ruined because they had to pay 6*d.* a bottle more for it now than they were used to. It was absurd on the face of it, and would not bear argument. There was one point, however, that he would direct the attention of the House, and he hoped also the country too. They on the Ministerial side of the House, who were those to whom his hon. and learned Friend had referred as misguided politicians, were told that these duties on manufactured goods pressed not upon the producer, but upon the consumer. They were told that if a duty were put upon lace the ladies of England would be ruined, and that if a duty were put upon watches, those who had to buy watches would feel the impost hardly, and that the adoption of such taxes would be a shameful thing to do. But in the iron trade, in the cotton trade, in the china and glass trade, they knew perfectly well that the manufacturers who dealt with the United States, with Germany, and with France, said, when they had to pay Import Duties—"You must remember this is a duty I have to pay when my goods go in." They all knew that that duty fell not on the consumer as much as on the producer. They had an illustration of the fact in this very case under discussion. In the matter of these duties on manufactured articles, those persons cried out when the shoe pinched. Who were the persons who were crying out now? Not the wine merchants of England, not the champagne drinkers—the right hon. Gentleman had not had a single complaint from champagne drinkers. Who was it then who were crying out? It was the producers. It was found out in this case that the brunt of the taxation would fall not upon the consumer but upon the producer.

Mr. PROVAND said, he wished to ask if the hon. and learned Gentleman would give a specific case in illustration of his views? [*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. STAVELEY HILL said, he hoped he was not out of Order. At any rate, if he was his attention would be called to the fact by the Chairman. He wished to say now one word as to our Colonial wines. We produced in our Colonies a very considerable amount of wine which he was not sorry to see was being brought more and more into competition with foreign wines. The great object they had in view—and this proposal was the first step towards it—was that we should put a tax not on necessaries but upon luxuries, which our people consumed, which were manufactured abroad. Let them put a duty on this wine, and he should be glad if the effect of so doing would be to encourage the production and sale in this country of Colonial wines.

Mr. SLAGG (Burnley) said, the hon. and learned Member for the Kingswinford Division of Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill) had neglected to take in the real issue in regard to this question. It would no longer remain to them, if they were to apply the line of argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman, to discuss merely the new duties on bottled wines, but they would have to take into consideration the whole fiscal system of this country. He (Mr. Slagg) must decline to embark upon a question so large; but he would just refer to the hon. and learned Gentleman's arguments, and make one or two answers to his inquiries. The hon. and learned Gentleman asked what had we got in exchange for the destruction of our silk trade from France, and for the destruction of some of our other industries? Well, he (Mr. Slagg) thought it was pretty well understood by almost everyone who professed to have even the most elementary knowledge of economic science that they did not legislate in this House, and did not arrange their Customs affairs with special regard to Coventry or any one single town or district in the country, but in view of the prosperity and welfare of the country at large; and though local misfortunes, such as the hon. and learned Member had referred to, were very much to be regretted, he must confess that the country was amply repaid for any sacrifice of that kind which it made by the return we received in the general advantage and prosperity of the community. When the hon. and learned Gentleman asked him what return such places as Macclesfield had received for the loss of her manufactures, he replied that they still retained the right of producing their silk goods at as good a price as they could be produced for anywhere else; and if they failed to do that it showed that their skill, their enterprize, science, and appliances were not equal to the effort. He would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman why he thought other sections of the community should have the hat sent round to them in order to support an industry on crutches which could not support itself? It was obvious that those industries which could not support themselves required very greatly to improve their processes to enable them to compete successfully with foreign countries. He could not conceive any more wholesome lesson applied to these businesses than the keen edge of foreign competition. While on the subject of the silk trade, he would beg leave to say that the town of Macclesfield, to which he had referred, was a striking example of the effect of the wholesome lessons taught by foreign competition. The manufacturing processes of Macclesfield received a very useful stimulus, because, although she was at one time adversely affected by the French Treaty, she was now not only able to keep pace with her foreign rivals, but was actually able to send certain manufactured silk goods to France, which she could not do before this wholesome discipline was applied to her. However, he would leave this subject in order to offer a few remarks on the question immediately before the Committee, and he ventured to do so on the ground that he had been associated with his revered Friend (Mr. Cobden) in very much that took place in relation to the Treaty negotiations in 1859, and it so happened that he had been concerned, more or less, in all the steps which had been taken between this country and France in relation to the modifications of that Treaty. If there was one lesson more than another which Mr. Cobden tried to impress upon the French people by his Treaty arrangement, and if there was any idea he endeavoured to impress on the minds of French economists, it was this—that it was good for us and to our advantage to take off import duties, because we thereby supplied ourselves with the commodities of foreign countries at the lowest possible rate, which enabled us in return to supply the foreign consumer with English goods at the lowest possible price. This was a lesson Mr. Cobden endeavoured to teach the French, and, in a manner, he was successful in showing them that it was to their interest to reduce their duties in order that they might supply their consumers at the lowest possible price. But what was the doctrine taught by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer? It was simply the reversal of that advocated by Mr. Cobden; and the amount of duty involved, and the sum the right hon. Gentleman was securing to the Revenue by his plan, was a mere bagatelle in comparison with the importance of the principle involved. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had said, it was as dust and balance. But the principle involved was very great and important and he (Mr. Slagg) ventured to say that the consequences of this act, small as it might appear from a financial point of view, might be very far-reaching and serious. It was his duty to go to France very frequently on matters of a semi-public character, and he had opportunities during those visits of exchanging ideas with prominent public men and with persons versed in public affairs, and he could tell hon. Gentlemen what the impression was upon the minds of competent financiers in France. It was this—that by advocating this new policy we were abandoning the Free Trade principles taught by Mr. Cobden; we were changing our minds on this important question of fiscal policy, throwing to the winds the principles and lessons which we endeavoured to teach in 1860, and taking the first step on the road towards retaliation. Retaliation was as clearly indicated as underlying this act of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer as anything could possibly be, for the right hon. Gentleman advanced this duty with this extreme and almost incredible statement. He said, in effect, that the French were not so very willing to accept our commodities that we should hesitate very much before putting a duty upon imports from that country. What was that but retaliation? It was an absolute declaration to this effect—"If you will not take our goods, we will proceed to prohibit yours." He (Mr. Slagg) thought it was an exceedingly sorrowful thing that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, even of a Conservative Government, had descended to such an argument as that. He could only regard it as one step in the direction of accepting the doctrines of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent). It was perfectly clear that the arguments of the school of that hon. Member were making a deep impression on the financial policy of the Government, and that they might presently see a return not only to the policy of retaliation, but possibly to the old system of taxing corn. But the assumption of the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Staveley Hill) that the producer paid the taxes was the most extraordinary misconception of the position which he had ever heard emanate even from the merest tyro in economic science. Arguments seemed altogether lost on the hon. and learned Gentleman, therefore he (Mr. Slagg) would forego using them, and endeavour to illustrate his meaning by a little story, which would be perhaps more likely to carry conviction to the minds of hon. Gentlemen opposite than all the economics he could preach. His little anecdote was this. Some time ago he was conversing with a gentleman in Lancashire very largely engaged in the trade of calico printing, and he was in the habit of importing, for the purpose of his business, large quantities of certain dyes manufactured in Germany. Well, he had a contract for the delivery of a quantity of this material to his works in Lancashire, and just about the period when this contract was going to be fulfilled there was an agitation in this country—as there very often was—one of the agitations got up by the hon. Member for Central Sheffield in favour of imposing import duties on foreign manufactured articles. When the German dealer who had to deliver this material heard of it, he wrote to my friend in Lancashire to this effect—"I see that there is an attempt being made to impose duties on the importation of articles of Continental manufacture, and I wish to point out to you that in case, during the currency of this contract, a duty is placed upon this material, you, the buyer, must pay the duty, and not I, the producer." Well, that was to him (Mr. Slagg) a most convincing argument that not the producer but the consumer paid the tax, and they could apply this special instance to all such transactions. What happened? His friend, of course, had to agree to pay the duty, and if the commodity in question had been increased in price by, say, a duty of 20 per cent, he would have lost his order altogether, and his very large operations would have had to be transferred to another country; so that instance showed what the effect of these precious duties really amounted to. And now he should like to say one word before resuming his seat on the question of political economy involved in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer assured them that the plea upon which he advanced this unhappy impost was that it only fell upon the rich. He altogether denied that. It fell upon the industry of the country at large. He must have to go to school again with regard to political economy if he had yet to learn the lesson that we could pay for our imports by any other process than through our exports; and to the extent to which our producing power for France or any other market was limited exactly to the same degree did they limit our exports. He did not suppose that we had any gold mines—unless those Welsh discoveries became greatly profitable—by which we could expect to pay for our imports into this country; and if that was so, surely all that we bought from France or any other country was paid for by the labour of our own people and by no other process in the world. Therefore, these taxes finally fell on the industry of this country. It was the fashion to say in this House, as the preface to almost every speech made from that (the Opposition) side, that the matter was approached in no Party spirit, and he could honestly say that he had no Party feeling in this question, and that in all matters, in fact, his Party feeling was not of a very vicious nature. But he looked with extreme sorrow and regret at this proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. As he said, it was not the amount of the tax proposed, but the principle involved. We beckoned France to follow a very bad example. We undid a great deal of the good done by the immortal Treaty Arrangement effected by Mr. Cobden; and when he referred to this arrangement as being valuable both in a commercial and political sense, he did not limit his admiration with regard to that Treaty to its operation on our trade with France, because, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had pointed out, the Treaty of 1860 had produced a network of Treaties throughout the whole Continent, not only increasing our trade with France, but largely affecting and increasing our trade with many other countries. It introduced, in the first place, that precious principle of the favoured nation treatment, so that throughout the whole of Europe we enjoyed the best treatment that it was possible for any country to obtain. Now, he asked what would be the effect on this delicate adjustment of International Treaties of the breach which we had made by this small act in the principles that we had laid down? We had shown a thankless spirit in relation to this most favoured nation treatment. We had virtually told the Continent of Europe that we cared very little for their good offices in relation to imports and exports, and we had invited them to embark on a system of retaliation the end of which it was impossible to foresee. The other objectionable tax in the right hon. Gentleman's Budget—namely, the Wheel Tax, was comparatively a small affair. It was a domestic matter, and affected only our own selves at home, but this tax on wine was of international significance, involving a very great principle, and he, for one, as a commercial Member, most respectfully protested against its application.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) said, he wished to submit that the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Slagg) had in his speech succeeded not only in answering himself, but also in answering the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). He had proved, or rather endeavoured to prove, conclusively that the consumer paid the duty and not the producer. Others argued that it was not the consumer who paid the duty, but the producer. If it was the fact that the consumer paid, how was it that this imposition raised the wrath of the producer?

MR. MUNDELLA: It lessens trade, it lessens the consumption.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL said, they should look at the remarks made in the French Assembly. He was not aware on what authority the hon. Gentleman opposite said that all economical authorities contended that it was the consumer and not the producer who paid these taxes. John Stuart Mill, in whom he should have thought the hon. Gentleman would have had some faith, laid it down distinctly that it all depended upon the nature of the trade whether the consumer paid or the producer. If the consumer was going to pay it in this case, why did the producer complain? But, supposing the producer paid the tax, what was the harm done to the middle classes in this country that they had heard so much about to-night? As a matter of fact, where the debate to-night had not been altogether beside the point, it had been a mass of self-evident contradictions. Again, there seemed to be a strong idea on the part of hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House that this tax was a Protectionist duty, and it was viewed on the other side of the House in a hostile spirit. He took it to be a first principle in considering the tax, when they accused it of being a retaliatory or protective tax, that they should understand what was the motive for which it was imposed. The motive of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was purely a revenue motive. It was neither a retaliatory motive nor a protective motive, and the right hon. Gentleman had clearly proved such to be the case. He (Sir George Baden-Powell) considered that this debate had lasted almost long enough to show that there was no valid argument to be advanced against the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he should like to say, with reference to the point just made by the hon. Baronet the Member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool (Sir George Baden-Powell), that he apprehended there could be no dispute that a tax of this description was paid by the consumer. The hon. Gentleman had used the words "producer" and "consumer" interchangeably, and it was not easy to understand the force of his argument

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL said, he should like to explain the matter. He had been alluding to what had been said by an hon. Member when the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) was not in the House.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he would take as an illustration in this part of the case what they had heard at an earlier period of the evening as to the Tea Duty. Supposing the House had made the duty upon tea 1*s.* instead of 6*d.*, who would have paid the extra 6*d.*—the Chinese or the people of this country? The increased duty upon every pound of tea would have been paid by the people of this country who consumed the article. It was absurd to say that the Chinese would pay it, and to deny that it would be paid by the English consumer was simply to deny that two and two made four. If anyone could show that the Chinese would pay the increased tax on tea introduced into this country, they would be equal to squaring the circle, or the solving of any other problem supposed to be impossible of solution. He did not understand the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian to contend that this was in itself a protective duty. They admitted that it would be paid by those who drank the wines, and not by the French importer; but what he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say was this—that at a critical period in the history of France, and in the relations between France and this country when the question of Free Trade was trembling in the balance, the practical effect of its operation would be to encourage the Protectionist party and depress the Free Trade party, and possibly lead to retaliatory reprisals. Now, he saw the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) in his place. The right hon. Gentleman had given a very cautious and candid answer to a Question upon these matters at Question time, and had intimated that he would give a full and more complete answer in the course of this debate. He (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) would like to ask him whether there was any accuracy, any correctness in the statement which had appeared in the foreign newspapers two or three days ago, that the French Prime Minister had stated to the Chamber of Deputies that the French Government had instructed the French Ambassador, Monsieur Waddington, to inform the English Government that in the event of this Act being definitely passed, the most Favoured Nation Clause would be withdrawn?

Mr. MUNDELLA: In jeopardy.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER: Yes; he thought that was the more correct word. They were entitled to know from the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State what was the state of this question. They were entitled to know what the strain and stress of this question was in regard to our relationship with France. He had no doubt that the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) thought that this was a fair raising of his theory of Free Trade policy. There was no one who would repudiate that more completely than the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and who would more emphatically declare that there was not a shadow of a shade of Protection in the whole of this matter. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, he would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman himself. He was there in his place, and could repudiate this assertion if he chose. The right hon. Gentleman altogether denied that there was any approach to Protection in any shape or form in this proposal. The right hon. Gentleman utterly repudiated Protection in every shape as connected with the imposition of this tax, and all that the House was called on to look to was with reference to the practical bearing of the question upon the relationship between this country and France, and upon our commercial intercourse generally. This was said not to be the inauguration of a new system of prohibitory duties. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had looked upon the matter from a Revenue point of view exclusively. He might differ from the right hon. Gentleman—he did differ from him—but, whether right or wrong, it was a Revenue proposal, and on that side of the House they opposed it from that point of view, believing that it would not be worth the risk that it involved. They appreciated the desire of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that those who were able to sell these wines should have the benefit of them, and they would be sorry to raise any false issue, as had been raised by the hon. Baronet the Member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL said, he was explaining that hon. Gentlemen had been fighting on different issues, and he had said that it depended on the character of the trade between the two countries whether the consumer paid or the producer. He had quoted in support of his contention from John Stuart Mill.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, that the hon. Member had not given them the passage from John Stuart Mill with all its qualifications, and the hon. Member had contradicted him when he said that the 6*d.* duty upon tea, if converted into 1*s.* duty, would be absolutely paid by the consumer. The hon. Gentleman had contradicted that, and many of his Friends contradicted it still. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; his Friends cheered him, and that he (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) contended was a false issue, and there was no one who would demolish that view more remorselessly than the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself. What he (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) wished to put before the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was whether it was worth while for the sake of a paltry sum of £125,000 a-year—which he could very well afford to pay out of his surplus, as his Estimates were moderate and prudent—whether it was worth while to propose a tax which would run the risk of producing such a bad effect upon our relations with France? He believed the right hon. Gentleman would find, in 12 months' time, that he had a much larger surplus than he at present contemplated, and he had no doubt that the financial condition of the country would be much better if this tax were not imposed than it would be otherwise.

Mr. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) said, he did not know that he should have addressed the Committee this evening if it had not been for the extraordinary doctrine enunciated by the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Slagg). The hon. Member had said that when our working classes were suffering in a certain town the hat was sent round for relief. As representing a large Metropolitan constituency, which was very largely affected by these foreign duties, he (Mr. Norris) entirely repudiated the notion that they wished to fall back on the country for charity. All they desired was justice, and he thought they had a right to demand it for them. On looking at this tax, it was evident, as former speakers had pointed out, that it was not a tax, in any form, of Protection. He must say, from the broad grounds on which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had brought the Motion forward, he had the greatest pleasure in supporting him; and not only so, but he believed the remark made by the hon. Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) was in the right direction as encouraging home trade. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) would make some statement in favour of the Colonies. He had been much struck with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), and more so by that part of his remarks to the effect that he had had it in his power to confer with certain French Members of Parliament in December last. They had not heard from him, however, that he had conferred with those gentlemen. If he had done so, he would have learned from them, in all probability, that Protection was not only an inherent principle in that country, but was spreading. They heard that in the United States and Germany the Protection system was producing effects which in this country would unquestionably be to the benefit of the working classes. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had stated, the question was rising, and was making immense progress amongst the people. Agriculture was suffering; and, as had been pointed out by the hon. and learned Member for the Kingswinford Division of Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill), in his own part of the country, the iron trade was suffering immense distress, and, therefore, even if this step proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a step in the direction of Protection, hon. Members were fully justified in supporting it. However, he (Mr. Norris) repudiated that doctrine. He believed that it was mainly with a view to preventing a deficit in the Revenue that the proposal had been made. He trusted that in the Division hon. Members would show that they believed this to be a necessary tax, and that to their minds it was not one upon the poor, but upon the rich, who could well afford to pay it.

Mr. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars) said, he thought they had had a very interesting discussion on this question, but there were still one or two things to be said. The hon. and learned Gentleman who formerly sat for Coventry (Mr. Staveley Hill) in this House had deplored the fact that we had taken the duty off French ribbons, and declared that it had brought about the ruin of a large community. That was not the fact. As a matter of fact, the alteration effected by the Treaty of 1860 had been the making of Coventry. No doubt, the town had suffered a great deal temporarily; but it had recovered, and it had never been better off than it was at the present time. It gave up making these articles in which it could not compete with other countries, and took to making articles which it could manufacture better than others. Coventry now had a larger population, a larger rateable value, and was in every way more satisfactorily situated than it ever was at any previous period of its history. When he had risen just now to interrupt the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Staveley Hill), he had done so in order to ask him to put before the House a specific case that he might have it answered.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL said, he had misunderstood the hon. Member. If he had understood, he should have said that the duty was taken off cotton in Lancashire not to benefit the consumer, but the producer.

Mr. PROVAND said, that that would not prove that the duty was paid by the producer, and not by the consumer. A specific case was all that was required to prove the argument he was advancing. Take an article made in Lancashire—cotton velvet. The duty upon that article throughout the world varied from nothing up to 100 per cent. Well, if the producer paid that duty, or any part of it, why was it that he got the same price for the goods, neither more nor less, no matter to which market it went? Some of the velvet made in Lancashire was used in this country, where there was no duty. Some was used in Central America, where the duty was 100 per cent; and some in other places, where, as he said, the duty ranged between nothing and 100 per cent. If the producer paid the duty, how could he get the same price from these different places? There was a very large question involved in this, and those who believed so must show who paid the duty on the £250,000,000 sterling of manufactured goods which were exported from this country every year to various markets all over the world? Did the producers pay? [*Cries of* "Yes!"] Well, let the hon. Members who said "Yes" produce a single instance in proof of the assertion; let them show a single case of any article; let them put their finger on any manufacturer who paid the duty as a producer. It was simply impossible to do so. [An hon. Member: Steel rails.] The producer paid no duty whatever on steel rails. It was the consumer and the consuming country who paid the duty on steel rails exported from this country, just as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) had shown that the consumer in this country paid the duty on tea. This was spoken of as a Protective Duty, but it was not of that kind. If we made wine it would be a Protective Duty, but as we did not, the duty was not protective, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian simply spoke of it as being likely to be regarded on the Continent as a duty of a protective character. He also said it would be looked upon as of a retaliatory character, and so it would be. It was only a protective Duty to this extent—that it would artificially extend the bottling trade in this country. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that he was going to satisfy the French people that there was nothing Protective in the duty, because they had done the same thing themselves by putting a heavier Duty on bottled wines than on wines in wood. But notwithstanding this, it would be impossible for him to satisfy bottlers and also manufacturers in France that they ought not to have Protective Duties, which would be the same thing as trying to convince them that they ought not to put money into their own pockets. Returning to the particular question before the Committee, he (Mr. Provand) said that the taxation of what were considered luxuries generally met with approval, and to say that an article was a luxury was quite sufficient reason in the minds of some persons for taxing it. But he would point out, first of all, that there was much difficulty in saying what was and what was not a luxury, for that which to one person was an article of luxury was to another an article of necessity. To tax some things that were called luxuries would simply be to damage the industries that produced them, and many of our industries produced nothing but luxuries; on the other hand, there were some luxuries the taxation of which would do no material injury to the people—for instance, the taxation of coats of arms would affect only to a small extent coach-painters and engravers. Every tax of this kind depended on the degree to which it might affect labour in our own country or our commerce with other countries. There were many objections to this tax, and, in the first place, it was not uniform in its incidence. They were all agreed that champagne was a luxury, but one-third of the champagne that was imported into this country cost less than 20*s.* a-dozen. Although the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) smiled at this statement, he ventured to think that he was no authority upon the subject.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, he smiled because he thought that if champagne was imported at 20*s.* a-dozen, it was the best reason in the world for keeping it out.

Mr. PROVAND said, he had made inquiries from the best authorities, and he repeated that about one-third of the champagne imported cost less than 20*s.* a-dozen, and a letter had been read that evening from an exporter, who said that he exported 160,000 dozens of champagne at prices from 18*s.* to 20*s.* a-dozen. He (Mr. Provand) pointed out while the tax would amount to 25 or 30 per cent on this class of wine, it would only amount to 5 or 6 per cent upon wine of a higher character that was consumed by the wealthy classes. The heavy tax, then, would fall upon the middle class, who could ill afford it, and the lighter tax upon those who cared little about it. Then it was said that the tax would stimulate the bottling trade in this country. The hon. Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) would, no doubt, like that; but some day the tax would have to be taken off, and then there would be the cry that this particular industry had been ruined; and the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Slagg) had clearly shown the folly of putting on taxes to assist a trade that could not stand by itself. Another reason against the tax was that it was diametrically opposed to those Free Trade principles which had dominated every Chancellor of the Exchequer in this country for the last 45 years. The hon. Member for Burnley had alluded to that also, and it was axiomatically true that there could be no buying if there was no selling. Almost the whole of our exports represented labour and industry, and to tax imports was to limit our exports, and therefore simply to punish ourselves. He (Mr. Provand) did not wish unduly to occupy the time of the House, or he might read extracts from almost every treatise on political economy which would condemn the present proposal, and he might even put the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself under contribution. There was one short extract, however, that he should like to read, and he asked the Committee to listen to what the Fair Traders themselves had said on this subject. Even they had been compelled to admit the conditions which governed international commercial relations. Four gentlemen who were known as Fair Traders sat upon the Commission which inquired into the question of the depression of trade; they printed and circulated a Supplementary Report, in which they used these words—

> "The conditions of international exchange are inflexible. We can only in the long run buy as largely as we can sell."

No advocate of Free Trade could say more, nor had it ever been better expressed. He had stated that the incidence of this tax was not fair at home; and he would say, further, that foreign producers, particularly the French, would argue that it was not fair abroad. Firstly, it would not affect Spanish or Portuguese wines, which all came in wood, nor would it affect Australian wines nor Italian to any appreciable extent. Even in the case of Germany—as all hocks could be brought into this country in casks—there were only some qualities and descriptions, chiefly sparkling wines, which could only be imported in bottles, but these would not exceed 40,000 or 50,000 dozens, paying of the new Duty, say, £10,000 or £15,000, therefore 85 or 90 per cent of the whole £125,000 which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer expected to get from this source would be paid by French wines. France would, therefore, interpret this Budget as a blow directly aimed at herself, and there would, no doubt, be a long-continued agitation in that country with the object of putting extra duties upon our goods, or of withdrawing from us the enjoyment of the "Most Favoured Nation" Clause under which we traded with France at the present time. It was only natural that the French people should object to sit down quietly and see this interference with their commerce. Could there be a time more inopportune than the present for the imposition of this tax? The extra Duty on bottled wines had been withdrawn in 1866 in consequence of the representations of Powers with whom we were then engaged in some very delicate commercial negotiations; but surely that reason applied with great force to the present moment, because we had on hand several subjects of delicate negotiation with Foreign Powers. He need only refer to the question of sugar bounties, which we were seeking to get withdrawn; and at the same moment we were going to impose a tax which France would regard as directed against herself. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, in introducing one of his Budgets some years ago, gave an admirable exposition of the conditions on which any change in the Wine Duties, if any change were made, should rest. First, he said that the system should be equitable in itself; secondly, that it should neither overweight nor favour any particular wine; thirdly, that it should favour the consumer; and, fourthly, that it should be suitable to the requirements of the Revenue; and, lastly, that it should have promise of endurance. This tax on bottled wines outraged every one of these wise conditions, except perhaps the second last; and it was for the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of course, to satisfy his own mind as to the tax being suitable for the purposes of Revenue; but he (Mr. Provand) thought that it would not eventually be found to meet its requirements, and he was convinced that if the right hon. Gentleman believed that he must raise the amount of the tax he could have levied the £120,000 in some less objectionable way. If the country were at war, or if it were necessary to make up a large deficit, he could understand the tax being imposed; but we were, and, as he hoped, would remain for a long time, at peace, and he contended that a tax of this kind, whether judged from the point of view of political economy or of political contingency, was a mistake. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to expose them to the terrible risks which had been pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, to whose speech and arguments the right hon. Gentleman had made no reply. For the reasons given he would move the rejection of the clause.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Clause 3.—(*Mr. Provand.*)

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): I think, perhaps, it might not be without advantage to recall the attention of the Committee, from the very high platform on which the discussion has been placed by recent speakers, to the somewhat narrow issue before us. I do not think it necessary to go into the whole range of political economy from the philosophical point of view of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Slagg), nor to anticipate very considerable changes in our fiscal system because of this item in the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Certainly the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had treated this question from a very serious point of view, and it was natural for him to do so, because it seemed to him to trench upon one of the great measures of his life; and he has been supported in his view by several hon. Members, and lastly by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Provand), who not only professed to follow but to interpret the right hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member for Glasgow has, however, truly represented the particular direction, if any, in which the wine trade will be affected by the tax proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He said that, for the most part, it is likely to affect French wines; and that was what my right hon. Friend told us when he introduced his Budget, his statement being that champagne and the more expensive wines would be those most affected by the tax, but that still wines could as well be imported in casks as in bottles. I may, with reference to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, also remark, that when he said that 135,000 hectolitres of French wine were exported in bottles, he did not mention the fact that of this quantity there were more than 90,000 hectolitres of champagne. The amount of French wine which can be disturbed at all by this duty is insignificant. I have the last Report of our Consul at Bordeaux, which gives the particulars of the exportation of wine from that port, and he states that the total export is 26,814,000 gallons in wood and 1,838,000 in bottles; and it is remarkable that of this quantity the export in wood to the United Kingdom is 3,362,000 gallons in wood and 702,000 gallons in bottles—that is to say, the exportation in bottles is something like one-fifth of the exportation in wood. It cannot be alleged, then, with justice, that we are going to ruin Bordeaux, even if the quantity exported to us in bottles should be less, seeing that all the rest of the world import nearly the whole of their French wine in wood. It seems to me that it is the present rate of duty that has caused so much more wine to be imported in casks than in bottles. But if it be so injurious to put a higher tax upon the latter than the former, how is it that this system does not injuriously affect the interior trade of France—because the Chancellor of the Exchequer has told the Committee that there is in France a higher Excise and a higher *octroi* duty levied upon wine in bottles than upon wine in wood? The hon. Member for Glasgow, following the steps of those who preceded him, has warned us of that bad impression that would be produced in France by the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposal, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, as well as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella), have also warned us that agitation may follow, and that possibly retaliatory duties may be placed on our imports and exports. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) has asked me to state what attitude has been taken up with regard to this subject by the Foreign Minister of France. I have here a translation of the words used by the Foreign Minister in the French Chamber on the 22nd of April. He said that he had instructed the French Ambassador in London to make representations, showing the great injury which would be done by this measure. If their representations were not listened to, France would have the right, not indeed to make reprisals, but to use reciprocity, and the Government would have to determine what proposals it would be proper to present to the Chamber for the protection of French interests.

I state that with perfect candour. It is already before the world. Of course it is very desirable that we should examine and weigh the effect which this proposal has had upon friendly nations; but it does not follow that we should subscribe to the very erroneous conclusions that may be drawn from it, or that we should give up that which we consider useful for our own Revenue and just in itself. The Committee will understand that these representations used by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in France had reference to representations made to the Chamber by one particular trade at Bordeaux and Beaune. It was very natural that upon such representations as had been made by an important trade in France, the French Minister should undertake to make representations to the Government of this country, and to endeavour to procure the withdrawal of this proposal. The Committee ought to remember that similar representations have been made to Her Majesty's Government from the trades of this country who conceive themselves to be injured, and find themselves injured by the tariffs of foreign countries, and Her Majesty's Government have made, in consequence, many representations to foreign countries as to the injury which was likely to be done to our industries. It is well known that during the last few months we have been making such representations to the Government of Italy as to the bad effect upon some of our industries and exports of their new tariff; and we have had much reason to complain of the injury to some of our industries and interests by the tariffs of France. We have made representations to the Government of France as we were in duty bound, and we have been met there, and elsewhere, by the reply that these imposts were founded on the necessities of those countries, that they were based on a fiscal system, and that they were imposed with no feeling of animosity to this country or with any desire to injure its interests, and that the different Governments would greatly regret if the imposts had that effect. In such cases we did not often procure redress of the grievances of which we complained, but we have not quarrelled with any foreign Government on that account; we have recognized that other Governments have a perfect right to levy such Customs duties as they consider best for their own interests. It is upon that footing all Governments proceed, and if we find that some of their fiscal systems press hardly on our interests, we must recognize that their duty is to govern their own country in the manner which they consider best for their own interests, and that we have no right to complain of them on that account. Well, Sir, I apprehend that is really the position in which we stand towards the Government of France at the present time. We have proposed a slight re-adjustment of the Wine Duties, a thing in itself small, and I think it will be found still smaller when it comes to be examined, because, although there may be at present a much larger quantity of wine imported in bottles than in wood, it is most likely that a much greater proportion will find its way into this country in wood in the future than hitherto. With the altered circumstances shippers will find it better and more convenient to export wine in wood than in bottle. Although it is put to us so strongly by a man of the great eminence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) that we are shaking the system of trade which he did so much to establish between France and England, that we are inaugurating a course tending to upset the Free Trade which was founded by the Treaty of 1860, I think we cannot accept that statement as absolutely well founded. Certainly the right hon. Gentleman had reason to congratulate himself on having gained certain improvements in 1860; but I regret to say that that improvement has not been sustained; the duties, which were lowered in 1860, have been raised since then. No doubt we have, under what is called the Conventional Tariff of 1882, the benefit of the Most Favoured Nation Clause, but what does that Most Favoured Nation Clause amount to? High duties are now levied in France on almost every article imported from England; whereas in this country we practically tax only two French articles—namely, spirits and wine, the latter not being an English production at all, and the former being subject to an equivalent Excise duty. These duties in France now amount on the average of all articles and all duties, including articles duty free, to about 6·9 per cent. But this gives only a faint idea of the weight of the duties on English products. On cotton yarns the French duty ranges from 6*s.* 1*d.* to £6 1*s.* 11*d.* per cwt.; and on the higher counts this duty is equal to from 100 to nearly 300 per cent on the value of the raw material from which the yarn is manufactured. On single combed woollen yarns, the duty ranges from 8*s.* 2*d.* to £1 12*s.* 6*d.* per cwt., with higher duties for most other kinds—a rate of duty on the raw material, valued on the average of 1*s.* per pound, ranging from about 7 to 30 per cent as the minimum, and in most cases much higher. On cotton tissues the range is from £1 0*s.* 4*d.* to £10 19*s.* 6*d.* per cwt., and to even higher figures. A duty of £2 16*s.* 0*d.* per cwt. would be equal to one of 100 per cent on the raw material used, and the higher duty mentioned is about 400 per cent. On manufactures of wool the range is equally high and wide, though, as the value of the raw material is greater, the proportion of the duty to the value of the raw material used may be put at from 50 to 200 per cent. On iron and iron manufactures the duties are of infinite variety, but articles like cutlery pay from £2 0*s.* 8*d.* to £9 15*s.* 1*d.* per cwt., which is from 100 to 500 per cent on the value of the raw material used. Generally, according to the French statistics of imports and exports, the iron and iron manufactures actually imported from England into France bear a charge of 25 per cent *ad valorem* on import. The same with many other articles. The duties are excessive in proportion to the value. The proportion of duties levied to the values imported does not show the full effect of the tariff, because the articles on which high duties are imposed are kept out altogether, whereas the statistics relate only to articles actually imported, including duty free goods. Taking the statistics as they are, the duties in France have been steadily increasing in weight on the value of the articles imported —from about 3·3 per cent in 1866 to 6·9 per cent in 1886. This is partly due to the substitution of specific for *ad valorem* duties in 1882, and to the increasing weight of all specific duties in proportion to the value of the articles in consequence of the fall of prices in recent years. As regards coal, the effect is shown in an increase in the percentage of the duties levied to the value of the article imported from about 6 per cent to 9 per cent between 1866 and 1886. Similarly, the proportion levied on the following articles increased as follows between 1866 and 1886:—Cotton velveteens, which formerly ranged from 60 to 100 francs per 100 kilos, were raised to from 80 to 140 francs; plain cotton tissues, if weighing 3 to 5 kilos per 100 square metres, formerly ranging between 80 and 300 francs, were raised to from 110 to 403 francs; bottles, per 100 kilos, from 1 franc 30 centimes to 3 francs; cow hides from 10 francs to 20 francs; gun-barrels from 20 francs to 60 francs; beer, per hectolitre of 22 gallons, from 5 francs 75 centimes to 7 francs 75 centimes; and spirits, per hectolitre of 22 gallons, from 15 francs to 30 francs. The principal change effected by the tariff of 1882, which was a substitution of specific for *ad valorem* duties, has thus been to increase the charge on English goods. This was intended at the time, as regards the inferior manufactures, as pointed out in Mr. Kennedy's memorandum; but the effect has been aggravated by the fall of prices which has been going on so long. Even if the specific duties substituted in 1882 had been as the fair equivalents of the *ad valorem* duties at the time, the course of events since 1882 has made them heavier than if the former *ad valorem* charge had since been continued. The French internal duties on wines and spirits, which are the only articles of theirs we tax, are very heavy, especially in the large towns, which not only levy an *octroi* for local use, but a duty for the State. It is almost certain that a Parisian pays a higher charge on wines and spirits of France, at least on spirits, than people in the United Kingdom pay on wines and spirits imported from France. The exports of coal from the United Kingdom are now about 24,000,000 tons per annum, of which 4,000,000 tons are exported to France—that is, about a sixth part of our exports. One of the great advantages of the Treaty of 1861 with France was the engagement not to impose an export duty on coal. The restoration of it might injure French trade a good deal; and we have not much to fear from an increased French import duty, which would tend to have the same effect. That duty, which in 1861 was 17½*d.* a-ton, has ever since been 11¾*d.* I have only mentioned these facts to show the Committee that, whereas in this case so much has been said about the alteration of a duty even to a small extent, and affecting only one French trade, our manufactured articles are taxed to such an extent when they enter France as to render the expression Free Trade, in my humble opinion singularly inapplicable. The burden on British importers is rendered greater in the application of Customs regulations, for the decisions of the officers and experts in disputed cases is almost invariably upheld, and little attention is given to the evidence adduced in support of the contentions of British Traders. In Fishery matters, the French Government have refused persistently to give effect to the stipulation in the Treaty of 1867, by which British fishing boats were to be allowed to sell in French ports the fish caught by their crews. This is a question of great importance to the fishing industry of this country. Then there is the ship-brokerage grievance, the fact that masters of vessels are not allowed to employ their own agents, but must have recourse to the services of a small privileged class of brokers, who make excessive charges for the discharge of very trifling services. When the master possesses sufficient knowledge of French to perform himself Custom House business, the Customs officers require witnesses to support him, and by selecting men of the crew who do not know French as witnesses—the choice rests with the Customs and not with the Master—they oblige the Master in this way to employ a broker to act as sworn interpreter, and he is thus enabled to make his whole charge. Frequently the charge amounts to £14, £20, and even £30 for a service which does not occupy more than a few minutes. I do not mention these things as reproaches against the French, but only as showing that the French Government and the French Parliament are Conservative and Protectionist, and that these measures are, in their opinion, necessary for the protection of French industry, and they are in no sense unfriendly towards British trade and British industry. I venture to think that on reflection it will be thought by the French Government and people that in proposing this alteration of the Wine Duties we are not doing anything unfriendly to their interests, or doing anything which they ought to take objection to. It would be, indeed, a grave charge, if it were made with any justice against us, that we have commenced, as some Gentlemen have said, a new departure which is untrue to the system which has been established in this country for so many years. I venture to think that there is nothing in the proposal with regard to the Wine Duties which will for a moment justify such an assumption. There has been a good deal said about the incidence of protective or revenue duties; but I certainly thought it was settled long ago that if a duty were put upon wine entering this country it would be by the people of this country that the duty would have to be paid. It is altogether untrue that in this altered tax there will be any fresh burden put upon the poor of this country. On the contrary, this is a tax laid on the rich and luxurious which they have made no objection to pay. It in no sense imposes a fresh burden on the poor and struggling as those who are always ready to pose as the friends of the people would fain make out.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I think it is very fortunate that the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) has spoken, because he has unwillingly put the question on the right ground. This comes before us as a question of reprisals. We have heard to-night a string of complaints against the French Government; and we are told we must accept the French Government's excuse for the acts of which we complain, because, as the right hon. Gentleman said, the French Government and the French Parliament are Conservative and Protectionist. I hope the House will remember what it is that we shall be doing when we become Conservative and Protectionist. Our trade with foreign nations will be hampered and made disagreeable to them, but the system of Protection will be a sufficient justification.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: I trust the right hon. Gentleman will pardon me. He will recognize that I ought not to be misunderstood. I certainly did not intend to say, and I am sure I did not say, anything approaching to a statement that this step had been taken by way of reprisal.

Mr. CHILDERS: I am sure the House will accept any disclaimer coming from the right hon. Gentleman, but how disappointed some Members opposite must be who have been talking about reprisals all the evening, who heard the long list of complaints which my right hon. Friend set forth, and who cheered every word he said. However, we are bound to accept the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman as to what he meant by those so loudly cheered expressions in the latter part of his speech. I am glad my right hon. Friend has put the case from the point of view of the Foreign Office, which will have to deal with this question with the French Government, and possibly with other Governments. There can be now no mistake in the matter, but I am about to call attention to one or two remarks of my right hon. Friend which, I must confess, I did not understand. He spoke of the increase of duty as a small increase, I think his words were "small and slight." An addition of 250 per cent to a rate of duty he calls "small." The present duty is 2*s.* per dozen on the wine which is under consideration, and it is proposed to make it 7*s.* a dozen bottles. Five shillings is an addition of 250 per cent of the former duty. I do not call an addition of 250 per cent a small addition to a duty at all. I must also call attention to another expression of the right hon. Gentleman. He spoke at great length of the way in which the Chamber of Commerce of Bordeaux received the intimation which had been made here as to this additional duty, and he gave some very interesting statistics of the amount of wine exported from Bordeaux in cask and in bottle. How much champagne is exported from Bordeaux? It is only claret that we receive from Bordeaux. I know Bordeaux well; and it is within my knowledge that the amount of sparkling wines shipped from Bordeaux is extremely small. The opinion of Bordeaux, therefore, does not go for much on a champagne question, and it is as a champagne question that this comes before the House. Furthermore, let me remind the Committee that whereas a good many of the manufacturing towns of France were strongly opposed to us in the matter of Commercial Treaties in 1860, and were opposed to us also in 1881, when the matter was again negotiated here and in Paris, Bordeaux always was in favour of a Commercial Treaty. So far as Bordeaux is concerned we are dealing with friends, so that the friendly resolution of the Chamber of Commerce of Bordeaux is not in point at all. What has come to the Minister from other parts of France in relation to this question? I shall have in a minute to expand a little what the right hon. Gentleman has said, for he left out the most important part of the French Minister's statement, which I have read myself in more than one French paper. I do not propose to touch upon the general question of Fair Trade. During the dinner hour, while the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not in the House, there was a good deal praise of Fair Trade from the opposite Benches, and the support of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was by the Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent), and the hon. and learned Member for the Kingswinford Division of Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill), and by other Gentlemen, put expressly upon the ground that this was the first step in the course of Fair Trade. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not hear that. In fact the whole tenour of the speeches coming from that quarter of the House was that support should be given to him, not on the ground of his being a Free Trader, which he is, and we know he is, although we think that in this matter he has made a mistake; but because he is taking the first step towards Fair Trade. [An hon. Member: Oh, oh!] An hon. Gentleman opposite says "Oh, oh!" I do not know whether he was in the House, but I appeal to those who were, whether what I have stated was not the tenour of the series of speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite. As I said, I will not go into the general question of Fair Trade or Free Trade, nor will I touch upon certain minor matters which are the fringe of the present question. For instance, I will not go into the question how far other nations besides France are affected by this proposal. There is something to be said upon that point, but I do not think it is worth while to go into it at the present moment. What I want the Committee to understand, and I will put it before them in a very few words, is what was the effect upon our trade with France of the Commercial Treaty of 1860; what the trade with France was before that time; what was the enormous improvement of our relations with France in consequence of that Treaty; and what we are risking by the course we are now taking; and I venture to ask the Committee to give me their attention for a moment while I put before them a few figures. The year before the Commercial Treaty with France our exports to France were of the value of £9,500,000, and our imports from France were nearly £16,000,000. Ten years later, in 1869, our exports were of the value of £23,000,000, and our imports of the value of £33,000,000; in the year 1879, our exports were £26,500,000, and our imports were £38,000,000; and in the year 1883, our exports £29,000,000, and our imports from France £38,000,000. Therefore, what has been the effect of that Commercial Treaty? It has increased our trades so that our exports to France are more than three times what they were before the Treaty, and our imports from France are more than doubled. Therefore, we are risking in this matter a trade amounting altogether at the present time to something between £65,000,000 and £70,000,000. That is not a small matter to be risked for the trifling increase of duty which will result from this new impost. Now, what has been our trade with other countries, especially countries in the North of Europe with which we have not made Commercial treaties or understanding. Our exports to Russia have only increased in value during the last 25 years by £1,000,000—namely, from £6,500,000 to £7,500,000; our imports from Russia have only increased from £13,000,000 to £21,000,000. With Germany our trade has less than doubled. Therefore, what I wish to point out is, that we are risking by this tax a trade which has expanded of late years far more than that with any other neighbour. And now, let me remind the House what is our position with respect to the former French Treaty. There has been to-night some great misapprehension. It is perfectly true that the Commercial Treaty of 1860 has come to an end; but it is also true that we have not been thrown back into the position we formerly occupied as to French trade. In consequence, not of the Treaty, but of the maintenance of the Fiscal system as to the import of wine and export of coal, formerly stipulated by the Treaty, we have got a satisfactory understanding with her; in fact, the Most Favoured Nation Clause with respect to our whole trade. The right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State quoted certain isolated instances of high duties in France, each under Most Favoured Nation treatment. Most Favoured Nation Clauses, but how much higher are they under the customary tariff of France. Many are, in fact, absolutely prohibitory, whereas now nothing can come into France at less duty than from England. Therefore, as I said, we are risking a great deal in provoking France to put us in the list of Nations not having Most Favoured Nation treatment. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman intended to give the House a fair idea of what passed the other day in the French Chamber on this matter, but he has not quoted fully what occurred when an interpellation was addressed to the French Minister. The Under Secretary of State quoted only part of the French Minister's reply. I have seen, I think, three different French newspapers containing reports of the French Minister's reply, and I find that the most important part of the reply the right hon. Gentleman did not quote at all. What did the French Minister say? He used almost the words the right hon. Gentleman had quoted, that the French Ambassador in this country would be instructed to make representations to the English Government; but the right hon. Gentleman opposite did not add that the French Minister stated that that Ambassador would remember that it was in the power of the French Government to denounce the Most Favoured Nation Clause, and that he was to represent this to the British Government. Now, it may be the wish of the Under Secretary to minimize that statement, but it is a most important one, and if the Ambassador here has acted upon these instructions—we are within a measurable distance of having, not the treaty, because, as I have said, there is no formal treaty, but the arrangement that followed the negotiations of 1881 denounced, when this country would have to fall back on the ordinary tariff which France imposes on the imports from other countries. What does this mean? Probably the loss of half our trade with France. It is within the power of the French Government, if they quarrel with us, practically to destroy our trade with her, and that is a far more serious matter than what up to the present time the Government have represented to us as the position of this question. The right hon. Gentleman said, and said very truly, that we have no right to complain. No, we have no legal right to complain, because this matter is not subject to a treaty; but the commercial community would have a very great right to complain of this House and this Government if, for the sake of this small addition to the Revenue, suddenly, we found half our French trade imperilled—if we found our large trade of £70,000,000 a-year, now carried on between this country and France, reduced to anything like what it was before 1860. Therefore it is a very serious question, and I put it to the Government, are they aware of the dangers of the present position, and are they prepared to accept them with a light heart? There is another important thing to bear in mind. We are negotiating with Foreign Powers on the subject of the Sugar Bounties. The negotiation at this moment is in a highly critical position. No power has as yet finally accepted any arrangement. The French are the most important power in connection with this negotiation. It is not a political question; everyone in this House was anxious that the Sugar Bounty question should be settled in accordance with the view which has been for the last 10 years expressed on both sides of the House. Well, if we come to a breach with France on a fiscal question of this kind, you may rely upon it the Sugar Bounty question will not be settled at the present time. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that we should not put in the way of our negotiations with France so great a difficulty as the present proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer has put in our way. Of the duties themselves I will not say much; but I will observe this, that in 1885 we were threatened with a Motion the effect of which would be to defeat the Budget and throw the Government out of Office, because whilst we proposed in the Budget to raise the duties on spirits and beer we did not propose to raise the duties on wine. Nothing would have been easier than for us to comply with the prevalent wish and to have amended the Budget by raising the duty on wine. The Spanish treaty was then out of the way, and we might have made an addition to the Wine Duties which would have put out of Court the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). After careful consideration of the effect of raising the Wine Duties on our trade in France and other countries with whom we had commercial relations, we distinctly determined to leave the Wine Duties alone. The effect was that we were defeated. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes, we were defeated when we might, with the greatest of ease, have avoided defeat by a moderate increase in the Wine Duties. If that is so, I think the House will see that in 1885 we looked upon this question as a most serious one. We looked upon it as one which was not to be dealt with as a means of avoiding a Ministerial defeat, but as of vital importance to the trade of the country, and I must again express my great regret that on the present occasion, for the sake of so small an amount of revenue, the Government have not the courage to do what we did in 1885 and refuse to alter the Wine Duties, and thus to avoid what may become a very serious and difficult question.

MR. GOSCHEN: If I have to address the House more often than I should like upon these matters, I trust the Committee will excuse it and will bear in mind that it is almost an unprecedented circumstance for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be placed in the position which I now occupy, that of being confronted by three ex-Chancellors of the Exchequer sitting opposite to me, a position which, of course, increases the dangers and difficulties of the occupant of the Office I hold. Now, the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down spoke in a tone with regard to our commerce with France, against which I must enter my respectful protest. In the first place, I must say that I think he, of course unintentionally, misrepresented the speech of my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. ["No, no!"] Then he intentionally misrepresented my right hon. Friend? I do not think so. I think the misrepresentation was unintentional. He rose with some unusual warmth and animation, and said—"Now we know that this is a system of reprisals." Yes; but did he not remember what I said before, that this was no proposal of reprisals? Did he discredit what I said, coming forward as the proposer of this tax, that no such idea as that of a policy of reprisals had in the remotest manner entered into our heads?

I do not think the right hon. Gentleman will, on reflection, believe that in the face of that declaration it was a fair interpretation of the speech of my right hon. Friend to say that he saw in that speech a system of reprisals. The whole argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary was directed to this—to point out that the French Government were not in a particularly good position to argue against the nature of this tax. He stated, and I think he stated accurately—"When you look on the enormous amount of duty raised on English products and manufactures in France, a slight increase of duty on French produce such as this is not calculated to sustain a just and equitable complaint on the part of Franc.e" It was to this that his observations were limited; and whatever may be said in any part of the House, I declare again, on behalf of my Colleagues, as well as for myself, that in this proposal there is not the slightest idea of Protection of any kind, and not the slightest idea of reprisal of any kind, and not the slightest idea of anything that would be disagreeable to the French Government; and I protest against the importation into this debate of insinuations and suggestions of that character. They are mischievous in the last degree. We have to deal with the fears of the French people; and now the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian himself, and a second ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, are bringing their authority to bear in a manner calculated to enhance these fears; and I am not quite sure that we shall not have a third ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer dealing with the matter in the same spirit before the discussion terminates. The suggestion is that we, the Government, have intended this as a measure directed against France. Now, I am sure that hon. Gentlemen opposite would wish as much as hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House that I should enter my protest against that suggestion if it is untrue. You would not wish that we should really be challenging the French Government to a war of tariffs —that we have had any such mad idea as that. I, therefore, think that hon. Gentlemen opposite will think me perfectly justified in rising again, though I have troubled the Committee on the subject before, to say that we have had no idea in the proposal we are making of inflicting any blow on the French Government or the French people, in order to get in that way a handle for dealing with other grievances which we have against them. Any such interpretation would be entirely erroneous. I must also enter my protest against another suggestion that has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). I say that his speech was not worthy of one of the Representatives of the greatest commercial nation in the world. It is not worthy of our commercial greatness that we should stand shivering and say—"Look at our great trade of £60,000,000 with France; if we touch a single item of their imports, the whole of that will tumble to the ground." Does our trade with France indeed rest upon so slender a basis that if we introduce any change in the tariff we are to be immediately threatened that the whole edifice of our trade with France is to tumble to the ground? Are we to be threatened that a trade of £60,000,000 is to be reduced to one-half? If we have a trade of £60,000,000 with France—and I rejoice at the magnitude of that trade—it is because it is agreeable to the interests of both countries that it should exist. Such a trade is not one which depends for its existence either upon the favour of the French Government or the humour of the French people; but it is obviously on the interests of the two nations that this exchange is based. I think it is entirely against every reasonable expectation that it should be thought that these vast relations, which are beneficial to both nations, should break down because we impose a tax upon one branch of French trade which will amount to about £125,000 in the whole. I have more faith in the stability of the commercial relations between the two countries than to believe any such thing. But if there is any such danger, you cannot think that it is to be averted by non-insistence on this proposal. Can we expect that this commerce will continue unless it is to the interest of the French themselves? I deny that this commerce exists for the advantage of England alone. We know that it is of equal advantage to France itself. We send them our products because they wish to buy them as much as because we wish to sell them. I should fancy that it would be a very short-sighted Government in France which would take any such step as that suggested from the other side of the House, and which would endeavour to trade upon the fears of the English Parliament. It would be a very short-sighted Government that would think of trading upon the fear on our part that some favour, which they of their goodness or kindness had afforded to us, might be withdrawn. No doubt, if they did trade upon such fears, the French Government would have recourse to measures which would cause some inconvenience to the English Government; but I have more confidence and faith in the interests of the two countries, and in the good sense of the two countries; and I do not believe that, simply in order, as it were, to punish this House for having put an additional duty upon bottled wine as compared with wine in casks, the French people will wish to destroy the commerce which has grown to such enormous proportions, and which has been so much to the advantage of both countries.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, he thought that the commercial relationship of Great Britain and France was not safe in the hands of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman asked whether the enormous trade between the two countries could by any possibility be jeopardized by such a small proposal as that he had made in his Budget. Well, he (Mr. Illingworth) would ask the right hon. Gentleman this question—Was it worth while for Great Britain to run the risk of jeopardizing the trade between the two countries for such a paltry result as he would obtain? He (Mr. Illingworth) demurred to the contention that the position the right hon. Gentleman had taken up was a necessity. Where was the necessity for interfering with the fiscal arrangements between England and France for this paltry sum of £125,000? Supposing the right hon. Gentleman were to entertain the objection taken by that—the Opposition—side of the House, where would be the financial difficulty? The right hon. Gentleman could spare this sum, and still his Budget would remain intact. He would only lessen to a very small degree the surplus he would be in possession of. The right hon. Gentleman had given no consideration whatever to the arguments used and the pleas urged from the Opposition side of the House in regard to the difficulties of the Free Traders in France, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman this question—Was he not aware that in France there was a very powerful body which sought in the interests of Protection to upset the present arrangement between GreatBritain and France, and that a very small cast into the scale would put it into the power of the Protectionists to carry their point? He would also ask the consideration of the Committee to this view of political and financial matters. It would appear to the French people, to the Free Traders, and especially to those who had to deal with the wine trade, that this was a blow aimed directly at them. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir James Fergusson) had quoted the opinions and views of the Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce. Well, the wine people of France were the Free Traders of France. These were the men we largely relied upon for keeping up the best possible commercial relationship between the two countries, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was gratuitously hitting them a blow in the face by hitting the one article in which they dealt and through which they were struggling to maintain the best political and commercial relationship with Great Britain. He made an appeal again to the Committee on a stronger ground. We in this country were in no financial embarrassment. We had neither a war on our hands nor the financial and political consequences of a war to struggle with. France had both. France was almost at her wit's ends for means of raising the necessary amount to meet her financial obligations, and was this the time when we should put into the power of those who sought to lessen the commercial relationship between the two countries this weapon, to force forward a measure of Protection, and furnish them with the most powerful weapon with which they could possibly be armed? He made an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself on the lowest possible ground, for he regarded him as utterly incapable, after the appeals which had been made to him, to regard the matter in its highest aspect. He would put it on the simple ground that the small sum which would be obtained by this tax was not necessary to the right hon. Gentleman's Budget. It was not necessary that £125,000 should be secured by means of an increased duty on bottled wines. We were reminded by the action of the French Chamber that the course Her Majesty's Government had taken might be the means of damaging the existing satisfactory relationship between the two countries, and would be putting a weapon into the hands of the Protectionist Party in France, and he asked the right hon. Gentleman, therefore, whether it was worth his while to do this thing? He would ask the right hon. Gentleman not to stand pedantically in his position, assuming that it was necessary for him to make the slightest change in his financial proposals in response to an appeal from the Opposition side of the House. In regard to this small question, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to forego the risk which was inseparable from the proposal he had made, and that this country and the Free Traders of France should be saved from the risk and danger involved in this gratuitous proposal to interfere with the financial arrangements existing between the two countries.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, that the debate had proceeded almost entirely on the lines of the relations existing between this country and France, which might possibly be disturbed by the action taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He (Mr. Conybeare) wished for a moment to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the possible effect his proposition might have upon one of our own Colonies. He (Mr. Conybeare) did not himself say that the danger which he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider, existed, as the right hon. Gentleman would be in a far better position than he was to say whether it was so or not. But he was anxious to be assured by the right hon. Gentleman as to whether these proposals of taxing wine would not have the effect of destroying the gradually increasing growth of the export trade in wine which came to us from South Africa? South Africa was a part of our Colonial Empire not previously mentioned this evening, and if he ventured for one moment to trespass on the attention of the Committee, it was because he did not think they ought to leave out of view the struggling attempts in the face of great difficulties which the Colonies of South Africa generally had been making to develop the export trade in their wines. He held in his hands the latest Returns as to the wines exported from South Africa according to the Trade and Navigation Account, and he found that the quantities given were for the month ending the 31st March in the three years 1886, 1887, and 1888,—in 1886, 2,238 gallons, in 1887, 5,258 gallons, and in 1888, 6,095 gallons; and for 13 months ending the 31st March he found the quantities were in 1886, 4,261 gallons, in 1887, 12,859 gallons, and in 1888, 12,881 gallons. Now, he would argue from that that it was quite evident that this export trade in South African wine was gradually climbing upward. He knew from information he had received during his visit to that part of the world that there had been great difficulties in the way of the Colony developing its trade. He was anxious to ask the right hon. Gentleman opposite if he had considered whether the effect of his proposal might not be to crush out this struggling industry of our Colonists in South Africa? From the figures he had quoted it was clear that this was an industry which was gradually finding its way to the front. The Colonists were taking every opportunity and using every method they knew of to improve their wines and fit them for export, to enable them to survive the long sea voyage from South Africa to this country, and he contended that it would be exceedingly hard upon our own Colonies, without reference to any international difficulties with France or any other country, were a proposal such as that the right hon. Gentleman had made to interfere with the growth of this export trade. This was not a fanciful supposition when it was recollected that the Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted that his proposals would tell not only against the high priced sparkling wines of France, but also against cheaper wines from the Rhine, the Moselle, and Italy. If his proposals affected those wines injuriously, it was quite possible they would affect, with equal injury, those wines on whose behalf he was now pleading. Into the large question of Fair Trade and Free Trade, which had been discussed *ad nauseum*, he would not enter, though he might make one divergent remark. An angry spirit was displayed by hon. Gentlemen opposite at remarks that fell from the Opposition side of the House; but it was a little difficult to understand the attitude of right hon. Gentlemen opposite and their supporters, for while one got up and declared that this impost would fall entirely on the producer in France, another would get up and say it would fall entirely on the consumer in this country. The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) assured the Committee that the tax would fall on the consumers, but several others explained that it would fall on the French producers, adducing the fact of the remonstrance from the French Government as the best proof of their theory that it must, would, and ought to fall on the producers, not the consumers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had expostulated with those who ventured to suggest that this was the commencement of a war of reprisal on the part of Her Majesty's Government, and, for his part, he accepted in the fullest manner the repudiation of that charge. He did not for a moment think of charging the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues with introducing these proposals to do injury to our friends in France; but what he did say was that the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends must be taken to be liable for it, even if they did not foresee the results of their own action. If this action was regarded as a reprisal and followed by other reprisals from France, then Her Majesty's Government must be held accountable for those events. It had been so regarded in the French Chamber, and a Deputy there had stated that if this proposal were carried the present arrangement with France and the Most Favoured Nation treatment would be denounced and repudiated. The Protectionist Party in France was strong, and the French Government susceptible to Protectionist views. It was all very well for the right hon. Gentleman to talk about our fiscal liberty, and that it would be a terrible thing if we were not allowed to put on a small tax of this kind; but what was the use of occupying a political pinnacle of this kind when it could be distinctly proved that it was not to our interest to do so, and when it had been specifically declared that it was clear from the action of the French Government that the result would almost certainly be that something like a war of reprisals would be entered upon? That in itself was quite a sufficient argument to show the inexpediency of these proposals, however desirable it might be from a political point of view that we should reserve the right of taxing imports. But he had risen to bring the position of the South African wine trade to the notice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and hoped it would not trouble the right hon. Gentleman too much to make a reply.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, that in the earlier part of the evening he informed the Committee that he had taken pains to inquire how far this tax would affect our Colonial wine trade, and he had been assured by numerous authorities on the trade that the wine could and would be imported in cask. The point had been very carefully considered, and he did not think that the Colonies would suffer from the duty in the slightest degree. He could not accept the suggestion of the hon. Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) to exempt the Colonies, for then there would be ground for a complaint from Foreign Governments that they were not in the Most Favoured Nation position, and there would be some colour for this charge of Protection.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, he understood that the right hon. Gentleman referred to the Australian Colonies; but he spoke particularly of South Africa. Had the right hon. Gentleman extended his inquiries to the wine trade there?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he had. Cape sherry could undoubtedly be imported in cask, and was well adapted to that mode of conveyance.

Sir FREDERICK MAPPIN (York, W.R., Hallamshire) said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) stated, among many other things, that the manufacturers and merchants paid the duties themselves, not the consumers. But the hon. Member had plenty of opportunities of satisfying himself that that was an utter fallacy. He had only to go among his constituents and ask any of the manufacturers and merchants, and they would show him at once that there was no foundation whatever for such a statement. He would advise the hon. Member, before he repeated the statement, to satisfy himself what foundation there was for it. Though the statement might deceive very few Members in the House, its repetition out-of-doors might have a prejudicial effect on public opinion.

Mr. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

The CHAIRMAN did not put the Question.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said, he should like to give a reason for the vote he intended to give. Before he went away to dine he heard a good deal of the debate, and he heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) say this was not a Party question. But when he returned to the House he found the Committee conducting the discussion with a heat he never saw exceeded in a Party debate. It did not, however, seem to him to be a matter of such extreme importance whether an extra sixpence should be paid for a bottle of champagne or not. He could assure the Committee it had no personal interest for himself. Having, then, no personal interest, and this being no Party question, he would give an impartial vote, first weighing the arguments *pro* and *con.* A reason against the tax was that it might affront the French people. He thought that might very likely be one effect; but if it was a measure essential to the national financial arrangements of the year, he should not much care whether it did affront France or not; he should consider a good deal more what would be the effect upon the people of Great Britain. Then another argument on the same side was that it was against Free Trade, and of course it was, as all indirect taxation was. Then an argument for the tax was that it fell upon the rich man. Well, but he knew quite well that this was merely said for the purpose of making an Election cry. Still, as a matter of fact, the consumer paid the tax; that was a first axiom of political economy, and the rich man—the rich fool—who drank champagne, would have to pay this tax. For his part, in regard to taxation, he liked to get at the rich man, and make him pay as much as possible. Another argument for the tax was that it made it more difficult for certain classes to get hold of the alcohol in champagne. On Tuesday last the House spent three hours in discussing the desirability of preventing Native races from taking alcohol, and surely there would be no harm in his trying by his vote to prevent his fellow-countrymen from using it. He could not say this was a good plan, this fiscal medium of putting a stop to drinking habits. He had heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian show how imperfect the method was. But it was the only way before him at the present moment; therefore, with great reluctance, he should vote against the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and against champagne, just as the right hon. Gentleman voted against him and against tea earlier in the evening.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 246; Noes 121: Majority 125.—(Div. List, No. 81.)

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Alteration of duties on carriages).

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) said, he would not occupy much time in moving his Amendment to this clause, which was to omit the words in line 28—"If such carriages shall have less than four wheels, 15*s.*, and for every hackney carriage 15*s.*" There was a very general agreement that this tax upon vehicles was very obnoxious in character. Carriages were used by many persons, farmers and persons of small means, and were almost necessary means of existence. These might very fairly be exempt from this taxation. Equally obnoxious as a tax on locomotion was the duty of 15*s.* on hackney carriages, and it would fall heavily on those persons who let out carriages for hire.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 28, leave out the words—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
"If such carriages shall have less than four wheels	0	15	
"For every hackney carriage, as hereinafter defined	0	15	0."

—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he was quite unable to assent to the proposal. The matter had been very carefully considered, and had, he believed, given general satisfaction. Very important concessions had been made, and he could not see his way to make any further exemptions. He reminded hon. Members that there was no increase in the Carriage Duty by the clause.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick) said, he quite admitted that, as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, the Government had made certain very important concessions on this subject, and that those who were interested in the matter on the part of the trade regarded those concessions as of much value. He thought, however, that the proposal which was made with respect to hackney carriages should be made to apply to omnibuses and tramcars, as well as to hackney carriages. If the right hon. Gentleman saw his way to adopt this suggestion, he (Sir Edward Grey) would not support the Amendment.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he was not prepared to make any alteration in the taxes on omnibuses and tramcars, which were really outside the changes proposed by the Bill.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 229; Noes 72: Majority 157.—(Div. List, No. 82.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) said, he desired to invite the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the case of hotel keepers in rural districts. Such people frequently required vehicles for three months only in the year. The tax would prove to be a heavy burden in such cases, and would have the effect of restricting the number of vehicles which hotel keepers kept, and, consequently, the convenience of the public. He should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would devise some means whereby hotel keepers in this position could be included under the provisions of Sub-section 2, so that they might be able to take out licences for a limited period. He would suggest that they should be able to take out four months' licences. If such a proposal were carried out, he thought it would result in an increase of the Revenue, as it would cause an addition to the number of vehicles which would be kept by hotel proprietors during the holiday season.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he was afraid he could not do anything at present in the direction suggested by the hon. Member, as a concession had already been made to the owners of flies.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Power to Treasury to prohibit the use of certain substances in excisable goods).

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) to allow Progress to be reported. A great many hon. Gentlemen had left the House since 12 o'clock, and he (Mr. John Morley) thought that there would be a considerable number of Members on both sides who would desire to speak on Clause 5.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had hoped that it would have been agreeable to the Committee to finish the Bill that evening. He would not, however, resist the appeal that had been made to him, if it was understood that the Committee should be resumed at 2 o'clock to-morrow. [*Cries of* "No!"] He was afraid that if there was any objection to a Morning Sitting to-morrow he must ask the Committee to continue sitting that evening for some time afterwards. Hon. Gentlemen must realize the fact that the Government were compelled to make progress with an important financial measure of that character. The Government would not be justified in allowing it to stand over from day to day.

MR. JOHN MORLEY said, he really did not think the Committee could assent to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. He believed he was right in saying that the Government, whilst they had not given a pledge, had entered into a very distinct understanding that private Members' rights should not be interfered with to-morrow. There was on the Paper for to-morrow evening a very important

Notice of Motion on the subject of education, in which great interest was taken by various Members. If the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury insisted upon having a Morning Sitting, there would certainly be disappointment at the infraction by the Government of the understanding which had been arrived at.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he trusted that, under the circumstances, the Committee would continue its sitting for some time longer, not for the convenience of the Government, but for the sake of the Revenue. It was most important that some of the provisions of the Bill should come into operation as soon as possible. Every week, every day that the passage of the Bill was delayed there was a loss to the Revenue. There was no very important point, although there were some interesting points still to be considered by the Committee, and he therefore hoped that hon. Members would continue to sit for a short time longer.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he ever remembered a Budget Bill which was so far advanced on the 26th of April as that now under consideration? There had been no delay in the discussion of the measure. The next clause was one of a controversial character, and raised an important scientific question, upon which some hon. Members wished to speak at great length, and it must be remembered that there were some Members who were serving on Select Committees, and who had been in the House since 12 o'clock. He moved to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was extremely sorry to do anything that would be disagreeable to hon. Gentlemen opposite; but it must be obvious that the Government were bound to make progress with Business. If there was a Morning Sitting to-morrow, the Government would consider themselves bound to make a House at 9 o'clock.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he would rather sit there for another hour than have a Morning Sitting to-morrow, although he had been in the House since 3 o'clock. He thought that no Government was ever so favoured by an Opposition as the present Government. They were quite as anxious as was the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to forward Business; but really there was some reasonable limit. The Chairman had already been in the Chair for eight hours. There would be no objection to meeting at 2 o'clock to-morrow, but for the fact that the adoption of such a course would probably interfere with the proper discussion of the two important Motions which were on the Paper for to-morrow. It was not fair for the Government, night after night, to take away the time of private Members. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to have some consideration for the rights of private Members.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, it was, no doubt, very important that the Revenue should be collected, but it was the duty of every Member of the House to examine with care the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to Revenue. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen) must feel that the discussion that evening had been of a most business-like character, and that, in view of the very weighty proposals that had been under consideration, considerable progress had been made. He thought he might tell the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) that he need not be very anxious about what he called the business of the country. They were all interested in the country's business; but it had become the custom to observe reasonable hours in that House, and to close all discussions at 12 o'clock, unless it was absolutely necessary to go beyond that hour. There had not been any unreasonable delay with regard to the Budget, and there had been no obstruction whatever. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] He knew that in some dark quarters of the House there was a disposition to enable the Government to transact Business without any discussion whatever; but he was sure that such was not the wish of the House, and he hoped that his right hon. Friend would persevere with his Motion. The Government must feel that there was a strong wish on the Opposition side of the House to have time for the consideration of the next clause, and that it would be very unfair, after the promise given by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury a short time ago, to attempt to filch away another private Member's night so soon after the last was taken. He hoped that hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House would stand firm, and would refuse to sanction further proceedings upon an important measure at close upon half-past 12 o'clock.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he would suggest that Clauses 5 and 6 should be discussed upon Report, so that the Committee stage of the Bill might be finished that evening. He knew there was an earnest desire on the part of hon. Members opposite to discuss the 5th clause, and he quite understood the objection that was felt to taking it at so late an hour. He thought, however, that the debate might very well take place upon the Report stage. After all, they were all refreshed by the fact that they had been keeping such good hours recently, and he thought they might devote another hour to the less controversial portion of the Bill. He trusted that hon. Members opposite would appreciate the spirit in which he made this suggestion.

MR. JOHN MORLEY said, he did full justice to the spirit of the right hon. Gentleman's remarks; but the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that a discussion upon the Report stage would be subject to restrictions, such as inability to speak more than once, which did not exist in the case of the Committee stage. The right hon. Gentleman had stated his notion of a compromise. He (Mr. John Morley) would now offer his, which was that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, in consideration of the ready assent of the Opposition to a Morning Sitting to-morrow, should promise to grant facilities on an early day for the discussion of the Motion on Education fixed for to-morrow evening.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he would endeavour to keep a House for to-morrow evening; but he could not assent to the proposal to give what would be practically a Government day for the discussion of the Motion at a time when the House was in the midst of very pressing Government Business. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley) was very well aware that the House could go on to-morrow night until 1 o'clock, and they all desired that the Motion which had been referred to should be discussed as fully as possible.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) said, the compromise which had been offered by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury would certainly not be agreeable to those who objected to the 5th clause. He did not think there were 50 men in the House who knew what that clause really amounted to. There was not the word "beer" in it, and yet it was a beer clause. If the discussion of the clause were postponed until the Report stage, it would not be possible to instruct the public as to the nature of the proposal. Perhaps if the clause were properly explained in Committee to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the public, it would be very materially altered before the Report stage.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, before the Committee sacrificed its right of division against this clause, he should like to know exactly what the position was, for he had had some experience of Government tactics. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury spoke in a gay and airy fashion of going through the Bill to-night; but if a Division was not taken, he wished to have it distinctly understood how long the Committee would be expected to continue the discussion.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

[*Lords*].—[BILL 228.]

(*Mr. Secretary Matthews.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, with regard to this Bill, he would ask the Government to state that it should not be proceeded with until sufficient time had been allowed for its consideration. It was only issued to-day, and it was very voluminous, requiring some attention before it could be grasped in all its details. An interval of a fortnight or three weeks should be allowed.

Mr. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) supported the suggestion of his hon. Friend.

Second Reading *deferred* till *Thursday* next.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 207.]

(*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, Mr. Sinclair.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Certain assignments made without consent in writing to be valid).

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, in this Bill the Committee would recognize an honest attempt to mitigate some of the defects that had appeared in the Land Act for Ireland passed last year. There could be no doubt that as time went on other defects in the Bill, which were well known in Ireland, would be recognized in that House. The Amendments to the clause of which he had given Notice extended the scope considerably, but they had been carefully considered in consultation with those who thoroughly understood the matter. In consideration of the limited time at the disposal of the Committee, he would content himself with simply moving the first Amendment, and would await the observations of the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) thereon.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 7, after "assignment," insert the words "alienation, sale, sub-letting, or subdivision."—(*Mr. J. E. Ellis.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University) said, the Amendment raised matter of considerable substance. The Bill was not objected to by the Government, inasmuch as it re-opened none of the principles settled by the legislation of 1881 and 1887. But the Amendment went behind the settlement of both those Acts, neither of which admitted to the benefit of the Act sub-tenancies granted in violation of contract. On this ground the Government could not possibly accept the Amendment, and he must ask the hon. Member to withdraw it, because the Government had accepted the Bill only on the understanding that such questions should not be re-opened.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he recognized the spirit in which the hon. Member for Rushcliffe had spoken; but he was bound by the undertaking on the second reading that the question alone of assignment should be dealt with.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS said, he recognized that the situation had certainly been considerably altered since he placed his Amendment on the Paper by an Amendment of the hon. Member for South Down (Mr. M'Cartan) that somewhat covered the ground of his Amendment. He would, therefore, ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. T. W. Russell, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 10, to leave out the word "such," and insert the word "any."

Amendment proposed,

> In page 1, line 10, after the word "assignment," insert the words "or in cases where the interest under the lease has passed to an assignee under a contract for purchase, and the lessor has accepted the purchaser as tenant, or has given his consent to the purchase."—(*Mr. Lea.*)

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) said, he desired to express his obligation to the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis) for withdrawing his Amendment in favour of that which he (Mr. M'Cartan) had put on the Paper. It was consistent with the part he took in Irish affairs. The Amendment was designed to meet the common case of an assignment of lease, where no assignment in writing had been made, but where the assignee was simply given possession of the holding, and was accepted as tenant by the landlord, and when under the Act the tenant would be out of Court. He would only mention that the attention of the Government was first drawn to the point by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), who put a question to the hon. and learned Solicitor General on the subject before the Easter Recess.

Amendment proposed,

> In page 1, at end, add, "For the purposes of this Act the term 'assignment' shall include an equitable assignment, and the term 'lessee' in Section 1 of 'The Land Law (Ireland) Act,

1887,' shall include persons equitably entitled to the interest of the lessee."—(*Mr. M'Cartan.*)

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 18, after "1860," add—

"Provided always, That any person claiming to be lessee under any lease, and whose claims shall have been allowed by the Court under this section, and his executors, administrators, and assigns, shall be estopped in any proceedings whatever from denying that such person was assignee of such lease at the time when his claim was allowed."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Short title) *agreed to.*

MR. J. E. ELLIS said, in refraining from moving the new clause, of which he had given Notice in the face of the opposition expressed by the Government, he did not for a single moment accept the statement that the matter was closed by the legislation of 1881 and 1887. He wished to make himself perfectly clear, that he did not admit that the Land Question was by any means closed.

Amendment proposed, after Clause 1, insert the following new Clause:—

(Definition.)

"The term 'lessee' shall include any present lessee, sub-lessee, or tenant of the lands included in the lease, or any portion of them, where such lessee, sub-lessee, or tenant is or has been in bonâ fide occupancy of his holding with the knowledge and sanction of the head landlord, or sub-landlord, or his agent.

"The term 'assignment' shall include any assignment under seal, or any contract or transfer, by way of sub-lease or otherwise, whereby the entire, or substantially the entire, interests in any term is passed in law or equity."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Question proposed, "That the said Clause be there inserted."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, at end, add "and it shall apply to all applications of leaseholders made since the passing of 'The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887.'"—(*Mr. Clancy.*)

MR. MADDEN said, he had no objection to the substance of the Amendment, but the drafting would not quite carry out the intention the hon. Member had in view. If the hon. Member would accept the language he proposed (and which he read), it would be more specific, and meet more directly the case of leaseholders whose applications had been already refused before the Bill before the Committee had become law.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, to insert the following as a new Clause:—

(2.) "The disallowance before the passing of this Act, on the ground aforesaid, of an application made to the court under the first section of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, shall not be a bar to the making of another like application by a person claiming to be a lessee."

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the words standing on the Paper were more simple and plainer to the lay mind, whatever they might be to the legal mind.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, he would recommend the hon. Member to accept the words of the hon. and learned Solicitor General. He admitted that legal drafting was a matter of mystery and admiration; but it would be well to trust to the drafting of one of the most eminent property lawyers in Ireland.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he was unable clearly to follow the words, but would the hon. and learned Solicitor General say, did it make the Act retrospective?

MR. MADDEN said, he could assure the hon. Member that his proposal completely and absolutely met the case of a lessee whose application had been refused before the passing of the Act on the ground of the technical defect which the Bill was intended to cure, and that it directly met the class of cases which were only indirectly met by the Amendment of the hon. Member.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, if the hon. Member accepted the assurance that the words expressed the meaning more correctly in a legally-binding manner, though they did not commend themselves to the ordinary mind, and hon. Members who had Amendments to the like effect, there was no reason why the discussion should be protracted.

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, he felt some doubt whether the words defined both applications that had been made, and should be made before and after the passing of the Act.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he would accept the assurance of the hon. and learned Solicitor General, and withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, New Clause (Disallowance of application not to bar a subsequent claim) read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be reported."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON said, it would be as well, so that all might be satisfied with the new clause, to have the Bill reprinted before the Report stage.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, there would not be the slightest objection to that, if there was a general desire.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, it was desirable to fix Report for that day, because, as the hon. Member for South Down (Mr. M'Cartan) was well aware, proceedings were pending that made time important in the North of Ireland.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down S.) said, he did not know that there was sufficient reason why the Bill should not be reprinted.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork) said, the matter was of equal importance to all parts of Ireland.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

FISHERY ACTS AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 32.]

(*Colonel Nolan, Mr. E. Harrington, Mr. P. McDonald, Mr. Foley.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 19th April.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2 (Advance from Irish Reproductive Loan Fund).

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University) said, the substance of the clause was not in itself objectionable, but it was unnecessary, because its objects, so far as they were considered expedient, were already carried out by an Order under the Irish Reproductive Loans Act of 1874. The other provisions of the clause, if thought expedient, could be adopted in the same manner.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Clause be omitted,"—(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

It being One of the Clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House, without Question put.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 27th April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—Poor Law Relief, The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury *disch.*; Earl of Jersey, The Lord Bishop of Rochester, Lord Sandhurst *added.*

Public Bills—*First Reading*—Augmentation of Benefices Act Amendment * (78); Duration of Speeches in Parliament * (79); Municipal Franchise Extension (Ireland) * (80).

Committee — Copyhold Acts Amendment (6-77).

Third Reading—Metropolitan Board of Works Commission * (62), and *passed.*

Royal Assent—Army (Annual) [51 *Vict.* c. 4]; East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways) [51 *Vict.* c. 5].

RAILWAYS — EMPLOYES' HOURS OF DUTY.

OBSERVATIONS. QUESTION.

Earl DE LA WARR, in rising to call attention to the recent Return of railway servants' hours of duty; and to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether there is any objection to have a periodical Return to the Board of Trade of exceptional cases of overtime employment, said, that an analysis of the Return of railway *employés'* hours of duty in the months of June and July last showed that there were 252,209 instances of being on duty 13 hours; 160,132 instances of being on duty 14 hours; 110,160 for 15 hours; 57,835 for 16 hours; 27,066 for 17 hours; and 25,525 for 18 hours and upwards. These included passenger and goods guards, drivers and firemen, and signalmen. On the Great Eastern Railway the percentage of passenger guards on duty more than 12 hours at a time during the month of January, 1887, was 4½ per cent; of goods guards 91½ per cent; of drivers and firemen 83½ per cent; and of signalmen 45¾ per cent. During the same time the figures for the Great Northern Railway were — Passenger guards, 26¾ per cent; goods guards, 87½ per cent; drivers and firemen, 92¾ per cent; and signalmen, 16⅓ per cent. On the Great Western, for the same time, the percentage of passenger guards was ¾; goods guards, 73⅔; drivers and firemen, 91; and signalmen 5¾. Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway — Passenger guards, 54½; goods guards, 98; drivers and firemen, 96⅓; signalmen, 47 per cent. London and North-Western — Passenger guards, 9½ per cent; goods guards, 67⅓ per cent; drivers and firemen, 89¾; signalmen, 8½ per cent. London, Brighton, and South Coast—Passenger guards, 2 per cent; goods guards, *nil;* drivers and firemen, 98½; and signalmen, *nil.* On the London and South-Western no passenger guards were on duty over 12 hours, and no signalmen. The percentage of goods guards was 19¾, and of drivers and firemen 15⅓. From a Return of the North-Eastern Railway, it appeared that of the signalmen employed on the 136 signal-boxes between Edinburgh and Darlington 45 were on duty for not more than 10 hours, the limit that ought not to be exceeded to secure safety; while 91 were on duty over that period each day.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (The Earl of ONSLOW) said, he was not going to ask their Lordships to offer any opposition to the Return which had been moved for by the noble Earl, but he desired to point out that the Return which had already been presented was not a satisfactory one. The noble Earl, who had moved for a Return of overtime during the months of January and July, could hardly have chosen two months which gave a more erroneous impression as to the average number of hours during which railway servants were at work. In January the traffic was frequently obstructed by snow-blocks, there was a constantly recurring danger caused by fogs, and men who were experienced in signalling had often to be on fog duty for a number of hours at a stretch. Besides, men were occasionally taken ill, and other men of tried ability for signalling had to take their places, and probably work a little longer than ordinary. Again, July was a month when the excursion traffic was at its height, and it was necessary to bear in mind that when men were sent out with excursion trains they had charge only of one train, and that a considerable portion of the time returned as "on duty" was spent it might be at the seaside or at race meetings. The men were not working from the time they left until they returned, but were paid for the whole time. Therefore, he thought that a Return for overtime during these two months only would be apt to produce a very erroneous impression. In the case of engine-drivers, the Companies did all they could to prevent them from being too long on duty. For instance, on the London and North-Western there was an order that when a driver had been 15 hours at work he should report the fact to a stationmaster, who would telegraph to the nearest available station in order that the driver might be relieved on his arrival there. The drivers were fined if that order was not obeyed. If the Returns asked for were not accurate, they were worse than useless; he, therefore, hoped that the noble Earl would confer with him in order to settle the best way in which the real truth as to overtime could be ascertained, and also to settle the form in which the Return ought to be laid on the Table.

LORD STALBRIDGE said, the noble Earl had given a correct account of how Railway Companies acted in regard to their men. They paid for overtime at the rate of time and a-quarter on the London and North-Western line, of which he was a Director, and he believed it was also paid for on all other lines. Therefore it was obvious that it was not the interest of the Companies to encourage overtime. The noble Earl who represented the Board of Trade had mentioned that there was an order on the London and North-Western that all men who found themselves on duty for 15 hours should immediately report the circumstance to the stationmaster of the first station at which they stopped, in order that relief might be ready for them at the next available station. He might inform their Lordships that that order had been in existence for many years past. There was this reason why in some cases there must be overtime. The two most unfavourable months in the year for the Railway Companies—namely, January and July—had been selected by the noble Earl for the proposed Return. It would be in the memory of most noble Lords that in the month of January there had been extraordinary fogs, which lasted in some instances for six days; and those who were acquainted with railway working would agree with him that it was astonishing that the traffic was so well conducted during the prevalence of the fog. There was hardly any accident, and on the London and North-Western hardly any train was late. Those facts told greatly in favour of the managers of the railways, and of the devotion of their *employés.* Overtime was an absolute necessity in this country, and for the following reason. If any Railway Company were to keep a sufficiently large number of men, engines, and brakesmen to meet the maximum traffic, the result obviously would be that the men would necessarily be on short time for a large part of the year. What the Companies wanted were loyal, devoted, and experienced men. They must have such men to work the trains, and if they had to work a few hours' overtime at certain times of the year they got the benefit of it on other occasions. On the London and North-Western Line and on other lines the men had every opportunity of making their grievances known to their superiors. He knew very well that the Directors of every well-regulated line did their best to diminish this overtime. In some cases, however, there was a difficulty in preventing men from working overtime, because they naturally liked the extra wages. Sometimes, when a man was entered on the list as having worked for 16 or 18 hours, perhaps he might have been resting or standing idle for from eight to 10 hours, and consequently he was well able to go on and to continue his duties after that time. In spite of what the noble Earl had said, he thought the figures showed that the passenger guards, the signalmen, and the passenger drivers had been kept within well-controlled time. There was another point in regard to the engine-drivers on the London and North-Western. What the Company did was this. At every place where they had a large number of engines and enginemen they had lodging-houses kept on purpose for them. The houses were fitted up with bedrooms, and had every accommodation for cooking, so that immediately a man had finished his journey he could go into one of these houses and take his rest. He got his lodging for nothing, and was ready for the return journey. He did not wish to weary the House with an enumeration of particular cases, but he could show in almost every instance that some special reason existed for the overtime. There were 23 instances of men working 16 hours a-day. In one case, however, there were but few trains, and the man was on duty only five days a-week. In another case a man had to wait for a single train; and these were typical instances of overtime with signalmen. On the North-Eastern Railway the guard of an excursion train was on duty for 20¼ hours, but 10½ hours of that he was at rest in the terminal station. It was impossible on a great line of railway to avoid occasional irregularities, and in these cases no physical suffering was endured. In one case a Member of Parliament required a special train on a branch line early in the morning. A number of signalmen were thus made to appear as having worked eight hours' overtime and having had to resume work after four hours' rest, though they only had this one train to wait for. Again, on the Midland there were four goods guards, each of whom was on duty between 21 and 22 hours. This was caused by the delay of trains in consequence of a landslip. On the previous day there had been a dense fog, which utterly disorganized work; but most of the time the men were sitting in their brakes smoking their pipes. In the Erewash Valley, again, five guards were on duty for exceptionally long hours in consequence of a fog. Without these explanations entirely wrong impressions were likely to get abroad on the question of overtime. In these exceptional cases it was obvious that it would not be safe to trust to any but the most experienced men. On the London and North-Western Railway the total number of passenger guards was 439, and in the month of July only 44 worked more than 12 hours—that was 3·18 per cent; and out of the 2,165 signalmen the number was 14, or 0·64 per cent. No doubt the enginemen worked rather longer overtime than the other men. The total engine mileage of the London and North-Western Railway was over 54,000,000, and of this 12 per cent was special mileage—that was, when trains were called out for special purposes, sometimes at a moment's notice, in the case of goods trains, for urgent or perishable goods, such as fish, &c. The returns of the London and North-Western Railway reflected great credit on the locomotive department, and it was a great mistake to suppose that no effort was taken to prevent or reduce overtime. The Directors knew that the men were not dissatisfied, and that the public were not dissatisfied. He could appeal to the list of accidents for 1885-6, in which only two cases were to be found in which there was any question of any of the men concerned working unduly long hours. He was not arguing against the Return, but he hoped that for the purposes of the next Return fair working months would be chosen, say April and September. These Returns, however, were a source of great expense to the Railway Companies and to the country, and he hoped they would not be moved for year after year.

Earl DE LA WARR said, he was quite ready to accept what had been offered by the noble Earl. He wished also to say that the months were not chosen by himself, and that no one more highly appreciated than himself the admirable way in which our railways were managed.

LIGHTHOUSES AND LIGHTSHIPS — TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH THE SHORE.

OBSERVATIONS.

The Earl of MORLEY said, he rose to call attention to the Report of the Committee appointed by the Board of Trade to inquire into the desirability of electrical communication between light-vessels and outlying lighthouses and the shore. An interesting discussion on this important question had been recently held at a meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, and at a meeting of the Plymouth Chamber, of which he was a member, there had been a discussion on the question which was well worth attention. The Committee had dealt mainly with lightships and lighthouses near the mouth of the Thames, though the recommendations of some Chambers of Commerce went so far as to urge that cables all round the coast should connect all the lighthouses with the General Post Office system, That, however, would involve great expense. He hoped that the Bill—which, he believed, was shortly to be introduced—would enable Lloyd's to purchase sites for their signal stations. He desired to call attention to the subject, particularly in connection with saving life at sea. At present the only means of communicating information of wrecks from lightships or lighthouses was by rockets and guns; but these signals were not wholly satisfactory. The guns often were not heard, and in fogs the rockets were not seen; and, in many cases, they did not indicate the position of the wreck—a matter of the highest importance—nor did they give any information as to its size, or the number of passengers to be saved; whereas the telegraph could at once communicate all these particulars. He need not dwell on the enormous importance of time in these cases. A few hours, often a few minutes, made all the difference between absolute disaster and the saving of life. He might quote from the experience of the coxswain of the lifeboat at Ramsgate to show the inestimable value of telegraphic communication, and that, under the present system of rockets, a wreck might lie for many hours in great peril without those on land, 20 miles away, knowing anything about it. He particularly mentioned the case of the *Indian Chief*, which got aground early in the morning. In this instance, telegraphic communication would have been of the greatest importance. He thought it would be sufficient to read one paragraph from the evidence of Captain Glover, who mentioned that telegraphic communication would have been the means of saving hundreds of lives. The superintendent of the telegraph department of Lloyd's gave a number of instances in which telegraphic communication would have saved lives. In the case of the *Schiller*, lost about 15 years ago, 331 lives were sacrificed, and the Coroner's jury gave it as their opinion that if there had been electric communication the vessel would have been saved. He would also mention a case off the coast of his own county, where a vessel which was wrecked might have been saved if her state had been known in time. This system had been adopted in Canada, where telegraphic communication was used for commercial purposes, as well as in North Germany, where the lighthouses were connected with the shore, in Denmark, and, he thought, in Sweden and Norway. He was not anxious now to urge on the Government a great expenditure; but he wished to insist that the question should not be lost sight of. He hoped that they would hear that there would be a gradual extension of the system. The country at large was interested to an extraordinary extent, a year or two ago, in the subject of the saving of life at sea; and he ventured to think that, without incurring very large expense, communications might be established between certain prominent lightships, and also outlying lighthouses, and the shore by means of the appliances of modern science. He hoped the subject would be seriously considered by the Board of Trade, and that gradually and cautiously the system would be extended.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (The Earl of ONSLOW) said, that the subject to which the noble Earl had called attention was one which interested a very large and important body in this country—namely, the Mercantile Marine. At the outset it was important to call attention to the terms of reference of the Committee. It was appointed with the special object of facilitating the saving of life at sea, and the reason for that reference was that the funds which the Government were enabled to devote to that purpose could only be derived from one source, and that source was the Mercantile Marine Fund. Now, by the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854, it was provided that the Mercantile Marine Fund should be applied to the Local Marine Board and purposes connected with it, the expenses of surveyors of steamships, expenses of Lighthouse Authorities, lastage andballastage of the Thames, expenses of Wreck Receivers, the preservation of life and property from and in case of shipwreck, any expenses specially charged by Act of Parliament, and "for no other purpose whatever." Therefore it was quite impossible to apply any portion of the Mercantile Marine Fund for the purpose of establishing electrical communication around our shores for commercial purposes. If it was desired to do anything in that way in the interests of commerce, the fund must be provided by shipowners themselves or by the Post Office, who were bound by Treasury regulations to incur no expenditure which would not either prove remunerative or be guaranteed by those deriving benefit from it. Apart, however, from the question of cost, there was a question of danger to the lightships themselves, because if masters were able to make communications with the shore through the lightships, the number of vessels which would approach to the lightships would largely increase, with the consequent risk that the lightships might be run down and a dangerous shoal or sandbank left absolutely unprotected. It was the duty of the Board of Trade and the Lighthouse Authorities to see that expenditure for this purpose was devoted, in the first place, to the prevention of wrecks, and not to offering temptations for lightships being approached for signalling purposes. A few years ago the lighthouse dues were very largely reduced, and the bad trade had caused a further falling-off. The consequence was that in 1886 it was found necessary to borrow for the purposes of the Mercantile Marine Fund the sum of £250,000 from the funds of Greenwich Hospital. In 1886-7 £100,000 of that sum had to be expended in order to make up a deficiency between receipts and expenditure. Taking the accounts for 1886-7, the last completed, as representing the annual expenditure and as a basis of comparison, the deficiency for the year 1887-8 might be taken at £160,000, being £68,000 in excess of dues for maintenance of lighthouses and new works, and £92,000 in excess of income upon other branches of the service — namely, Mercantile Marine offices, surveys of ships, expenses of saving life on the coast, and relief of distressed seamen abroad. But inasmuch as the receipts from light dues had increased by £12,000, and as the accounts of the Lighthouse Boards for only six months for the last year, 1887-8, had been as yet received, he had obtained from those Boards an estimate of their expenditure for the succeeding three months to December 31, 1887. This information led to the conclusion that the deficiency for the whole year 1887-8 might possibly not exceed £110,000. During the last 10 years there had been an average of about £50,000 expended on new works. In the unfortunate state of the Mercantile Marine Fund the Board of Trade had done all they could to reduce the expenditure on new works, but they had not been able to reduce it below £85,800. The reason of this was that in these days shipowners and perhaps shipmasters were tempted to drive their ships by lights, instead of, as in times past, navigating them by the lead. Consequently, demands would continue to be made for illuminants of higher powers, for fog signals emitting increased volumes of sound, and other appliances which inventors were not slow to urge the Board of Trade to adopt. As things were, the means of signalling ships coming to our ports were very considerable, and shipowners had no great difficulty in obtaining early information regarding the approach of their vessels. It was a difficult and expensive task to establish communication between isolated rocks and the mainland, but experiments were now being carried out by Lloyd's without actual metallic contact in this direction, and if those experiments were successful there was reason to hope that the system of communication between outlying rocks and the land might be very largely made use of. For vessels coming up the east end of the Channel there were ample means of communication, as there were stations at Dungeness, Beachy Head, two at Dover, and one at Deal, while it was under consideration whether there should not be another at the North Foreland. Vessels approaching the Thames from the North were reported at Southend Pier, and it was contemplated to establish a station at Orfordness, which vessels approaching the Thames could hardly miss. For the East Coast north of the Thames there were Flamborough, Yarmouth, Grimsby, and Aldborough. With regard to the experiments which had been made at the Sunk lightship, they had been very costly. The ship cost £7,000 without the fog signals; but for the purposes proposed this vessel would be too small, and it would be necessary to expend £8,000 on any other ship for like purposes, while the cost of maintenance would amount to £2,420 a-year, exclusive of £4,000 for the cable. What had been the practical results of the Sunk experiments? Since its establishment the ship had only called the lifeboat out seven times by telegraph, and on every one of those occasions the lifeboat had been apprised earlier by the rocket signals. It must be remembered that it was not possible always to have a man watching the shore end of the cable; he might be in bed, and only be called up by the ringing of the bell, and then he would have to go out to give the message. It was true that there was one advantage of communication by cable—namely, that it might prevent the lifeboat from going out on a futile errand after the wreck had been got off; but he must point out that the lifeboat men were paid for every time they went out 10*s*. in the day and £1 at night. It had been argued that by having cable communication those on shore were able to know the exact locality of the wreck; but it must be remembered that rockets were fired in the direction of the wreck, and consequently the lifeboat men were able to form an accurate idea as to where the wreck was lying. It might be the case that cable communication would have been of advantage in the case of the *Deutschland* and the *Indian Chief*, but there the want had been not so much of communication between lightship and shore as that there was no ship at all at the most important point. Since that time a ship had been placed at the Long Sand, and only one casualty had occurred since. To establish cable communication was a very expensive matter. A light cable chafed, while with a heavy one there was the risk of the ship's anchor fouling it and the ship sheering on to the lightship and causing it considerable damage. The experiments, therefore, at the Sunk hardly justified further expenditure in the same direction. The Mercantile Marine Fund was in a state approaching bankruptcy and could not be saddled with further burdens, while shipowners were not ready to come forward themselves. Lloyd's and *The Shipping Gazette* had done much to prevent loss of life at sea by supplying early information, and he trusted that the Bill shortly to be introduced by Lloyd's might pass through Parliament that Session; at all events, it would meet with no opposition on the part of the Government. He held that it was the duty of the Government with respect to this question rather to prevent wrecks than to give information after they had taken place, to spend their funds upon maintaining the efficiency of our existing lightships, and then, if anything further was possible, to increase the number of those ships. He could not, therefore, hold out to the noble Earl that there was any chance of the Government taking up this question at present.

THE EARL OF CRAWFORD said, he was sorry to hear the answer just given by the noble Earl. He had been disappointed in the Report which had been sent to the Board of Trade by the Committee appointed to consider the question of saving life at sea, and he had himself desired to send a fuller Report, recommending that further experiments should be carried on, but in a different manner. He was, however, bound to be guided by the opinion of the remainder of the Committee, and he had, therefore, been unable to give effect to his views. He was all the more pleased, therefore, that their Lordships' attention should be called to this subject. He agreed with the noble Earl opposite that the Committee had been rather too guarded in the expression of their views. There had been several matters which they had wished to recommend; but they had been informed that the present state of the funds at the disposal of the disposal of the Board of Trade prevented any possibility of carrying out such suggestions. He believed that much would be done by the Bill which Lloyd's had promoted last Session, in which they engaged to transmit information of wrecks to the nearest lifeboat station. He was happy to say that the experiments which had been tried showed that it had been found possible to maintain electric communication between the shore and the lightships, and that the ordinary work of maintaining or repairing the cables, if broken, was carried out by the men on board the "Sunk" lightship in a most satisfactory manner. Those experiments had been continued throughout the winter with the most satisfactory results. The noble Earl had said that the cost of maintaining that communication was very great; but, on the other hand, the value of the service rendered by means of that communication ought not to be overlooked. He thought that it would be in the interests of the lightships themselves that they should be of a larger type. It had been found that, while the men on board the lightships off the coast could see for miles around them, at night the coast was hidden by fog, and no signals made on the ships could be seen from the shore. In these circumstances telephonic communication between the ships and the shore would be of the utmost value. He did not advise that lightships should be made the medium of communicating between passing vessels and the shore, because that might lead a vessel into too close proximity to the lightship, and thus cause danger to both. Lightships were placed in their positions for the purpose of warning vessels to keep away, and not for the purpose of attracting them into positions of danger. He hoped that provision would be made for giving special duty pay to those seamen who, by learning the technical details of cable maintenance, were thus saving for the Department the wages of a professional electrician.

EARL GRANVILLE said, that there had been too many objections, good, bad, and indifferent, offered by the noble Earl (the Earl of Onslow) in his reply to the observations of his noble Friend (the Earl of Morley). He was aware that it was the duty of the Government to exercise the strongest possible supervision over the expenditure of the country; but, at the same time, in the matter of saving life at sea, he thought, even if the Mercantile Marine Fund was, as had been alleged, almost insolvent, the difficulty of want of funds for that purpose might be overcome by making an application to Parliament. It was stated on behalf of the Government that experiments had been tried with regard to electric communication between the shore and lightships, and that it had been found impossible to keep the cables in continuous good working condition. He understood, however, that the noble Earl who had last spoken took exactly the opposite view of the matter, and that the experiments had proved successful. However that might be, the experiments ought not to be dropped, and he hoped that the Government would give the House an assurance that both in the interest of commerce and life-saving they would consider the subject further, instead of finally putting it one side.

COPYHOLD ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Hobhouse.*)

(NO. 6.) COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1 (Memorandum of enfranchisement to be enrolled and take effect as award) *agreed to.*

Lord HOBHOUSE, in moving the insertion of a new clause, said, the object of the Bill was to enable parties to enter memorandums upon Court Rolls when they had agreed upon the compensation to be made, and to give such memorandums the effect of an award; but by the Act of last year power was given to get rid of quit rents, and it had been found that in some manors which were now extinct there was no Court to go to, and therefore memorandums could not be entered. In such cases, a receipt would, by the new clause, have the same effect. There could be no objection to that course except by the Treasury, on the ground that it would interfere with the Stamp Duties; and the consent of the Treasury had been obtained.

Moved, after Clause 1, insert as a new Clause—

"In every case where the compensation to be paid for the extinguishment of the rights or incidents mentioned in the seventh section of the Copyhold Act, 1887, has been ascertained under the Copyhold Acts without reference to the Commissioners, and such compensation has been duly paid or secured to the lord or the owner of such rights and incidents, and there is no existing manor, or no court roll on which a memorandum can be entered, a receipt for such compensation, signed by such lord or owner, shall be as effectual as an award of enfranchisement for extinguishing such rights and incidents, and for releasing and enfranchising the land subject thereto."—(*The Lord Hobhouse.*)

New Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Stamp Duty).

On the Motion of Lord Hobhouse, the following Amendments made:—At the end of line 27 add ("and every such receipt"); after Clause 2, insert a new Clause which, after some conversation, was agreed to, as follows:—

"The second schedule to this Act shall be substituted for the schedule to the Copyhold Act, 1887, and section twenty-seven of that Act shall be read as referring to the second schedule to this Act."

Clause 3 (Provision for mortgages where enfranchisement effected by memorandum).

On the Motion of Lord Hobhouse, the following Amendments made:—In line 1, leave out ("it shall appear that"); lines 3 and 4, leave out ("for the purpose of securing any sum of money"); lines 4 and 5, leave out ("shall state the purport of such surrender or customary mortgage and.")

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Boundaries of land enfranchised by memorandum).

On the Motion of Lord Hobhouse, the following Amendment made:—At end of Clause add—

("Subject to any agreement between the parties such plan shall be made at the cost of the party requiring it.")

On the Motion of The Earl of Milltown, the following new Clause was inserted after Clause 4:—

(Power to agree with regard to minerals, &c.)

"In any agreement under the third section of the Copyhold Act, 1887, any lord or any tenant may provide for the reservation or grant to the lord of any rights, easements, or liberties over the surface of the land to be enfranchised, whether in relation to the minerals under or upon the same or any other matter."

The Earl of MILLTOWN said, that the new clauses he was about to propose were unanimously agreed to by the Select Committee of their Lordships' House last Session; but they were afterwards dropped in "another place," because it was understood that they would be opposed by some hon. Members who took an extreme view of the rights of the tenants. He thought that it was not fair to their Lordships' Committee, which had given great care and consideration to the subject, nor respectful to their Lordships' House, that this important clause, the object of which was to enable minerals to be worked when the lord and the tenant could not agree should be rejected without discussion.

Moved, to insert the following Clauses:—

(Provisions as to minerals where existing rights have been reserved on enfranchisement.)

"Whereas in many manors the freehold ownership of minerals contained in copyhold tenements is vested in the lord, but subject to the copyhold or possessory interests of the tenant, so that neither party can work such minerals without the consent of the other: and whereas in many cases of enfranchisement such rights have been left unaffected: Be it enacted, that in all such cases, and in similar cases, occurring upon enfranchisements effected after the passing of this Act, the following provisions shall apply:—

(*a.*) The lord may give to the tenant notice in writing that he desires to work for and get any of such minerals, and for that purpose to purchase from the tenant such rights of way, of sinking shafts, or working by out-stroke, or otherwise, as the lord shall specify in his notice.

(*b.*) Agreements may be made by or on behalf of the lord and the tenant as to the amount and nature of the compensation to be paid for the acquisition of such rights as fully and effectually as similar agreements may be made with respect to compensation for land to be enfranchised.

(*c.*) If no such agreement is made within six months after service of the notice, the matter may be referred by either party to the Land Commissioners, including the question whether the compensation is to be by a capital sum or a rent-charge or a royalty, and the Commissioners shall determine the same.

(*d.*) The lord may exercise the rights specified in his notice when, and not before, the compensation, if by way of gross sum, has been paid, or, if by way of rent or royalty, has been finally ascertained.

(*e.*) Any compensation payable by way of gross sum shall be paid over, held, and dealt with for the benefit of the persons interested therein in the same manner, mutatis mutandis, as compensation payable to the lord in a gross sum would be dealt with under the Copyhold Acts, or as near thereto as the circumstances of the case will admit.

"Nothing in this section shall derogate from any special interest in, or right or power over, minerals which may have been acquired by express and special agreement between lord and tenant, whether at the date of the enfranchisement or otherwise.

(Preceding section to apply to successors in title.)

"The preceding section shall apply to the successors in title of the persons who were lord and tenant respectively at the date of the enfranchisement as fully as if the copyhold tenure of the minerals contained in the enfranchised land had been kept on foot to all intents and purposes, and as if the copyhold tenure in the land enfranchised had been kept on foot to all intents and purposes, and as if the owner for the time being of the enfranchised land were still the copyhold tenant thereof."—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

LORD HOBHOUSE said, these clauses were most important, and he would be glad if they could be passed into law. They were in the Bill of last year, and were dropped in the House of Commons, and he feared that the placing of them in this Bill would endanger its passing through the other House. They were opposed on their merits, and also on the ground that they did not apply to copyhold tenements.

New Clauses *agreed to.*

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, he would call the attention of the noble Lord to the fact that the words just inserted did not seem to have sufficient regard to special customs in Derbyshire and Devonshire as to the payment of compensation in certain cases, and hoped that the question would be dealt with on the Report.

Clause 5 *agreed to.*

Schedules *agreed to*, with Amendments. The Report of the Amendments to be received on *Friday* the *3rd of May* next; and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 77.)

AUGMENTATION OF BENEFICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend an Act for the augmentation of certain benefices, the right of presentation to which is vested in the Lord Chancellor—Was *presented* by The Lord Chancellor; read 1^{a}. (No. 78.)

DURATION OF SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT BILL [H.L.] (NO. 79.)

A Bill to ascertain and limit the duration of speeches in Parliament: And

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE EXTENSION (IRELAND) BILL [H.L.] (NO. 80.)

A Bill to enable women to vote in municipal elections throughout Ireland: Were *presented* by The Lord Denman; read 1^{a}.

House adjourned at Seven o'clock,
to Monday next, Four o'clock.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 27*th April*, 1888.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.] — COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (Special Report).

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*) — *Second Reading* — London and Saint Katharine and East and West India Docks.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Companies Clauses Consolidation Act (1845) Amendment * [230].

Committee—Customs and Inland Revenue [202] —R.P.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL — *Ordered* — *First Reading*—Public Health (Scotland) (Denny and Duinpace Water) * [229].

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (IMPRISONMENT OF MR. GILHOOLY).

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following Letter, relating to the imprisonment of a Member of this House:—

Skibbereen, Co. of Cork, West Riding,
April 25th, 1888.

Sir,

I beg to state that on Thursday and Friday last, the 19th and 20th inst., an appeal from a decision of Messrs. Gardiner and Warburton, R.M.'s, made at Skule, in this County and Division, whereby they sentenced Mr. James Gilhooly, Member of Parliament for the West Cork Division, to two months' imprisonment without hard labour, for intimidation contrary to the provisions of "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," came before me at Quarter Sessions, and that I confirmed the order of the Magistrates, but reduced the sentence to fourteen days' imprisonment without hard labour.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
H. Ferguson,
County Court Judge, Cork Co. West Riding.
To the Rt. Honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

MOTIONS.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (DENNY AND DUNIPACE WATER) BILL.

On Motion of The Lord Advocate, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under "The Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1867," relating to Denny and Dunipace Water, *ordered* to be brought in by The Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 229.]

COMPANIES CLAUSES CONSOLIDATION ACT (1845) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur Acland, Bill to amend "The Companies Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845," in respect to voting by proxy, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Arthur Acland, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir Frederick Mappin, and Mr. Robert Reid.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 230.]

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (SPECIAL REPORT).

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report.

Sir John Mowbray accordingly *reported* from the Committee of Selection; That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure the following Fifteen Members in respect of the Mortmain and Charitable Uses Bill [*Lords*]:—Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Sydney Gedge, Mr. Gully, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Charles Hall, Mr. Howard, Mr. James William Lowther, the Judge Advocate General, Mr. Mattinson, Mr. Mount, Mr. O'Hea, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Warmington, and Mr. Waddy.

Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—WICKLOW ASSIZES—ATTENDANCE OF CATHOLIC JURORS.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a large number of Catholic jurors were compelled to attend the recent Assizes at Wicklow, many of them from distant parts of the county, at great inconvenience and cost to themselves, and that, for the trial of prisoners charged with capital offences, the Crown Prosecutor directed all Catholic jurors to stand aside, and so obtained exclusively Protestant juries; whether he is aware that a meeting of Catholic jurors was held in the Town Hall of Wicklow on the 9th instant, at which a protest was signed by certain of the jurors ordered to stand aside, against the insult to which they considered they had been subjected, repudiating any sympathy with moonlighting, and protesting against the transfer of cases from distant counties; and, whether he will take this protest into his consideration?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The alleged protest has not been received. The hon. Member must be aware that the duties of jurors are diminished, instead of increased, by the order to stand aside.

Mr. W. J. CORBET: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, is it a fact that in all the Catholic cases tried the juries were exclusively Protestant; and is he aware that in the County of Wicklow the proportion is 58,000 Catholics to 15,000 Protestants? I wish to ask him, then, how it came to pass that exclusively Protestant juries were sworn in to try the cases?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot answer the Question of the hon. Member unless he gives me Notice.

Mr. W. J. CORBET: I will repeat the Question.

SCOTLAND—ISLAND OF LEWIS—THE RAIDS ON DEER FORESTS.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, How many persons have been prosecuted for having, in connection with the late raid on a deer forest in Lewis, carried guns without having taken out a gun licence; whether Donald M'Kinnon, who on that occasion threatened with a gun which he carried to shoot a Superintendent of Police and other persons about to arrest him, held a gun licence; and, if not, whether he was prosecuted; and, whether Mr. John Ross, Deputy Procurator Fiscal, who, during the trial of the Aignish rioters, swore that on the 9th of January he had produced a revolver to intimidate a mob, possessed a gun licence; and, if not, whether he was prosecuted?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I am informed that eight persons have been prosecuted at the instance of the Supervisor of Excise for having carried guns at the late raid without having licences. Two others, who were unable to appear, will be tried next month. Donald M'Kinnon obtained a licence the day before the raid with money received for this purpose from Donald Macrae, who was charged with inciting to commit the raid. Mr. John Ross, the Deputy Procurator Fiscal at Stornoway, holds a gun licence dated October 4 of last year.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—THE ESTIMATES FOR 1886-7.

Mr. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the attention of the Secretary of State has been drawn to the discrepancies pointed out in *The Economist* of April 21, which occurred in the original Estimate, the revised Estimates, and the actual financial results of Indian finance for the year 1886-7, in the last case amounting to an increase of over £500,000 in the receipts and over £1,000,000 in expenditure, and what explanation has been offered by the Indian Government of the reasons for these discrepancies; whether he will state how it is possible that such discrepancies can occur, and whether it is due to a bad system of accounts; what control in the way of audit the India Office has over the accounts of the Indian Government; whether there is any independent audit on behalf of the Secretary of State of accounts in India, or whether those accounts are forwarded to England to be audited and controlled by auditors appointed by the Secretary of State; whether the Government Accounts in India are audited by officials of the Indian Government, and not by an independent auditor appointed and controlled by the Secretary of State; and, whether he will lay upon the Table copies of documents and regulations which shall exhibit the system in vogue for estimating, auditing, and accounting for the Revenue and Expenditure of the Indian Government?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The writer in *The Economist* is mistaken. He overlooked my statement that if there was a surplus the cost of special defence works would be charged against it, and he forgot to take into account the effect of the allotments to Provincial Governments. The true discrepancy between my statement and the final account was R.x.155,800 in Revenue and R.x.293,800 in Expenditure. The reason for any discrepancy at all is the difficulty of collecting and winding up accounts over so wide an area—a task which it takes nine months to accomplish. The India Office has never attempted to audit the accounts of the Government of India in this country; but the possibility of establishing such an audit has been for some time, and at the present moment is, under the consideration of the Secretary of State. The accounts of the Indian Government are audited by officials of that Government in India. The desired information as to the system will be found in the Report of the Committee on Military Accounts and Estimates, No. 86 of 1881.

POST OFFICE — SOLDIERS' LETTERS FROM THE SIKKIM FIELD FORCE.

Mr. FOLJAMBE (Notts, Mansfield) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that letters from soldiers serving in the Sikkim Field Force, who (from the circumstances) were unable to procure field service stamps for their letters, have been charged extra postage on delivery in this country; and, whether this is in accordance with usual practice?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (A Lord of the Treasury) (Wigton) (who replied) said: The Postmaster General informs me that he was not aware of the circumstance until the hon. Member drew his attention to it; but the charge is in accordance with the usual practice. From that practice, however, successive Postmasters General have from time to time departed on representation being made to them of particular cases of hardship; and he is quite willing to depart from the practice in the case of any of Her Majesty's soldiers employed in the Sikkim Field Force, and to give instructions for letters sent by such soldiers in the circumstances named by the hon. Member to be charged with postage equivalent to the prepaid rate only.

ARMS (IRELAND) ACT—GUN LICENCES —MAURICE DOYLE.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that Maurice Doyle, of Inchiquin, who was recently evicted from his farm on the Ponsonby estate, was brought last week before two Stipendiary Magistrates, Messrs. Gardiner and Redmond, at Castlemartyr Petty Sessions, on the charge of having a single barelled gun without a licence, and whether he was fined 10*s.* by them; whether the gun in question was found by the police in the removal of furniture and other articles at Doyle's eviction; whether the weapon was an old gun covered with rust; whether it was proved to have belonged to Doyle's brother, Denis Doyle, who had recently gone to America; whether District Inspector Ewart stated that Denis Doyle had a licence for a single barrelled gun; and, under what Act was the prosecution taken?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Inspector General of Constabulary reported that the reply to paragraphs 1, 2, and 5 was in the affirmative. The weapon was an old pattern and rusty; but it was serviceable. It was not proved to have belonged to his brother; but Maurice Doyle did make a statement to the magistrates to that effect. The prosecution was under 44 & 45 *Vict.* c. 5, and 49 & 50 *Vict.* c. 24, and 50 & 51 *Vict.* c. 20.

Dr. TANNER asked, whether Denis Doyle did not take out a licence for this gun 18 months ago?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he gathered that Denis Doyle had taken out a licence.

Dr. TANNER: Was it not proved that it was the same gun?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No; I gathered that was not proved; but I do not know.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): Was guilty knowledge proved against the man condemned?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I suppose the man knew he had the gun, and under circumstances which made it illegal for him to have it. I believe a licence for a gun only lasts for one year; therefore the licence taken out 18 months ago would be invalid.

Dr. TANNER asked, was it not a fact that Denis Doyle left the country within the 12 months, and accordingly could not have taken out a licence again. He would also ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether the gun, when found, was not all covered with rust, and in a bundle of rubbish amongst a number of articles which were being removed from an out-house during the scene of an eviction; and whether, under these circumstances, it was fair to fine the young man for having it in his possession?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have stated the gun was rusty, but also that it was serviceable; therefore I suppose the licence ought to have been obtained for it.

Dr. TANNER: Would the right hon. Gentleman undertake to fire it off?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

AFRICA (SOUTH EAST)—MOZAMBIQUE —THE PORTUGUESE COLONIES.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What is the western boundary of the Portuguese Colony of Mozambique in South-Eastern Africa; whether there is a Treaty with the Portuguese Government as to Transit Duty for goods passing through the Mozambique Colony to the districts north and west of that Colony; and, whether, considering the increase of trade to these districts, it is desirable that negotiations should be entered into with the Portuguese Government for terms of transit to the districts beyond the Portuguese Colonies, and especially those on the Zambesi River and its branches?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): There has never been any delimitation of the western boundary of Mozambique. There is no Transit Treaty; and the Portuguese Government are so far from being disposed to negotiate one, that they have suspended their transit tariff, and refuse to give any facilities for a transit trade. As regards facilities of access, Her Majesty's Government are in communication with the Portuguese Government with a view to keeping open the freedom of navigation of the Zambesi River. The Portuguese Government have already made certain concessions; but these have not been accepted as satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government.

In reply to Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.),

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON said, the Zambesi was not included in the Congo Conference.

SOUTH AFRICA—BECHUANALAND—CONCESSIONS OF LAND BY CHIEFS.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether concessions have been given to land between the Shashi and Macloutsie Rivers by Khama, Chief of the Bamangwata, one of our protected Chiefs, and also by Lobengula, King of the Matabeles; and, whether, in the event of war taking place between Khama and Lobengula, the Government will interfere?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) (who replied) said: It is apparently true that both Khama and Lobengula have granted concessions in the debatable country between the Shashi and Macloutsie Rivers, and Sir Sidney Shippard is hopeful that he may be able to effect a settlement. Her Majesty's Government would desire, in the unfortunate event of a continued disagreement between the two Chiefs, that the High Commissioner and the Administrator of Bechuanaland should use their good offices to the best of their ability to prevent war breaking out between the Chiefs; but they cannot undertake to say what course it might, under any circumstances, be necessary to take in the event of British interests being threatened.

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND—ALLOTMENTS OF FARMS.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government approves of the policy of giving allotments of farms in Zululand to White settlers, as stated in *The Natal Gazette* of March; and, whether, if the land is given to White Settlers, there will be room for the 200,000 Zulu squatters in Natal?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) (who replied) said: The Proclamation to which the hon. Member refers does not mean that any more White Settlers are to be introduced into Zululand. It object is to regulate the occupancy of farms by the Boer settlers in the part of Zululand known as "Proviso B District," and to provide for the forfeiture of title in case of claimants not occupying effectually. The right of the settlers in Proviso B was admitted in principle by the settlement arrived at with the New Republic in October, 1886. This reply, in effect, answers the second paragraph of the hon. Member's Question; but I may also refer him to the Secretary of State's despatch of the 4th of August last, printed at page 20 of Parliamentary Paper C. 5331.

STATE OF IRELAND—QUARTER SESSIONS AT MACROOM—WEST MUSKERRY.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the Chairman of Quarter Sessions, Mr. Fergusson, has, upon the last two occasions, been presented with a pair of white gloves when sitting at Quarter Sessions, in the town of Macroom, as a sign of the crimeless condition of West Muskerry; whether these cases make the total of nine in the past seven years; and, whether, in consequence of the crimeless condition of the district, the proclamation of West Muskerry will be removed?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Inspector General of Constabulary reports that it is not a fact that on the last two occasions the Chairman at Quarter Sessions at Macroom was presented with a pair of white gloves; but he did receive a pair of white gloves on the last occasion. So far as can be ascertained, the Chairman received white gloves on three occasions during the past seven years. I cannot undertake to adopt the course suggested in the last paragraph.

DR. TANNER: How often during the last six months has he been presented with white gloves?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot answer that Question.

DR. TANNER: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last paragraph of the Question. Is it not a fact that Mr. Fergusson was presented with a pair of gloves within the last fortnight, and is not that a sign of the district being crimeless; and I wish also to know whether he will remove this ban from the district?

[No reply.]

DR. TANNER: I will repeat the Question again.

RIOTS AND ASSAULTS (IRELAND)—ASSAULT ON SERGEANT O'SHEA, OF MACROOM.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a young man named Creedon was arrested in the town of Macroom, on Sunday, the 8th instant, charged with an assault upon Sergeant O'Shea; whether he was remanded until the 9th instant on the medical certificate of Dr. Crooke, of Macroom, who stated O'Shea's life was in danger; whether Dr. White, of Macroom, a Protestant and Conservative, was prevented visiting Sergeant O'Shea with Dr. Crooke for the purpose of finding out whether the injuries stated to have been inflicted placed O'Shea's life in jeopardy; whether O'Shea was pronounced out of danger by Dr. Crooke on Wednesday evening, the 11th instant; whether Mr. Gardiner, Stipendiary Magistrate, visited the Cork Gaol at an early hour on Thursday and further remanded Creedon on the charge of assaulting a constable dressed in plain clothes, on the occasion in question, named Keaveny; whether a prior information had been sworn by Creedon's father against Keaveny for having brutally assaulted his son, the prisoner, while held by several policemen; and, whether Mr. Gardiner presided on the trial of the case in Macroom on the 18th instant?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Inspector General of Constabulary reports that Creedon was arrested for a savage assault on a sergeant. He was remanded on the 9th for eight days, the sergeant's life being certified to be in danger. Dr. Crooke, under whose care the patient was, objected on professional grounds to a second doctor being brought in. The sergeant was pronounced out of danger on the morning of the 12th. Creedon was remanded on the 13th, as alleged. No prior information was made by Creedon's father, as stated in the last paragraph but one; but he issued a summons against Keaveny. This charge was dismissed. Creedon was sentenced to seven days' imprisonment for the assault on Constable Keaveny. Mr. Gardiner did preside.

DR. TANNER: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether Dr. Crooke refused to allow Dr. White, a Protestant and anti-Home Ruler, to see this policeman, because he was afraid he would certify that the policeman's life was not in danger; also, what were the technical character of the injuries of this policeman, O'Shea?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I said before, Dr. Crooke refused to allow the second medical gentleman to be present on professional grounds. As to the nature of the injuries received by the sergeant, the hon. Member must give me Notice of the Question.

DR. TANNER: What were the professional grounds?

[No reply.]

CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) ACT—FISHERMEN'S BOATS.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the boats supplied to fishermen under the Crofters Act are put up to tender, or are given to Fraserburgh and East Coast builders without competition?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The fishermen are not in any way interfered with in their selection or purchase of boats, nor are any restrictions imposed as to the locality where the boats are to be built or purchased. The fishermen themselves are the best judges of the class and build of boats, and the places where they can be purchased to the best advantage, and these matters are left entirely in their hands.

COURT OF SESSION (SCOTLAND)—PRINCIPAL CLERKS.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the case that, for many years past, one of the offices of principal clerk in each Division of the Court of Session in Scotland has been vacant, and that the duties have been discharged by the appointment by the Court of one of the assistant clerks, without a Queen's Commission; and, if the Government will ascertain whether such an arrangement conduces to the efficiency of the Service, and take any steps that may be necessary for that purpose?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I answer the first paragraph in the affirmative. One appointment has been vacant for 18 years, and the other for 14 years. I do not think that the leaving of statutory offices vacant for long periods of years is a satisfactory arrangement; and I have been actively engaged in inquiring into the arrangements of the clerical staff of the Court of Session, and have a Bill in preparation for the re-organization of that Department.

POST OFFICE—LICENCE TO THE WRITING TELEGRAPH.

MR. M'EWAN (Edinburgh, Central) asked the Postmaster General, If his refusal to grant a licence to the proprietors of the Writing Telegraph is indicative of a resolution to depart from the position taken up by the Government, as defined by Sir Henry James (then Attorney General), on the 15th December of 1880, in the case of "The Attorney General *v.* United Telephone Company," as follows:—

> "There is no desire on the part of the Crown to check invention. I most emphatically disclaim that Inventors and Companies will always be dealt with in a liberal spirit if they consent to become licencees of the Crown;"

and, seeing that the proprietors of the Writing Telegraph only wish to become licencees of the Crown, why should they be treated differently from other Companies using telegraph systems?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (A LORD of the TREASURY) (Wigton) (who replied) said: The Postmaster General has not succeeded in finding a record of the statement attributed to the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James.) The arguments in the case of "The Attorney General *v.* The Edison Telephone Company" (it was not the United Telephone Company) were concluded on the 3rd of December, 1880. Judgment was given on the 20th, and there were no proceedings in Court on the 15th. In the absence of more specific information, therefore, I am not able to follow the hon. Member in his reference. I may observe, however, that the Telegraph Act of 1869 leaves it to the Postmaster General's discretion whether a licence shall or shall not be granted to a person or Company proposing to transmit telegrams; and the Government have never assumed the position of granting indiscriminately a licence to every inventor of a new form of apparatus.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—SCHOOL AND PENNY SAVINGS BANKS—THE PASS-BOOKS.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has received any representation as to the defective and insecure character of the little pass-books supplied by the Post Office for the use of depositors in school and other penny savings banks, which, from having only paper covers and being insufficiently stitched, often come to pieces and cause the obliteration of the deposit entries after a few weeks' use; whether, having regard to the importance of preserving such books in a perfect state, arrangements could not be made by the Post Office for providing pass-books with linen covers; and, whether any financial objection to such arrangements could not easily be met by charging a trifling sum for the books, instead of supplying them gratis as at present?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (A Lord of the Treasury) (Wigton) (who replied) said: Yes, Sir. The matter was brought under the notice of the Postmaster General in January last. He caused inquiries to be made on the subject; and he found that the books suggested would involve a cost of 35*s.* per 1,000 as compared with 15*s.* per 1,000—the sum paid for the books at present in use. The number of books issued last year was 125,000; and seeing that the proposed alteration would result in an additional cost of about £125 a-year, he has felt some hesitation in adopting it. He will, however, be glad to consider the Question further.

PERU—IMPRISONMENT OF ENGLISH SAILORS.

Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the inquiry into the alleged false imprisonment of three English sailors at Talcahuano in April, 1887, of which complaint was made to the Board of Trade on 22nd July, 1887, is still proceeding; and, if so, what is the cause of the nine months' delay?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): In the first place, let me assure the hon. Member that the seamen referred to in his Question were released from gaol early in April, 1887, so that the length of time occupied in making inquiry is not causing any hardship to the men. The circumstances under which the men were imprisoned have been investigated by a Consular officer specially sent to the spot to make inquiries; and as I only received the Report of that officer yesterday, I can, of course, as yet give no final answer.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1867—SECTION 4—SUPPLY OF LIME JUICE.

Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that the issue of lime juice on board merchant ships, as directed by section 4 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1867, is frequently neglected; and, if that be so, if he will take steps to insure the carrying out of the provisions of that Act relating to this matter?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): I have no reason to suppose that the provisions referred to are frequently neglected. Whenever a case is reported to the Board proceedings are at once taken either to inquire into the master's conduct in the matter or to sue for the penalties recoverable, if the circumstances justify it and if proceedings are possible.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE CARRIAGE TAX.

Viscount NEWARK (Notts, Newark) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, under the new scale of duties, carriages with pair-horse fittings will be liable to the duty of £2 2*s.*, although those carriages are only used in the course of the year with one horse?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Yes, Sir. It is impossible to draw a distinction as to whether these carriages are used with one or two horses.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—GROCERS' LICENCES—COMPENSATION.

Viscount NEWARK (Notts, Newark) asked the President of the Local Government Board, How grocers' licences will be dealt with, as regards compensation, under the Local Government Bill?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Licensing Committee will have power to refuse renewal of all licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors. Grocers will be entitled to claim compensation under the Bill; and the measure of the compensation will be the difference of the value of the premises with and without the licence.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE CLERK OF THE PEACE FOR MIDDLESEX.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is intended by the Local Government Bill to treat the Clerk of the Peace for Middlesex differently to all other Clerks of the Peace affected by the Bill, and to make him the first Clerk of the Peace for the County of London; whether he is aware that the Clerk of the Peace for Middlesex is also the present Clerk of the Peace for Hertfordshire; and, whether, in the interests of the public, he will provide in the Bill against two such offices being held by the same person?

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) inquired, whether the Clerk of the Peace for the County of Hertford was a solicitor; and whether he was also the solicitor to the Prime Minister?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I think that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bradlaugh) is probably as well aware of the fact as I am. With regard to the Question on the Paper, I have to say that, so far as existing counties are concerned, the Clerk of the Peace is to continue to act as Clerk of the Peace, in addition to being clerk to the County Council; but as the County of London will be formed out of several counties, each with a Clerk of the Peace, it is necessary that the Bill should provide who is to be the first Clerk of the Peace for the new county; and it is intended that the Clerk of the Peace for Middlesex, who now fulfils the duties connected with that office for the main portion of London, shall hold that office. Under this arrangement no question of compensation to him for loss of emoluments will arise. In ordinary counties the Clerk of the Peace will be the clerk to the County Council; but, looking to the exceptional circumstances of London, and the amount of the work which the County Council there will have to perform, it is, in my opinion, very desirable that the clerk of the London County Council shall be a separate officer from the Clerk of the Peace. Provision is made for this in the Bill. I am aware that the present Clerk of the Peace for Middlesex is also Clerk of the Peace for Hertfordshire. I do not propose to provide in the Bill that two such offices shall not be held by the same person. It is a matter for the County Councils; and I can conceive that circumstances may exist which would render such an arrangement a desirable one.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — SEC. 15 — MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF MAIN ROADS.

Mr. ALLISON (Cumberland, Eskdale) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, under Section 15 of the Local Government Bill, it is intended that the County Councils should themselves undertake the maintenance and repair of the main roads throughout the county; or, whether it will be permissible to delegate their powers in this respect to the District Committee?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Bill provides that the County Council should themselves maintain and repair the main roads, and does not enable them to delegate this power to a District Council.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — ALLEGED INSURANCE FRAUDS AT BELFAST.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, with reference to the prosecutions for insurance frauds in Belfast, Whether he is aware that it has been proven and admitted weeks ago that Mr. H. K. Mathews, Town Councillor, Belfast, and a Mr. Presse, are holders of £13,000 worth of policies, effected through the Equitable Assurance Company on the lives, and without the consent, of persons in whom they had no insurable interest; whether he can state if these policies have been surrendered to the Company; whether he is aware of the intense feeling of uneasiness existing in Belfast, owing to the wholesale gambling by some men on the lives of others, in whose deaths alone they have a pecuniary interest; and, whether the Government will at once take charge of the prosecutions, and have a searching inquiry made into the whole matter?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): It would be obviously impossible for me to give an answer as to the matters of fact referred to in the Question of the hon. Member, inasmuch as the Question appears on the Paper this morning for the first time. But for another and a more serious reason, I must deprecate being called on to enter into the facts of this case at present, inasmuch as the case is still under investigation. As regards the substantial portion of the hon. Member's Question, I have to state that it is not the practice to interfere in the first instance with prosecutions conducted by Public Companies. When the depositions have been taken before the magistrates, they are laid before the Attorney General, who, in the exercise of his discretion, either leaves the case in the hands of the private prosecutor, or assumes the conduct of the prosecution himself, and directs such inquiries and proceedings as he may think necessary. This course will be followed in the present case.

Mr. CAREW (Kildare, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, with reference to the insurance frauds at Belfast, Whether he can now state on what date instructions were sent to the local Sessional Crown Solicitor to watch the prosecutions on behalf of the Crown; whether he is aware that a confession of his conduct was published by Mr. Robert Dunlop, a Town Commissioner and a Poor Law Guardian, in *The Belfast Insurance Gazette*; whether Mr. Dunlop was arrested under a warrant grounded on the oath of a member of the detective force at Belfast, and by special directions from Dublin Castle; whether he was charged therein with forgery and conspiracy to defraud, and was kept in gaol for two nights, during which time he was visited by the Mayor of Belfast; whether he was then admitted to bail, and whether any further steps were taken by the Executive Government in the matter; whether the prosecution is still left in the hands of the Equitable Insurance Company, which had accepted surrender of the fraudulently-obtained policies, and refunded Mr. Dunlop the premiums paid, and which Company has been charged by Mr. Young, solicitor for one of the Company's accused servants now in prison, with having condoned or compromised the offence, and with having dealt largely in issuing such policies; and, whether there is any precedent for the Crown having first caused the arrest of a person so charged, and of afterwards having handed the conduct of the prosecution over to a private party against whom such serious charges were made?

Mr. MADDEN: In reply to the first paragraph of the Question, I have to state that in consequence of a Question put in this House, and suggesting possible remissness on the part of the private prosecutors, the Attorney-General, on the 24th of this month, communicated with the Sessional Crown Solicitor with reference to the case, and that he has been since then in communication with him on the subject.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, with reference to the prosecution now going on at Belfast in connection with the alleged frauds committed on the Equitable Assurance Company, Whether he is aware that Mr. Finlay M'Cance, J.P., Belfast, swore at the Belfast Police Court that the policy of insurance effected on his life in the Equitable Assurance Company by and in favour of Mr. James Henderson, proprietor of *The Belfast News Letter*, was not obtained with his consent; that Mr. Henderson had no insurable interest in his life; that the signature purporting to be Mr. M'Cance's was neither written by him nor with his authority, and that the policy was obtained by means of forgery; whether he is aware that Mr. M'Cance is one of the Belfast or Ulster Board of Reference or of Directors of the said Equitable Assurance Company; and, whether under these circumstances, the Government will take action in the matter?

Mr. MADDEN: I must refer the hon. Member to the answer which I have just given. It is impossible, for the reasons I have stated, to go into the facts of the case. I have already stated the course that will be adopted.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked, whether a conspiracy to defraud was not the same as a combination to protect tenants?

Mr. MADDEN: A conspiracy of this nature is, of course, a criminal conspiracy; but in cases of such conspiracy, where the complainant is a bank or a Public Company such as in the present case, it has never been the practice, as I stated, to interfere with the conduct of the proceedings in the first instance; but after a magisterial investigation has been held, and the depositions laid before the Attorney General, he will then exercise his discretion in the matter.

In reply to a further Question by Mr. M'Cartan,

Mr. MADDEN said, he was not in a position to state whether the suggestion made in the Question as to Mr. Dunlop was or was not well founded. The Question had only appeared on the Paper that day.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—LENIENT SENTENCES AT SHEFFIELD.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the expression on the 16th instant by the inhabitants of Sheffield, in meeting assembled under the presidency of His Worship the Mayor, of regret at the lenient sentences recently passed upon two prisoners for unlawfully wounding; and, if it is possible to draw the attention of Magisterial and Judicial Authorities to the importance attached by the public in the interests of general safety to the treatment of offences against the person on a scale of punishment at least equal to that adopted in offences against property?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) (Sheffield, Hallam), (who replied) said: Yes, Sir; attention has been called to this matter. The Home Secretary has no reason to doubt that the Judicial Authoties are fully alive to the considerations urged by my hon. Friend. The right scale of punishment depends so much on the particular circumstances of each case that the authorities, with whom the duty rests of trying such cases, must be intrusted with discretion as to the amount of punishment.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACT, 1878—THE "SWEATING DENS" AT MANCHESTER.

Sir HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the supervision of workshops—which under the earlier Acts of Parliament on that subject had been committed to the Corporations or Corporate Boroughs—was by "The Factories and Workshops Act, 1878," taken out of the hands of the Local Authorities and placed under the direction of the Home Secretary and of the Factory Inspectors; and, whether, if this is so, any Report from the Factory Inspector for the Manchester District has been received as to the condition of the "sweating dens" described by *The Lancet* Commissioner as existing in the above city?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: The Factories and Workshops Act, 1878, did not transfer any jurisdiction from the Local Authorities to the Factory Inspectors in respect to any workshops. It transferred from the Factory Inspectors to the Local Authorities the supervision of sanitary provisions in all workshops in which men only work, and in which women work with men or by themselves. A subsequent Act transferred from the Factory Inspectors to the Local Authorities the supervision of the sanitary condition of all retail bakehouses. A special Report has not been made as to the condition of the sweaters in Manchester; but several prosecutions have taken place for the overwork of women and young persons in that city.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH, ST. ALBANS.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If it is true that the St. Albans Rural Sanitary Authority proceeded to the election of a Medical Officer of Health, in contravention of Articles 4 and 7 of the Local Government Board Order of the 8th of March, 1880; if so, whether it is the intention of the Local Government Board to confirm such election?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The St. Alban's Rural Sanitary Authority have recently appointed a Medical Officer of Health at £100 per annum, the previous salary having been £120 per annum. As the salary was to be altered, it was necessary, under Article 7 of the Order of the 11th of March, 1880, that the assent of the Local Board should be obtained to the proposal before the appointment was made, and this was not done. The course to be taken in the matter is now under the consideration of the Board.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE HORSE TAX (IRELAND).

Mr. R. POWER (Waterford) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of the recent efforts made by the Government to encourage the breeding of horses in Ireland, and in view of the special importance of the breeding of that class of stock to Irish farming interests, he will exempt Ireland from the operation of the Horse Tax?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) : None of the so-called establishment licences have extended to Ireland—at least, not in late times. It is not proposed to extend this tax for local purposes to Ireland.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887, SEC. 7 — FAIR RENT APPLICATIONS— NOTICES OF EVICTION.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether it is a fact that tenants who have applied to have fair rents fixed, and who have been subsequently served with notices of eviction, under the 7th section of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," before the hearing of their fair rent applications, are thereby deprived of their right to have fair rents fixed, unless the amount of rent and law costs due in each case has been previously paid; whether every present tenant whose gale day was the 1st of November last, and who had his fair rent application served before that day, is entitled to the benefit of the reduced rent on the rent accruing from the 1st of May last, and whether he is, nevertheless, compelled by "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," to continue paying the old rent up to the time when his fair rent is fixed by the Sub-Commission; whether, at the expiration of six months from the service of this eviction notice, and without any actual eviction, the right of the tenant to have a fair rent fixed ceases, and the holding of the tenant then becomes the property of the landlord without any compensation to the tenant; and, whether, as the law now stands, the landlord may obtain an ejectment decree for the non-payment of one year of the old rent due at the 1st of May next, although the tenant is entitled to the benefit of the reduced rent for that period, but owing to the insufficient number of Sub-Commissioners he may not know for years what the fair rent is to be?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): The Question of the hon. and learned Member relates to abstract matters of law, and not to any particular case which has arisen. But I am ready to inform him that a tenant who has applied to have a fair rent fixed and who omits to avail himself of the right given to him of applying for a stay of ejectment proceedings then pending or subsequently instituted, and who allows those proceedings to culminate in an eviction notice, necessarily loses his right to have a fair rent fixed, inasmuch as he has allowed his tenancy to be determined. He can only re-instate himself in the position of tenant by redeeming his holding on payment of rent and costs. In answer to the second paragraph, it is hardly accurate to say that a tenant is compelled by the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, to continue paying the old rent up to the time of fixing the judicial rent. The Act of 1887 gave to the tenant an advantage which he did not enjoy under the Act of 1881—namely, the antedating of the judicial rent as stated in the Question, with the consequential benefit conferred on the tenant of enforcing an account against the landlord in the event of the rent being reduced. In the interval between the application of the tenant and the adjudication of the Commissioners, the rent legally payable in respect of the holding remains unaltered, with the necessary result stated in the fourth paragraph of the Question. As to the third paragraph, I have to point out that the tenant's holding does not become the property of the landlord without compensation to the tenant, after the determination of his tenancy and the expiration of the period of six months allowed for redemption, inasmuch as the tenant still retains his right to compensation for improvements under the Act of 1870.

Mr. M'CARTAN: You have not answered the last paragraph of the Question.

Mr. MADDEN: I think I did answer the last paragraph. What I stated was that between the application and the actual adjudication the old rent necessarily remained unaltered, with the consequence correctly stated by the hon. Member in the fourth paragraph of the Question.

Mr. M'CARTAN: Then I understand that the answer to my Question is, shortly, yes?

Mr. MADDEN: So far, that is the answer shortly.

EXCISE LICENCES (IRELAND)—MR. J. HEGARTY, J.P.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that it is commonly reported in Mill-street, that the son of Mr. J. Hegarty, J.P., has left Ireland for Australia, with no intention of returning; whether he can state the name of the holder of the licence under which porter and spirits are being sold at the residence of Mr. J. Hegarty, J.P., since the departure of his son; and, what is the date of the issue or transfer of the licence to the present holder?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am not aware of the rumour in the first paragraph of the Question. The local Constabulary report that the licence is in the name of Jeremiah Hegarty, junior, and that it was transferred to him in October, 1885.

DR. TANNER: How long will a person who holds premises be permitted to sell liquor on these premises without having obtained a transfer of a licence or a new licence?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot answer a mere speculative Question.

DR. TANNER: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, how long will a person be permitted to remain away, and a licence to be held by another person to sell liquor in his name? I have put the Question as plainly as possible.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I perfectly understand the character of the Question; but it is of an abstract nature, and I cannot answer it.

DR. TANNER said, he should like to ask the Question of the Solicitor General for Ireland.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE TRIALS AT ENNIS—COLONEL TURNER, D.M.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in the recent trial of James Halpin at Ennis, Colonel Turner, Divisional Magistrate, on being told by Mr. Morphy, the Crown Prosecutor, that the deposition should be read to and signed by him before leaving the Court, is correctly reported to have said, "I am perfectly satisfied to sign it, and have it read afterwards;" and, if so, what steps the Government propose to take in the matter?

Dr. Tanner

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the report alluded to was incorrect. Colonel Turner stated that as the deposition had been read over to him bit by bit, he did not think it necessary to have it read over to him again. As a matter of fact, however, it was fully read to him again.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—TRIAL AT TRALEE—CASE OF TIMOTHY SULLIVAN.

MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case tried at Tralee, on Monday, before Messrs. Roche and Massey, Resident Magistrates, when a young man, named Timothy Sullivan, was charged with having a bullet in his possession; whether Sullivan said he found the bullet, and kept it as a marble; whether he was sent to gaol for three months with hard labour; and, whether, considering the somewhat light nature of the crime, he will obtain a remission of the sentence?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): This man was defended by a solicitor, and was convicted and sentenced as stated in the Question, but without hard labour. The Head Constable who appeared on behalf of the Crown asked the Magistrates to impose the full term of imprisonment in the first case, the man being a person of bad character; and, secondly, suspected of connection with crime and outrage, and it being believed that he had the bullet in his possession for the purpose of committing an outrage. If the prisoner felt aggrieved he could have, by a notice through his solicitor, appealed from the Magistrates' decision, and I may say that he can still.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman, Whether there was any evidence brought forward at the trial which would show that this man was suspected of crime?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot answer that Question without Notice. I have not seen a full report of the trial.

MR. T. E. ELLIS: Was there any evidence brought forward that he was a bad character?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a Question which I could not answer now. In the opinion of the police he was a bad character.

MR. T. E. ELLIS: I want to find out whether it was the opinion of the Judge?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Gentleman asks that Question, I should say I think it was the opinion of the Judge, or else he would not have sentenced the man to three months' imprisonment.

GOVERNMENT PRINTING — CONDENSATION OF BLUE BOOK.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If Her Majesty's Government will consider whether economy in printing and a saving of time might not be effected by omitting or condensing mere formal Correspondence and technical details in Blue Books presented to the House; and, whether it would be possible to give only the Despatches and information material to the question connected by a brief narrative, instead of printing the whole of the Correspondence and enclosures, when the greater part is of such a character that hon. Members never read it, yet are obliged laboriously to sift the material from the immaterial parts?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Member's anxiety to economize Votes of public money and the time of Members of this House has my entire sympathy. Beyond that I am sorry I am unable to go, and I cannot agree with the way in which he proposes to effect the object he has in view. To what Department would the hon. Member propose to intrust the work of making a *précis* of a Correspondence ordered to be laid before this House? If to the Department which is a party to the Correspondence, it requires no great gift of prophecy to state what would occur. The Government would be charged with having caused the facts of the case to be garbled or distorted; in self-defence the whole Correspondence would then be produced, and the country would be called on to pay not only for the *précis*, but also for the Correspondence. Under these circumstances, I see no way of relieving Members who are interested in any particular subject from the trouble of reading the whole Correspondence.

INDIA—THE STATE OF HYDERABAD—CONCESSION OF MINING RIGHTS

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will state what facilities he will give with a view to a Motion being moved for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the alleged malpractices connected with the Deccan Mining Company (Limited)?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Perhaps the House will allow me to read a telegram which has been received by the Secretary of State in Council from the Viceroy on this subject. It is to this effect—

> "I consulted my Council to-day in reference to the Hyderabad Mining Concession. Government of India have no objection to the matter being fully investigated, either by Select Committee, or by any other tribunal your Lordship might approve of. Issues raised seem to lie between Abdul Huk and Hyderabad Government on one hand, and concessionaires and shareholders on the other. Government of India expressly decline all responsibility with regard to the purchase of the shares by Nizam's Government."

Under these circumstances, the Government will certainly offer no objection whatever to the appointment of the Committee which the hon. Gentleman desires. I will confer with him as to the best method by which that Committee should be appointed, and as to the date on which the modification should be brought forward.

CRIMINAL CASES (IRELAND)—INCREASE OF SENTENCES ON APPEAL.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question in reference to the statement which appeared in *The Standard* this morning as to the powers of the Lord Lieutenant with regard to the additional sentences imposed on appeal in Ireland. It is stated that the Lord Lieutenant may, at his discretion, remit portion of the sentences; and, in consequence, a private intimation has been given that this power will be exercised if necessary. I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is true that this private intimation has been given?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Well, Sir, I demur to a good deal that is stated in the Question. I do not think it is clear that the sentences are additional. To begin with, the sentences were modified. They may have been made longer in term, but they have been made less onerous in character. Whether this means an increase or not I do not undertake to say; but certainly no private intimation has been made by me on the subject.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether any private intimation had been given? He stated that no private intimation had been given by himself. Might I ask him whether any private intimation has been given by the Authorities at head-quarters?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know on what principle the hon. Gentleman thinks the Government of Ireland is carried on; but I suppose a private intimation sent by Authorities at head-quarters means some private observations addressed by me to the Executive on the subject. There have been no such intimations by me, and nobody else, I presume, would have the right to make any.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): Are we to understand from the right hon. Gentleman that there has been no increase in the sentence on Mr. Blane, M.P., that that sentence was not increased on appeal?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a matter of opinion; I should say the sentence has been diminished, but it is entirely a matter of opinion. The facts are these:—The original sentence, I believe, was four months with hard labour, and the new sentence was six months, without hard labour. [An hon. MEMBER: With hard labour.] I believe it is without hard labour. I say that that is not an increase in the sentence.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough): Does the statement of the right hon. Gentleman apply to the case of the three men at Ennis?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not quite sure about the facts of that case; but if the hon. Gentleman wishes, I will try to find out.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

In reply to Mr. LEA (Londonderry, S.),

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he hoped the Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill would be proceeded with on Monday, and other Irish Bills.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) asked what Business would be taken next week?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he trusted that the Committee stage of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill would be completed that afternoon. The Report would then be taken on Monday. The Resolution of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to the Cart Tax would follow; and then would come the Bill relating to the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland, the Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill, and the Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Amendment Bill. On Thursday he hoped the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill would be read a third time, if not before; if it were disposed of, then he would propose to take the second reading of either the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill or the Employers' Liability Bill.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) asked, in what order the Irish Bills would be taken on Monday?

MR. W. H. SMITH replied, that the Bill for the salary of the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland would be taken first.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.—[BILL 202.]

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 26th April.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 5 (Power to Treasury to prohibit the use of certain substances in exciseable good).

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) said, he hoped those of the Committee who had Bills in their hands would look at Clause 5, because, unless they followed the words, they would be unable to understand them. The clause was very wide in its scope and meaning, and provided that any substance used in the preparation of exciseable articles might be prohibited on two conditions. First, if obnoxious or detrimental. To that no one could object, but he thought it was a surplusage in the clause, as it was already provided for in the Food Adulteration Act. The second condition was that the Revenue might prohibit any article used in the preparation of exciseable articles which might injure the Revenue. That was a very large power indeed and made the clause exceedingly elastic. He did not say there might not be justification in some such power on the part of the Revenue. The Revenue ought to be an increasing product, and if anything came in and disturbed it, it might be desirable to have elbow room; but this was an absolute prohibition. There was no question, this clause really meant a power with reference to the brewing of beer, and was really aimed at saccharine. It might go further—for instance, noxious or detrimental substances might be substances used in substitution of hops which gave the bitter quality. He had nothing to say to that, but the clause gave means to prohibit many substances that were not noxious. There had been a new substance discovered called saccharine, which was got from a coal-tar derivative called Toluin. Saccharine had 300 times the sweetness of sugar. This substance not only had an intense sweetening property, but it could not be converted into alcohol, and had nothing to do with introducing more or less alcohol into beer. In addition it had what was exceedingly valuable, an antiseptic property—that was in hot weather it prevented beer becoming bad. In the strong beer, such as Burton ale, there was another kind of antiseptic which was inapplicable to light beers, and it was desirable to find an antiseptic for light beers. The researches of scientific men—he might mention Professor Dewar, Professor Tidy, and others in this country and many abroad—gave it very high antiseptic properties. This substance was an exceedingly growing industry, and, amongst other things, it was used for preserving fruits. It was an industry which it was particularly valuable to develop in this country at the present moment, when they had a plentiful supply of the raw products for its manufacture. All the raw materials now went to Germany, this saccharine only being made in Germany. It was very expensive, being now sold at 50*s.* a-pound, but it could be manufactured in this country readily at 20*s.*, or, at most, 30*s.* per pound. A Company was prepared to start in England with a subscription of £200,000 to carry on the manufacture of saccharine; but when it was known the Revenue were going to pass a prohibitory clause, the Company abandoned their intentions. The reason the Revenue was afraid of it was, he believed, on account of this—the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) would correct him if it was not the case—not only did it sweeten the beer and preserve the beer as an antiseptic, but it had a strange effect upon the palate and made light beers taste like strong beers, and porter taste like stout. Therefore, from this peculiar effect on the palate, more of the light beers might be used until the people found they did not get drunk with it, and believed they were taking strong beers, and this would be a danger, because the stronger beers paid a higher duty. He did not deny that the Revenue might be affected by the use of this product, but his Amendment did not say that the Revenue Department should not have power to tax this addition to the beer, if it was considered desirable. The saccharine could not properly be used in the brewing of the beer, because, being an antiseptic, it would interfere with the action of the other ingredients, so it was added in the priming. With the power of making concessions—and the Revenue did make concessions—this saccharine priming might be used in light beers in certain proportions extremely small to the gallon, because it would sweeten it too much if added except in almost infinitesimal quantities. He did not object to the Excise regulating this new industry relating to beer; but what he did object to was that they should prohibit it, as they would do under the clause, because they had the power to prohibit but not to regulate the use of any article. A prohibition in the eyes of the Excise was a small matter, but prohibition was a very serious matter in relation to a growing industry, and when it stopped an art was a matter very serious indeed. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would allow the use of the preparation upon terms, and if the right hon. Gentleman could not adopt the words he had used, he hoped some other words might be adopted which would allow them the opportunity of seeing whether the article had the good effects which those who used it said it had. If the words of the clause were retained as at present, see what position they would be in. Foreign brewers used it largely, and were erecting large works for its manufacture in Belgium. It was used all over Germany for brewing purposes, and if they prohibited it in this country and allowed the foreign brewers to use it there with the light beers, they put the brewers in this country at a terrible disadvantage. He was very anxious to persuade the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he should not interfere with the progress of this industry, but should have an opportunity of watching its use, and that if it was found to be weakening the Revenue that he should come to the House and ask for a tax on saccharine priming. To that he was told the brewers would have no objection. If the right hon. Gentleman did not do so, what would follow? This substance was exceedingly difficult of detection, being used in excessive small quantities in a barrel of beer; and there was another substance, as any chemist would tell them, that would absolutely prevent its detection when put into the beer; therefore the result would be that if they did not regulate its use, there was nothing to prevent a publican taking a little pinch of the saccharine in his fingers and putting it into a barrel of light beer, and the Excise would thus be defrauded. If they regulated its use, they could easily restrict its use, because there would only be one manufactory in this country, and all the saccharine coming from abroad would be bought up by this manufactory in order to retain the monoply. The brewers, he was told, were anxious for a fair trial of this product, and that that fair trial should be under the inspection and control of the Excise. If his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer would suggest other words better than those he proposed, which did not prohibit but restricted the use of any substance of this kind, he was sure the brewers would be quite ready to accept them, as they were only anxious to have a fair means of trial and not to have it prohibited, and for this they were willing to be taxed a fair price. He therefore moved his Amendment, formally, in the hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer might be enabled to meet the meaning of the Amendment—namely, to prohibit what was noxious and injurious, and regulate the use of that which was not injurious, but which was of use in brewing, and so not to stop the growth of a great industry.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 29, after the word "notice," to insert the words "when it is noxious or detrimental, and to regulate its use when it acts in restraint of revenue."—(*Sir Lyon Playfair.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): With regard to the concluding observations of my right hon. Friend, my information with respect to the opinions of the brewers is not entirely in accord with that of my right hon. Friend. I have not heard of any anxiety on the part of the brewers whatever to use this new substance, this coal tar product, to which my right hon. Friend has been directing his attention; but, no doubt, if they were at liberty to use it they would do so to a certain extent. I cannot exaggerate the importance of either prohibiting or regulating the use of this extraordinary substance if put in the beer, a substance which has got for its scientific name—benzoyl-sulphonic ionide. [*Laughter.*] The introduction of the substance would be by no means a matter of laughter, because it is calculated the loss to the Revenue — if this substance was employed in the place of sugar—will be no less than £1,000,000 sterling; therefore I am sure the right hon. Gentleman opposite will admit it is the duty of the Inland Revenue and of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to look most closely to the application of this substance to beer. Though I cannot contend for one moment against what my right hon. Friend says with regard to the scientific merits of this substance. I have to look to the Revenue. I have heard something of its effect on beer, and understand something of its effects, and I have found out that it will not affect the alcohol in the slightest degree, neither making it less strong nor more strong, therefore we can put the idea of its increasing the strength out of our minds; but it will have the effect of producing upon the public the impression the beer is something different to what it really is; it will produce upon the palate the impression a man is taking strong beer instead of taking light beer. That may be in the point of view of temperance very valuable, and if it was not for that point the alcoholic question does not enter one way or the other. The right hon. Gentleman says truly this substance gives no sustenance, but sugar has sustaining qualities. This substance has no preserving or life-giving qualities, therefore the result of the discussion to a layman seems to be this, that while it leads to the belief that a man is drinking something that will do him good, practically he will be taking something which is not in the slightest degree sustaining him as sugar does; therefore it is scarcely too strong a word to use to say it is a kind of fraud on the beer drinker. I allow my right hon. Friend wishes to draw a distinction between light and strong beers, and to suggest that it will increase the drinking of light beers, and I think it is for that purpose it is proposed to prohibit the use of this substance, because light beer is less remunerative to the Revenue than strong beer. The main part of the case against the introduction of this substance is this, that in measuring the beer the duty is determined by the gravity of the beer. But this substance adds nothing to the gravity of the beer, and therefore the total amount of duty to be paid when this substance is used will be less than when malt or sugar or the other substances that have been used for the same purpose are used. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman accepts this view of the case, which is not different from his own except that he (Sir Lyon Playfair) draws a different conclusion from it. My right hon. Friend thinks it desirable, for its antiseptic qualities, to continue the use of this substance; but I think if it were a simple question as between sugar and coal tar—and there is no other issue in the matter—my right hon. Friend might prefer to use sugar instead of coal tar. My right hon. Friend has spoken of this as a growing industry, and I understand that so marvellous is the sweetening power that 12 tons will suffice for the whole brewing industry of the country; in fact, it goes so far that a small quantity will suffice to sweeten, and to deceive the palate of almost every beer-drinker in the country. I think there is a patent which preserves all rights in this substance for some eight or 10 years to come, so that there is no general industry which will in any way be generated by the use of this substance in brewing.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR: There are patents in all industries.

MR. GOSCHEN: We are asked here to make a gigantic experiment in regard to this industry, the results of which for a certain length of time will be confined to one Company or one body of men. I do not use that as an argument to prejudice the case, except so far that I cannot accept it as that general establishment of trade which my right hon. Friend seems to anticipate. My right hon. Friend appeals to me to allow the use of this substance in brewing.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR: To restrict the use.

MR. GOSCHEN: That is to allow the use under certain conditions and regulations. Well, I am bound to say that the Revenue does not see their way to allow the use of this substance in the brewing industry of the country. From the Revenue point of view, it will be attended with the greatest difficulty. It has been suggested that the Company who sell it shall keep a register, showing the quantities they supply to different brewers or Companies, so that there should be a restriction, as in the supply of poisons; but I do not think it will be possible to introduce into the books of the Company a system of that kind.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR: What I meant was that the Excise should regulate the use of the substance, and, having found in what way it could be used, should come back to the House and ask for a Resolution to tax it.

MR. GOSCHEN: It was distinctly suggested by those mainly interested in the industry that there should be a list or register kept, and that suggestion was made in order to induce the Revenue Department to comply with their wishes. Such a regulation, I pointed out, would be both wrong in principle, inefficacious in practice, as well as extremely difficult to carry out; and it seems to me, as at present advised, that absolute prohibition of its use is the only method of dealing with the matter. My right hon. Friend argues that it is a matter which is exceedingly difficult to detect, and, therefore, the prohibition would probably fail; but the scientific advisers of the Inland Revenue believe that it is possible to detect the substance. They are of opinion that if they are armed with such a clause as this, they would be able to prevent its use. I do not know whether I am correct or not, but my right hon. Friend will correct me if I am wrong. My right hon. Friend has called attention to the wide scope of the clause. It is certainly true that the words in the clause as it is drawn, "or is calculated to effect prejudicially the interests of the Revenue," give extreme power to the Revenue Department, and would probably cover wider ground than is intended. It has been pointed out by the brewers that it would prevent their using substances other than those which they use now—what I may call other ordinary grains. I would, therefore, be willing to introduce, instead of the words "affect prejudicially the interests of the Revenue," such words as these—"Or being a chemical or artificial extract or product which may be made prejudicially to affect the interests of the Revenue." I do not know how far the alteration will meet the views of my right hon. Friend. At present, I have only power to prohibit, and no power to sanction; but if hereafter new light be thrown upon the subject, I will be prepared to take power to withdraw the prohibition, so as to permit other regulations. I think that, by the introduction of these words, we shall not be departing from the principle which has animated us in proposing the clause. We have been of opinion that no other course was open to us than to prohibit the use of these materials.

Sir LYON PLAYFAIR: Does the prohibition mean that the substance should not be used in beers imported into this country from abroad?

Mr. GOSCHEN: The question of prohibiting substances in imported beer coming from abroad is a very serious one; but if the beer in England does not have the advantage of this new substance it could not be fairly enjoyed by foreign beer.

Sir HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) said, that after the remarkable scientific discovery which had been explained by his right hon. Friend the Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair), he could not vote without saying a few words. He objected entirely to the way in which the clause had been drawn up, because it mixed up two different things which had no relation to each other. No doubt, matters that were noxious and detrimental should be prohibited; but as the clause was drawn, not only would noxious materials be prohibited, but others which were perfectly harmless; both would be equally prohibited by the clause. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) on the scientific knowledge he displayed; but he thought the right hon. Gentleman had used the word "tar" in a somewhat offensive manner. This was likely to be an important modern discovery, the production of a perfectly white sweet principle, 300 times as sweet as sugar, and it was not right to treat it as the introduction of tar into beer. It was in the interest of the health and welfare of the population to assist in the consumption of light beer, and the introduction of this new material would have that effect. He thought the Authorities at Somerset House had taken up a position which was somewhat doubtful with regard to the detection of this material. He spoke with some degree of knowledge upon the matter, and he believed that, used in small quantities—and it was only in small quantities it was used—its detection, even although prohibited, would be almost impossible, and, if absolutely prohibited, it would be used under the rose. Would it not be much better to place the open use of this material under proper restrictions than to have it used in an underhanded way, as he was afraid would most likely be the case? He wished also to point out that in this clause there was no right of appeal given against the decision of the Somerset House Authorities, although in the case of the Food and Drugs Act there was an appeal from the decision of the magistrates to the Court of Queen's Bench. He did not think that the Somerset House Authorities ought to be the sole and only judges in a matter of this kind. The prohibition of the use of saccharine for this particular purpose was a restraint upon industry which ought not to be entertained. There could be no doubt that the manufacture of these articles from coal tar was largely carried on in Germany, and to impose restrictions upon it might be to restrain what might turn out to be a very important and interesting English industry. He agreed that they ought to prohibit the introduction into beer of anything noxious, but nothing more. No doubt, certain means could be found by which the addition of saccharine could be taxed equitably under the Act of 1880. If this were done, he did not see why the Government could not determine the quantity, and, having ascertained it, place its equivalent on an equality with the quarter of malt. He cordially supported the Motion of his right hon. Friend.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I will not detain the Committee at any length, I have great sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) in this matter. I think the position is one of great difficulty. I should not be surprised that this might come ultimately to be a question where the interests of the Revenue are involved on the one side and the interests of the improvement of trade on the other. I think if that is the case the interests of the Revenue will ultimately have to give way. I am quite sure that this question will have the careful attention of the right hon. Gentleman, and I am bound to say from long experience that I have the utmost confidence in the administration of the Board of Revenue, not only in the individuals who now preside over it, but in the traditions of the Office. I have known them for many years, and I may say that, during the 35 years I have been acquainted with the Department, there has been a desire on the part of the officers to do the utmost which the public interest will permit to facilitate the improvement and development of trade by every possible means. There are two things which I wish to submit to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The first has reference to the serious question of the importation from abroad. If the interests of the Revenue are so seriously involved as to make it the duty of my right hon. Friend at this moment to take prohibitive power against the British brewer, it is also absolutely necessary, to use the phrase of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), who addressed the House yesterday, that the principle of simultaneity should be introduced, and that we should have the same legislative powers for the purpose of checking the introduction from abroad of beer in which the material may be used. It would be extremely hard on the brewer at home if he were prevented from doing that which we have no legislative power to prevent his foreign competitor from doing. That is a point upon which I own that either on the present occasion, or on a future stage of the Bill, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer should give us some assurance. The other point upon which I desire a more distinct assurance is this. The right hon. Gentleman has stated that the Inland Revenue, as at present advised, only see their way to prohibition. But the time may come when scientific knowledge may enable us to proceed in a different way. What I would put to the right hon. Gentleman is this—that before he asks the House finally to sanction a measure so harsh as the prohibition of a substance in itself undoubtedly harmless and having important medical recommendations, will he give an assurance, not now, but before this law is enacted and comes into operation, that the Inland Revenue will do their best to ascertain with the scientific knowledge at their command, and under a sense of their own responsibility, to what extent prohibition is available? I think we should only resort to prohibition from a sense that no other alternative is open to us.

Sir EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) said, he thought it was only reasonable that, after having heard a debate on tea and champagne, they should now direct their attention to England's national beverage—beer. The object of the Amendment to the clause would be in effect a gigantic fraud upon beer drunk in England. They were told that, under the Amendment, light beer would pass as strong beer. His objection to the clause itself was that he did not think it went far enough. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to frame it in somewhat more stringent terms on behalf of the beer drinkers. What he should have preferred was that the principle of the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for the Sudbury Division of Suffolk (Mr. Quilter) should have been introduced in a clause of the present Bill. If that had been done, it would certainly meet with the approval of the working classes. He believed there was a stronger desire than ever that some legislation should be passed carrying out the principle of the Pure Beer Bill. Further, he thought it was of the highest importance in regard to England's national drink that it should be above all suspicion as regarded adulteration. In his own opinion, the time had come for some amendment of the Adulteration Act. If all the adulteration which was now resorted to was to be stopped, let the House legislate in the direction of the Margarine Bill of last Session, which was a step in the right direction, and he thought in regard to beer that a similar step should be taken. With regard to Germany, the legislation of 1861 had had a great effect, and he was informed that the Bavarian Beer under that stringent Act was now the purest in the world. For offences under that Act brewers were actually sent to prison. A very important judgment was lately delivered by Mr. Justice Kay. In the course of that judgment the learned Judge said, among other things—

> "That the case had initiated them into some of the mysteries of beer manufacture. It appeared that instead of beer being made from good and wholesome malt and hops, a process had been invented for concocting a beverage from invert sugar, and this was drunk by unsuspecting persons who believed that they were drinking beer. The defendant in this case was a brewer, and believing that brewers might make invert sugar from sugar cane themselves, he took counsel with the plaintiff, an analytical chemist. This must have been a doubtful advantage to the consumers of the beer, for sulphuric acid and gypsum were employed, the feature of the insertion being the doubling of the sulphuric acid, and then neutralizing by means of gypsum, and this stuff was then sold by some brewers and called beer. No doubt these facts speak for themselves, but it is about high time when the Legislature should say plainly of what ingredients beer should be composed, under very heavy penalty, as a protection to the public. At present a lot of 'secrets' are permissible, which may be construed to mean the introduction of almost anything in the concoction of the popular beverage."

Well, he (Sir Edward Birkbeck) thought the remarks of the learned Judge were very much to the point. He was quite sure that the Temperance Party and the hon. Baronet the Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson)—whom he was glad to see in his place — would agree to anything that would put a stop to the adulteration of beer. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), who was not in his place, had spoken in favour of his hon. Friend's Pure Beer Bill, and he could foresee the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer being in difficulties in trying to keep on good terms with the brewing interest. No doubt, the brewing interest was in very high favour at Somerset House, but as far as the working man was concerned he desired to know what his beer was made of, and whether it was made of hops, barley, malt, and water, or any other compound. The motto of the beer-drinking classes would continue to be in the future as it had been in the past—a full pint and a pure pint.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I quite agree with the remarks of the hon. Baronet the Member for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck), but I wish to point out one question which has not been brought before the House. Saccharine is not a deleterious substance, and its mixture with beer is perfectly innocuous. It is a substance which can do no harm, but may do some good. I speak with some experience, because within the last few months I have been told by more than one eminent medical man that saccharine which contains in a tablet weighing a quarter of a grain as much sweetening matter as is contained in one or two lumps of sugar, it might be used with perfect safety and security, so far as health was concerned. It is becoming quite customary to use saccharine as a substitute for sugar in tea or coffee. Sugar itself has a deleterious effect in certain respects, in connection with tendencies to gout and other complaints. Saccharine, however, has not that effect. It would, therefore, so far as its wholesome character is concerned, be better to put an exceedingly small quantity of saccharine into beer than what nine-tenths of the brewers do, a large amount of sugar. There can be no question that this remarkable invention is an advantageous one, and if my right hon. Friend comes here next year as Chancellor of the Exchequer, I think he will be surprised at the speech he was led to made this evening, and be astonished why so innocuous a remedy was not adopted earlier. But I would recommend my right hon. Friend the Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair) to accept the modification of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is not, I think, prudent to force any sudden change on the officers of the Inland Revenue Department, who say that they do not see their way in the matter. I therefore hope my right hon. Friend will accept the Amendment of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but with a protest that the Government are unnecessarily suspicious of a perfectly innocuous substance, and I hope that, after experiments have been made, the restrictions will be withdrawn. On the other hand, I believe that the quantity put into a barrel of beer is so small that it is impossible to detect it after it leaves the brewer. I am, therefore, afraid that if this prohibition is maintained, it will act as a distinct premium on the importation of foreign beer.

MR. GOSCHEN: With regard to the remarks of my hon. Friend behind me the Member for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck), I wish to call attention to the fact that the Inland Revenue is a Department for raising the Revenue, but not the proper Department for supervising the reduction of the articles which pay the duty. My hon. Friend has stated that beer, like Cæsar's wife, should be above suspicion, but I would point out that it is not the duty of the Treasury or the Inland Revenue to look to that. They look at the question purely from the point of view of revenue, and all they consider in this and similar matters is the interest of the Revenue. In regard to the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) I have never contended that saccharine is a noxious article, but I am bound to say that I did not see much weight in the argument as to the difference between sugar and saccharine, for by substituting the latter for the former, a man who looks to beer as a nourishment as well as a drink loses by the exchange. The arguments of my right hon. Friend certainly did not oppress me with much weight, although he gave us the benefit of his own experience. In the case of the bulk of the population who drink beer it is something for them to consider that the beer does not only contain alcohol, but other nourishing ingredients, and that is another reason, although I hope not the chief reason, why they drink beer. The sugar which it contains gives them something which contributes to nourishment which they could not get in any other way. I therefore hope that nothing will be done to encourage the use of saccharine instead of sugar in the face of these facts. Whatever may be said of saccharine from the point of view of my right hon. Friend, I do not think that upon its merits it can compare with sugar as an article of consumption for the people at large. An observation has been made to the effect that the Inland Revenue Department is on very good terms with the brewers. I am glad to say that the brewers are prepared to co-operate with the Board of Inland Revenue in resisting the introduction of saccharine into their breweries, at all events, at present. They have, however, not pushed their opposition to an extreme point. In regard to the important objection which has been raised in reference to beer, I am told by the Inland Revenue Department, that it is possible to detect the presence of saccharine in beer. Beer imported from abroad would be submitted to certain tests, so that there would not be the danger which had been suggested of injuring their own trade by the importation of foreign beer. I do not wish to convey any impression that there would be an absolute *non possumus* on the part of the Government. The matter will be carefully watched by us, and I shall be prepared to answer any questions later on in regard to any discoveries that may be made.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR: The right hon. Gentleman is quite aware that the London brewers are anxious to try, and, indeed, have been trying experiments with regard to the use of saccharine. A Memorial has been presented to the Chancellor of the Exchequer from the

London brewers asking that experiments may be tried under supervision, and I would ask that that Memorial should be acceded to. I should like to know whether it is intended to be implied in the statements which have been made that experiments will be tried, and that the prohibition may be withdrawn.

Mr. QUILTER (Suffolk, S.) said, he thought that the interesting discussion which had taken place must have awakened strange feelings in the minds of many hon. Members who were not initiated in the mysteries of making beer. It was proposed to add a new ingredient to the list of those which were already used in beer making. Personally he had ceased to be surprised at any compound which was passed off in the name of beer. He rejoiced at the discussion which had taken place, because it must have enlightened the minds of many hon. Members as to the substances which were used by various brewers in regard to beer. He believed that everyone who had had communication with the Inland Revenue Department would heartily re-echo what had been stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), as to the invariable courtesy and ability displayed by the officials in the discharge of their arduous duties. He must, however, say that he had hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would adhere to the clause, because, although, he thought, it did not go half far enough in its stringency, yet words were now sought to be introduced which would tend to weaken it. He found fault with the Inland Revenue on this account, that under their ægis they permitted substitutes to be advertised daily and weekly for the making of beer, thereby leading the public to believe that if they were not the Department which should have the regulation of substances used in the manufacture of beer, at any rate they were supposed to be. In illustration of that point he would read an advertisement which had reached him that morning. As the clause had only been placed in his hands that day he had not had time to look through a number of interesting communications he had received in reference to the matter, but he hoped on a future occasion to be able to do so. The advertisement to which he referred was couched in the following words:—

> "To brewers, save one-third of your hops by using ———'s hop auxiliary, prepared in accordance with the Act of 25th Vict. c. 22, s. 20, approved by the Excise, and stated by the highest authority in the brewing trade to be a true hop substitute. The hop auxiliary has been in use during the past eight years, and has fully established its claim to be placed in the first position of its class. Manufactured by ———, a Retired Supervisor of Inland Revenue."

He (Mr. Quilter) had also received the following interesting notice:—

> "Ecumin, or foaming powder, for giving a foaming head to ale and porter. This article puts a rich and lasting flavour to beer and porter. It imparts neither flavour nor smell, and does not impair the brightness of the liquor. Its use is permitted by the Excise, and its cost is but 2*d.* for each barrel of ale. It also has no tendency to acidity."

It occurred to him that this ecumin might be useful on many occasions—for instance, if a dose had been administered to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian and his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, previous to the debate on the County Court sentences on Tuesday last, it might have removed the tendency to acidity without in any way impairing the brilliancy of the speeches delivered. This question of the adulteration of beer was considered as a serious matter by hundreds of thousands of the working men of the country. Whilst holding the opinion he had expressed, that the clause did not go nearly far enough in the interests of the consumer, he should support it in the belief that it was a step in the right direction.

Mr. NORTON (Kent, Tunbridge) said, he was of opinion that the adulteration of beer was a very serious matter. During the last serious blight in hops, in the year 1882, the price of quassia went up from £5 to £40 a-ton. Other substances went up in a still larger proportion, some of them from 3*d.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* per pound. This was an important fact, but he wished to guard himself against making any general charge against the larger brewers of using improper materials. He regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not seen his way to make the second paragraph of the clause more clear. He should have liked to have heard from the right hon. Gentleman what steps it was proposed the officers of the Board of Inland Revenue intended to take to ascertain the noxious character of the articles referred to.

Mr. THEODORE FRY (Darlington) said, he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) had taken up the position which he had on this question. He had argued it from two points of view; first, with reference to the effect of the employment of saccharine on the Revenue, and next with reference to its use in the manufacture of beer. In regard to the Revenue, he would point out that a Chancellor of the Exchequer would always be able to find some means of obtaining the resources he required from the hard-earned money of the people. The right hon. Gentleman had remarked that there was no demand on the part of the brewers for the use of saccharine in this country, but that, he might say, was entirely beyond the question, and he would rather look at the question from a broad manufacturing and commercial point of view. It was quite possible that some hon. Members might not have seen saccharine, and no doubt many thought it was a nasty black substance; but it was, on the contrary, as white as snow, and resembled lump sugar ground exceedingly fine, and when an hon. Member spoke of it as tar, it was in order to prejudice it in the minds of the people. It might just as well be said that the beautiful dyes now used in commerce were tar, because they were derived from that substance; but he hoped hon. Members would dismiss from their minds all idea that saccharine was deleterious in dealing with the question before them. If it was injurious, he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to prohibit its use in the manufacture of marmalade and preserves. Saccharine was 300 times as sweet as sugar, but he could not help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman had miscalculated when he said that there would only be 12 tons of it used by all the brewers in the country if it were allowed to be substituted for sugar. He did not personally care much about its use in beer, but the action of the right hon. Gentleman would give great discouragement to the manufacture in this country of an article which was exceedingly useful, and was becoming a very important branch of industry. He believed he was right in saying that a German firm had paid £40,000 for the privilege of manufacturing saccharine in Germany. The question was one which demanded the attention of the House, and he thought they should endeavour, as far as possible, to encourage all manufacturers, especially those of chemical products, in which we were being beaten by the German nation, and, in view of that fact, he could not but regret the course which the right hon. Gentleman had thought fit to adopt in the present case.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not been able to agree to some of the suggestions with regard to revenue which had been proposed. It was, of course, important that the right hon. Gentleman should protect the Revenue of the country, yet it was a bad thing that the discoveries of science should be nipped in the bud by the regulations of the Exchequer. With regard to the £1,000,000 which it was said the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer might lose by allowing the use of saccharine in brewing, all he could say was that the levying of that sum was a small matter in contrast with the importance of stimulating such industries as this. The manufacture of aniline dye had grown from small beginnings into a great industry. The right hon. Gentleman had also objected that the working man ought to have sugar for his money when he purchased beer; but he thought that the working man got very little sugar in his beer, and that it would be much better for him to buy that article in the ordinary way. They ought not to be led away in this matter by a sentimental notion about pure beer, it being a scientific fact that beer made from this subject was just as good and just as pure as that made from sugar and other materials. He hoped that hon. Members on that side of the House would not show themselves to be so far enveloped in the ignorance of the dark ages as to object to the use of this discovery.

Mr. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, he could not see that there was anything in the clauses of this Bill which would prevent hon. Members who took an interest in science from seeing full swing given to it in this country. There were only two points involved in the clause, one being that nothing noxious should be introduced into beer, and the other that by the introduction of any material, scientific or otherwise, the Revenue should not be defrauded. Those points, as everyone must admit, were very important. Now that the Truck Act was in operation, it was not possible for employers to give the same amount of home-brewed beer to workmen as before, and it was, therefore, most desirable that they should be protected from having their beer corrupted by the introduction of anything noxious. Upon that point there could be no difference of opinion. Good beer, such as would enable a man to do a good day's work, was generally brewed from malt and hops, and it seemed to him that science had done very little to improve upon the old system of manufacture. At any rate, he objected strongly to any of the substituted ingredients escaping taxation; because, as an agriculturist, he knew that an enormous amount was directly, or indirectly, levied upon the barley grown by the farmers. A barrel of beer, to be properly brewed, should be produced from two bushels of barley, worth from 3*s*. 6*d*. to 4*s*. 6*d*. a-bushel; so that the barley in a barrel of beer was taxed to the extent of 80 per cent of its value, and the farmers were, therefore, entitled to say that no other class of traders ought to be allowed to introduce into beer at any stage—at the brewery or at the public-house—articles of any description which escaped taxation; because that would be giving an advantage which was denied to the farmers. For this reason, he objected to the Amendment before the Committee.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, it was a great mistake to speak of the use of saccharine in the manufacture of beer as adulteration, for he understood the term to mean the use of something of a different nature from that which it professed to be. He had no doubt that if this substance were added to beer it would be of advantage not only to the brewer, but to the beer drinker. Anyone who had a knowledge of medical science would be aware that there were many persons who would drink beer if they were not absolutely prevented from doing so by the presence of sugar; and as one instance he had only to allude to the large class of people who suffered from dyspepsia. If that objection were removed, much more beer would be consumed. He did not quite follow the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he spoke of the sustaining and nourishing qualities of beer, and he would like to know how many persons who drank beer did so for nourishment. As a matter of fact, beer was drunk for that sense of exhilaration which it gave, and which, carried to a certain point, became intoxication. Although a great deal was said about beer doing a man good, there was very little nourishment in it, and, as was perfectly well known to physiologists, alcohol in any form was an immense hindrance to muscular exertion. For these reasons, he thought the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, with regard to nutritive quality of beer, could not be taken into account. He had heard it said, in favour of the use of saccharine, that it possessed great antiseptic qualities, and that being so, its presence would be of advantage in beer. He had much pleasure in supporting the Amendment.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) said, he should like to ask why the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not so modify his regulations on the subject as to give the public the choice of using beer with or without saccharine? He thought the principle of the law with regard to margarine, which was that no one should sell it as butter, might be applied in the present case; and he could not see why they should not make it a rule that all brewers should declare whether or not they used saccharine in the manufacture of their beer. The right hon. Gentleman had said there was no insuperable difficulty in ascertaining the presence of saccharine in beer, and it would therefore be very dangerous for any brewer to make a false declaration on the subject.

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) said, that he would like to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for some further explanation on one point. The right hon. Member for South Leeds had stated that the opposition of the Inland Revenue Department arose from the fact that saccharine caused light beer to taste like strong beer, and therefore feared that its introduction would make light beer to supplant strong beer, to the detriment of the Revenue. The Chancellor of the Exchequer repudiated this motive; but he had admitted that the use of saccharine would result in an annual loss to the Revenue of £1,000,000. If this loss would not be caused in the manner indicated by the right hon. Member for South Leeds, he wished to know how it would be caused? The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the use of saccharine would be fraud on the beer drinker; but if the statements of the right hon. Member for South Leeds were correct, every friend of temperance could be in favour of his Amendment. The complaint of fraud would amount to nothing more than that a person going into a public-house intending to get drunk would be fraudulently kept sober. A fraud of so pious a character the House might very well join in.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I do not complain that the discussion on this Amendment has been too long. I am glad to have an opportunity of removing from the minds of the hon. Members opposite, a fallacy which has been once more stated, and which I thought I had already cleared up. It has been said that there is a good deal more alcohol in strong beer than in light beer; but, as a matter of fact, there is the same amount in both, and that has been admitted by the right hon. Gentleman who proposed the Amendment (Sir Lyon Playfair). The question of temperance, therefore, does not enter at all. The one kind of beer is only strong in the sense that it has more sustaining power, and not in the sense that a person can more easily get drunk on it than on light beer. The hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) has suggested that the brewers should be compelled to state that they do not use the substances ordinarily, but most erroneously supposed to compose beer. If such a declaration on the part of the brewers were necessary, and if the Government were pressed by the House and were supported by hon Gentlemen opposite, I do not know that they would oppose the proposal. It has been suggested, however, that it is not the duty of the Government to proceed in that direction. Of course, brewers might declare whether they brewed with saccharine or not; but then the custom would have to be extended to other manufacturers. An hon. Member had spoken of its being in the power of the Inland Revenue Department to deal with any noxious substance, and not with saccharine only. Of course, it would have to be proved that an article is noxious, and if it were so, it would be in the power of the Department to deal with it under the clause now before the Committee. With regard to experiments, I am prepared to admit that experiments ought to be made to the fullest extent. [An hon. Member: Where?] In the laboratory; but we could not allow any individual selected by the brewers to make experiments for the purpose of saying how far we should permit the use of this ingredient in the manufacture of beer; but, short of that, facilities might be afforded for scientific experiment, and within those lines I shall be very glad of the co-operation of my right hon. Friend opposite.

Sir LYON PLAYFAIR said, he was anxious to explain the difference between the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his own Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman practically prohibited the use of an article of a new and important industry before it had been tried, and before it was shown that its use would be detrimental to the Revenue. His own Amendment gave power to the Excise to regulate the use of that article; and if they could not find the means of regulating it, they could prohibit it under the latter part of the clause. Our trade difficulties were so great that he desired to see a new industry carried on in this country, which was being carried on in other countries. He repeated that the question before the Committee was as between regulation and prohibition.

Mr. GOSCHEN: The words proposed by my right hon. Friend only gives power of regulation; and if this should prove to be insufficient, there would be no power of prohibition. We say that we are not sufficiently advanced to state whether we should allow the brewers to use saccharine. Under the clause of my right hon. Friend, the brewers could use the article to-morrow; but until we have made out our regulations, we believe that it could not come into use in all breweries without great loss to the Revenue. I propose prohibition, in the first place, because it is necessary at once to stop the enormous loss which would otherwise ensue, and to have experiments made, in the second place, to see whether we should afterwards allow the article to be used. There is no idea of crushing a new industry; all that is desired is to proceed in a different manner, and by different stages, from that which is proposed by my right hon. Friend.

Sir LYON PLAYFAIR said, for his part, and on the part of the brewers of London, they would be quite contented to be allowed to make experiments to show whether they could use saccharine without restraining the Revenue. But the right hon. Gentleman wanted experiments made in the Excise laboratory; and everyone knew that such experiments were not worth a half-penny to those engaged in a great industry. To be useful, experiments must be made in the industry itself; but, of course, under proper supervision. He should have to take a Division on his Amendment; but was willing temporarily to withdraw it to make way for the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in line 35.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, the following Amendment made:—In page 3, line 35, to leave out the words "or is calculated," in order to insert the words "chemical or other product."

Amendment again proposed,

In page 3, line 29, after the word "notice," to insert the words "when it is noxious or detrimental and to regulate its use when it acts in restraint of revenue."—(*Sir Lyon Playfair.*

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, the suggestion of his right hon. Friend was only to go to the same length as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had gone last year in the case of the attempted growth of tobacco. It was clear that where science introduced a new element into trade or manufacture, that the people of the country would insist upon the Revenue Department placing no obstacles in the way of its use. It was notorious that many industries had been driven abroad to the disadvantage of the country, and they must take care that this did not occur again; and his right hon. Friend was determined to go to a Division in support of that principle.

Mr. Goschen

Mr. GOSCHEN: We are so near in our views that I regret my right hon. Friend should think it necessary to take a Division. What we wish is to have power to prohibit; and if the experiments were purely scientific, I should be very glad to accept them. It is the wish of the Government that no particular brewer should have power to make the experiments. I think my right hon. Friend will see that I have met him very nearly indeed; and I trust, therefore, he will not insist upon a Division, which, under the circumstances, I think would be misleading.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 122; Noes 229: Majority 107.—(Div. List, No. 83.)

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 7 and 8 *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Repeal of duties upon hawkers' licences).

Mr. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, he should move the Amendment, standing in his name, to the clause, because he did not think it fair to the shopkeepers in towns who paid rates and taxes, if hawkers were allowed to go quite free from all charges. He knew that there were many respectable men engaged in this occupation, and he had no wish that they should be punished. He did not propose that any new tax should be imposed upon them; but that instead of the Licence Duty for hawkers being abolished, he would move that it be reduced to £2.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 19, to leave out the words from "shall" to the end of the line, and insert the words "be reduced to two pounds."—(*Mr. C. W. Gray.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am willing to accept the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman; and I am inclined to view the alteration favourably, because the charge which he has referred to was decided upon in connection with the Wheel Tax. I have received many representations from hon. Members on both sides of the House against the total abolition of the duty, and I therefore hope hon. Members will agree to the proposal of the hon. Gentleman.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he had on the first introduction of the measure expressed his objection to the change proposed in the Bill; and he believed that the Amendment of the hon. Member (Mr. Gray) would fully meet the views of those who had full knowledge of this question.

MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) said, that as he had the occasion to call attention to the point when the proposal was first made, he wished now to remark that the only blot on the Budget had, in his view, been removed.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words proposed be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 10 and 11 *agreed to.*

Clause 12 (Charge of duties on foreign shares, certificates, and bonds, &c., transferable by delivery).

MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) said, that from the wording of line 9, one would infer that the stamp was imposed on foreign shares, certificates, and bonds on their first delivery in the United Kingdom. If that were so, the stamp would have to be applied upon delivery through the Post Office. The result would be that firms would hold the bonds abroad until an actual sale was effected. Such bonds were frequently sent to this country as security for advances, or as cover for bills of exchange drawn against them, and if the bonds as well as the bills had to be stamped, such transactions would be done elsewhere. There was another point which was not quite clear. It frequently occurred that small bonds were needed for exportation. Would it be the case that if large bonds were exchanged for small bonds in the hands of investors, the bonds delivered and received would also have to be stamped? He could hardly think that was the intention. He presumed the intention was that when a sale was effected between people resident in this country, the 1*s.* stamp must be applied. It might happen that many who left their securities at their bankers would want an advance upon them. He presumed that the transaction would not necessitate a stamp. In any case, he thought the stamp would be largely evaded, especially at the end of the term for which the stamp was available. He could hardly believe that the revenue of £200,000 would be forthcoming, as expected by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because such a yield would necessitate securities to the value of £400,000,000 being transferred annually. If they deducted the bonds already fully stamped, and also the bonds that would be held over and not delivered, he did not think the yield would be anything like as large as the Chancellor of the Exchequer anticipated. He did not find fault with the principle of the tax—that was, no doubt, quite just; but still the imposition would induce speculation in the way of time bargains, because those now willing and accustomed to take up their stock when purchased, would be induced to buy on delivery, so that when they had a re-sale the stamp, so far as they were concerned, would be avoided. He regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not had recourse to a small *ad valorem* duty on contracts, rather than to this tax, which would be so frequently evaded.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) said, he quite agreed with the justice and principle of the tax, but desired to know how the right hon. Gentleman proposed to enforce its collection? At the present time, shares in foreign railways, for instance, passed from hand to hand without any stamp at all. In that case, the stamp would come upon the buyer; but the buyer would naturally be quite willing to take the certificates without a stamp at all on them, or after the period of the stamp had expired, and add a stamp only when he thought proper to do so, if at all. He thought it would be very unfortunate to impose a tax which would only be paid by those who were scrupulously honest. It seemed to him that this was a tax which could very easily be evaded by the certificates passing from hand to hand as at present.

MR. BARING (London) said, that before the Chancellor of the Exchequer answered the points raised by hon. Gentlemen opposite, he should like to call attention to what had seemed to him to be a mistake in the Bill as drawn. But, first of all, he would say on behalf of a body of whom he knew something, that he did not think ill enough of the stockbrokers of the City of London to believe that for the sake of saving the sum of 1*s*. per cent, they would be guilty of deliberate fraud. What he wanted to call attention to was that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Budget Speech, spoke of putting an annual tax of 1*s*. per cent on the certificates described in the clause. He (Mr. Baring) found that, as the clause was drawn, the tax was in future years to be at the rate of 1*s*. per cent per annum; but that for the remainder of this year 1*s*. per cent would be charged. That would be at the rate of 2*s*. per cent per annum. He had thought that was a mistake of the draftsmen, but his right hon. Friend told him it was not—that he meant it. He did not think that was worthy of the right hon. Gentleman. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer was content to take 1*s*. per cent per annum in future years, he ought to be content to take for the six months of this year 6*d*. per cent.

Mr. GOSCHEN, in answer to the question put to him by the hon. Member for the Whitechapel Division of the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Montagu) said, he had to say that what was meant was the first delivery of bonds and certificates—the first legal delivery, which he believed was the proper phrase—that was the delivery from one person to another, and not the delivery through the Post Office of letters containing these securities. Supposing these securities arrived in London, they need not be stamped until they passed from hand to hand. But so soon as they did that they must be stamped, and it was not a full delivery unless they were stamped. He, therefore, presumed that if they were deposited as security they would certainly have to be stamped. They might be deposited as security many times in the year; but they would only bear an annual tax. One payment would clear the documents for the year. He had taken a great deal of pains with this tax. He had consulted many persons as to the best mode of imposing it. Many suggestions had been made, but all broke down in comparison with this, which was not a perfect system, but which he believed, on the whole, would prove to be a good working system. No doubt it could be evaded. No doubt, to a very limited extent, it would be evaded; and he was sorry to say that in that respect it would be in the same position as nearly all Stamp Laws. There was scarcely a Stamp Law which could not be evaded. There was this sub-section in the Bill—

> "Every person who delivers or transfers, or is concerned as broker or agent in delivering or transferring, any instrument chargeable with duty under this section, and not being duty stamped, shall forfeit the sum of *twenty pounds*."

The Committee would see that this was a purely personal penalty. He entirely agreed with what fell from his hon. Friend (Mr. Baring)—namely, that the brokers and agents of the City of London were not men who would attempt, in the face of this distinct declaration, to defraud the Revenue. There would be isolated evasion here and there; but in the great bulk of cases the tax would be paid. He had seen a great many persons in connection with the tax, and they thought that, on the whole, it would work well. This was to be an annual tax. His hon. Friend (Mr. Baring) was quite right in describing this as an annual tax; but the question was how should the stamp be worked? The easiest way was to put the calendar year clearly on the stamp. This year the stamp would bear in large figures 1888, and next year 1889, so that it could be easily seen to what year the stamps belonged. He was sorry there had been a misunderstanding between himself and his hon. Friend. Certainly, in his Budget Speech, he did not go into detail with regard to the fraction of the time. The tax might have been made to run to the end of the financial year; but it had been thought more convenient that it should run from the 1st of January in each year. The difference was not very great; and the stamps for this year would be at once prepared. The tax was really so extremely light compared with the taxes on transfers of almost every other kind of securities—his hon. Friend knew that if he transferred any railway stock he would have to pay 10*s*. for one transfer—that the payment of 1*s*. per cent for the six months which remained of this year was a tax which these securities might well bear. He had put the tax at the very lowest figure which was compatible with the equity of the case. He was anxious not to interfere with business, but, at the same time, to secure for the Revenue a source of Stamp Duty which he thought had been generally approved.

Mr. MONTAGU asked, if he was right in understanding the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say that if an importer in England had stock sent to him for an advance it need not be stamped; but that if it was delivered Stamp Duty must be paid?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, that the principle was clear. If stock passed from hand to hand it must pay; it was not available for passing from hand to hand without a stamp. The hon. Member might import for his own use these foreign stocks, and keep them for five years, and it would not be necessary to put a stamp on them, because there would be no delivery. But so soon as he dealt with them they must be stamped.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, he thought the clause would operate harshly upon persons borrowing from their bankers. If a person went to his bankers for a temporary loan, he must pay 1*s.* per cent on the nominal value of the bonds deposited; although, as a rule, he would not borrow more than two-thirds of the nominal value of the bonds. This was a tax upon the poor borrower. Hitherto the duty on mortgages had been levied on the amount borrowed, not on the real or nominal value of the security.

Mr. BRISTOWE (Lambeth, Norwood) thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the confidence he had placed in the members of the Stock Exchange, of whom he (Mr. Bristowe) happened to be one. Speaking with some considerable amount of experience, he did not anticipate any of the difficulties which had been mentioned by various speakers. It was no new principle on the Stock Exchange to have stamps. It had not been the practice of stockbrokers to evade stamps, and he did not think they would try to evade them now. He assured the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the confidence he had reposed in the Stock Exchange would not be misplaced.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 13 (Duties on transfers of marketable bonds, &c., not transferable by delivery).

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) proposed to insert, after security, in line 35, "and not being a mortgage or charge on freehold or leasehold hereditaments."

Amendment proposed,

In page 6, line 35, after the word "security," to insert the words "and not being a mortgage or charge on freehold or leasehold hereditaments."—(*Mr. Bryn Roberts.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, it was certainly not intended to bring in any mortgages or charges which the hon. Gentleman had in his mind, neither did he think the words of the clause implied that they would be brought in.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 14 (Duty on contract notes).

Mr. POMFRET (Kent, Ashford), in moving the omission of the 3rd subsection, said, it was not so much a question of the amount of the charge as upon whom the tax would fall. At present the charge fell upon the broker who made the contract for the sale or purchase. He challenged the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or any Member of the Committee, to point out any class of persons engaged in any profession or mercantile occupation who earned the amount which brokers on the Stock Exchange did, with so very little trouble and cost, and in so short a space of time. He was not aware whether the right hon. Gentleman proposed to increase this Stamp Duty, in the hope that it might check, to a certain extent, time bargains on the Stock Exchange, but it would have that effect. He had no means of ascertaining, and he doubted whether the right hon. Gentleman could inform the Committee, what was the yield at present of the Stamp Duty. He suggested that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer wished to ascertain what the amount was, he should adopt an embossed stamp, similar to that on bank cheques. As he had said, the stockbrokers had a very profitable business, and they were the persons upon whom this increased charge should fall. The brokers paid the present Stamp Duty, and, seeing that all transactions in shares and bonds were to pay increased taxation, he thought the increased charge should not fall on the purchaser or the seller.

Amendment proposed, in page 7 to leave out Sub-section (3).—(*Mr. Pomfret.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (3) stand part of the Clause."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, it was not intended by the Bill that any particular class of persons should be singled out for taxation. It seemed to him, however, that the matter was one fairly open for discussion. He was obliged to the hon. Member (Mr. Pomfret) for the suggestion he had made as to the use of an embossed stamp.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) said, he would point out that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was really exempting a particular class, instead of leaving the matter to arrange itself. As a matter of fact, the right hon. Gentleman was not only exempting a particular class, but he was making them a present of a penny on every contract note, inasmuch as at present the broker paid the penny Stamp Duty. It struck him the right hon. Gentleman would do well to leave the matter to be adjusted between the stockbrokers and their clients.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, he thought a slight alteration of the words would meet the views of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and of the Mover of the Amendment as well. The object desired would be attained if they left out the words "is to," and inserted "may be."

MR. POMFRET said, he could not accept the hon. Gentleman's suggestion, because it was most in accordance with the freedom of trade to leave contract open between brokers and their clients. He desired to point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he was taking a tax off the class who were best able to bear it.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) said, he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consent to the omission of the sub-section. Stockbrokers got their money for a very small amount of work, and, therefore, this matter ought to be left for themselves and their clients to settle who should pay the duty.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he would accept the proposal of the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge).

MR. POMFRET said, there was a great principle involved in this matter, and if he could find any hon. Member to go into the Lobby with him, he would certainly divide.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, that in refusing the concession of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Pomfret) was actually doing the very thing against which he objected; he wanted the House to decide who was to bear this charge. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to leave the matter open between the parties.

DR. CAMERON said, that if they wished to leave the matter open, the best way to proceed was to omit the sub-section. A stockbroker sent many telegrams; they did not say that the telegrams might be charged to the buyer or seller, but they left the people to do as they liked. The members of the Stock Exchange were perfectly well able to take care of themselves, and, if they thought proper, they would not be long in making a rule that this duty should be charged against the buyer.

MR. BRISTOWE (Lambeth, Norwood) said, that judging from his experience, if the word "may" were introduced, it would settle the whole question. Members of the Stock Exchange and their clients were perfectly well able to arrange the matter.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire): Perhaps the Secretary to the Treasury will tell us whether there is any provision in the existing law as to who shall pay the 1*d.* stamp?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): No.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY said, he did not see why the same principle should not be observed in regard to the increased duty.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he thought it was the general feeling of the Committee that the matter should be left with the contracting parties. That would be effected by the words "may be;" but it would also be effected precisely to the same degree by the omission of the sub-section. In deference to what he considered to be the view of the majority of the Committee, he would withdraw the sub-section. Of course, it would be understood that by that withdrawal it was not meant that either party was to bear the charge, but that the matter was to be arranged between the stockbrokers and their clients.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Sub-section *struck out.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 15 *agreed to.*

Clause 16 (Provisions as to the stamping of instruments).

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he begged to move the omission of Sub-section (*a*)—namely,

> "The instrument, unless it is written upon duly stamped material, or is first executed at any place out of the United Kingdom, shall bear a date not later than the day on which it is first executed."

That was rather a technical question; but as he spoke on behalf of an important body in the country, who had practical management of these things, it was necessary he should trespass on the attention of the Committee for a minute or two. He cordially sympathized with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his endeavours to put a stop to the practice which the Inland Revenue Authorities believed was spreading, or at all events existed, of legal instruments not being duly stamped. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was fully justified in taking precautions to ensure that when the law had imposed a stamp, that stamp should be paid; but the provision of this sub-section was rather novel. Legal transactions or documents had never been subject to such a provision before, and, as a matter of fact, it could not practically be carried out. Take a sample transaction between two people. One man bought a piece of land, and another sold it, and the deed would be dated on the day that it was signed. As was well known in the case of mortgages on land and various other instruments, a large number of persons was called upon to execute a legal document, and the deed possibly did not possess its full validity until the last person had signed it. A gentleman or trustee proposed to raise a mortgage on an estate. Various persons had to give their consent to the execution of the deed; possibly five or six individuals, some of them living abroad and some at home, might have to sign the deed before the transactions were complete, and not until the matter was complete and the money paid over was the deed dated. His experience was that the dating of a deed was the last thing done in connection with a deed. People did not advance the money until the deed was complete; and, on the other hand, no one wanted to be liable for the payment of interest until he had the money in respect to which the interest accrued. There was another transaction with which he hoped all hon. Gentlemen would be fully familiar, and that was a marriage settlement. Very many signatures were often required to a marriage settlement, and the date of the deed was not inserted until the smallest possible number of hours before the marriage, for very obvious reasons. There was no motive in dating a deed onward. No one would run the risk of putting a future date to a deed, because there was a possibility of a party to the deed not being alive when he had to sign. The Incorporated Law Society, which consisted of the most eminent solicitors in London and the Provinces, considered that the date of the document should be the date of delivery; that was the date on and from which the document was intended to take effect. Of course, the Chancellor of the Exchequer might suggest some mode of altering the sub-section; but he (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) saw no possible mode of retaining the sub-section and really carrying on the legal business of the country in the ordinary way. While he was as anxious to promote the interest of the Revenue as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he begged the right hon. Gentleman to consent to the omission of this sub-section.

Amendment proposed, in page 7, to leave out Sub-section (*a*).—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (*a*) stands part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, he quite agreed that the matter was one which required to be carefully considered, and he might tell the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fowler) at once that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was quite prepared to allow the sub-section to be taken out; but then it would be necessary to make certain Amendments to Sub-section (*b*). No one would deny that in years gone by there had been a practice of not stamping deeds. As the law at present stood the penalty was a very small one, and a deed was only stamped if it was required to be produced in evidence. The right hon. Gentleman would remember that there were certain documents which must be on stamped paper, and, therefore, the idea of requiring every instrument to be written on stamped paper was not new. With regard to any special case, the case, for instance, of a deed which could not be got back in the time allowed by the Bill, the alternative was that the instrument should be put on stamped paper. Of course, they must take care that it was no longer possible for people to keep a large number of instruments back, so that they should not be stamped. While he agreed with the view taken by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and would not insist upon Sub-section (*a*), they must so remodel Sub-section (*b*) as to meet the difficulty. Perhaps he would be allowed to indicate his reasons for advising the Committee to assent to the omission of Sub-section (*a*). He suggested that, after the omission of Sub-section (*a*), Sub-section (*b*) should be amended, so as to read—

> "An instrument, unless it is written on duly stamped material, shall be duly stamped with an *ad valorem* duty before the expiration of 21 days after it is first executed."

He ventured to suggest to the Committee and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the 14 days might be extended to 21 days; 30 days, which was the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) was too long. He considered that if "the date thereof" was put in, it would lead to the possibility of a large number of documents escaping the Stamp Duty. People would sign an undated paper, and then the instruments would not be stamped. Practically speaking, to allow an unexecuted paper to remain undated, would be to afford a loophole by which a large number of persons would evade the duty. He quite understood that the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge), who had great experience in these matters, and his right hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), might be able to show the Committee that there might be special cases, as, for instance, the one mentioned, in which a deed might, in order to be signed by one of the parties, have to be sent out to a Colony. But these special cases, which could not be frequent, would be amply and sufficiently met by the regulation that if the document became inoperative the Stamp Duty would be returned. He therefore submitted that the insertion of the words "the date thereof" would inevitably allow a large number of persons who wished to evade the duty to evade it. The law should be stringent, so as to effectually ensure the stamping of instruments, leaving special cases to be dealt with by special regulations. In assenting, on behalf of the Government, to the omission of Sub-section (*a*), he wished it to be understood that he, or the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would move the Amendment he had indicated in Sub-section (*b*).

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) asked how, in the case of the suggested alteration, the Authorities would find out when the deed was executed? In his opinion, there was very little evasion of the Stamp Duty with regard to the transfer of land or real property. Evasion might exist with reference to stocks, but the risk in the case of real property would be far too great. He suggested, in order that the tax should not be evaded, that the penalty should be raised to £25 or £30. There were now in England two registration counties, Middlesex and Yorkshire; and when there was a system of general registration, no deed would be admitted which was not already stamped. In the case of personal property, he suggested that a short clause should be inserted preventing a settlement of personal property from having effect, unless registered within a certain number of months. That would prevent evasions of the Succession Duty, and the stamp difficulty would be solved at once. If these instruments were presented at Somerset House, and examined, it would result not only in checking the evasion of the Stamp Duty, but would bring in a large return to the Revenue on Succession Duty. He hoped to introduce clauses with that object when the Committee reached the consideration of the Succession Duty clauses.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he quite agreed with a great deal of what his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General said, and he was prepared to accept an alteration of Sub-section (*b*) very much on the lines the hon. and learned Gentleman indicated. There were two points, however, he would call the Attorney General's attention to. He had suggested 30 days, the Incorporated Law Society had suggested two months, which was the present time, and the Attorney General suggested 21 days. He (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) thought that 21 days was hardly long enough for a deed that had to circulate, and especially as they were going to make it compulsory. If they altered the period to "30 days after the date thereof," then they could appoint another period in line 4. He wished to meet the case of a deed executed by the contracting parties in England and then sent abroad. The time would run in the case of a deed sent abroad, if it was first executed abroad. If the Government would consent to this proposal, he would not contest the point any further with them. He sympathized with them in their endeavour to bring about compulsion in the case of these deeds.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, he was able to say from personal experience that the Stamp Duty had been largely evaded, and that the raising of the penalty would not answer the purpose, even if it were raised to £50. Take the case of a £300 or £400 stamp. It might be worth the parties' while not to pay it, and the interest on the money in a few years would amount to as much as the penalty. It was not well to impose large penalties, as they could not always enforce them. He thought that if the deed was first stamped within 30 days after execution, instead of 21 days, it would be soon enough. The ordinary conditions of the law were that the stamps were to be used, and that the regulation so laid down was not to be evaded. Of course, exceptional cases—namely, those where the stamps were evaded—arose under the present law. There might be a difficulty in proving evasion; but, as a rule, the honourable Profession to which the right hon. Gentleman belonged would observe the condition. With reference to leaving out the words "or is first executed," he was afraid the Government could not assent to that proposal. The matter had been carefully considered, and the Government had come to the conclusion that it was necessary to adhere to the first execution of the deed, wherever it took place. Striking out those words would not be sufficient; but even if it would, he could not consent to the omission. It seemed to him that exceptional cases, such as those referred to, could be met by using stamped paper. He ventured to say that Sub-section (*a*) could be struck out, on the understanding that they put in 30 days instead of 21, or, rather, instead of 14.

MR. WHITLEY (Liverpool, Everton) said, that the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be very difficult to carry out. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman did not know the practice in reference to conveyancing. It was a very common practice, when a conveyance had to be signed by many parties, to engross the deed in the first instance on unstamped paper, and get it stamped afterwards, when signed by all the requisite parties. In cases like this it was very hard to require the deed to be stamped first, as some of the parties might refuse to sign, and it might never be completed; and it was very difficult afterwards to recover the money from the stamp authorities. He wished to propose what he believed would be an Amendment, which would carry out all the Chancellor of the Exchequer wished. He thought they should enact that the deed should be operative when it was signed by all the parties to give it validity. That would, at the same time, meet the objection of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), and also carry out the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Attorney General. He hoped that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed his Amendment, he would adopt the suggestion that he (Mr. Whitley) now placed before him.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he understood from his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General that it was sometimes a question of law, and a very doubtful question of law, as to how many persons and what persons would give the deed validity. There was considerable difficulty in the matter; and the reason they were adopting the short period of 14 days, instead of the longer one, was that they did not wish to allow it to slip out of the memory of the parties concerned that the deeds had to be stamped. They desired that the stamp should be put on while the matter was still fresh in their memories. The deed might be sent abroad, and the imposition of a stamp might be deferred until it had gone abroad, and they might lose the advantage contained in the present proposal, that while the matter was fresh in the minds of everybody the deed should be stamped. A deed might be partly operative with the signatures of some of the parties, and not all. He understood that a good deal of the neglect at present to impose these stamps on documents was due to negligence, a long period of time being allowed to elapse, and not through wilful evasion. He did not think they could accept the suggestion of his hon. Friend.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, that with regard to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Sydney Gedge), he had no hesitation in expressing the opinion that they required specific words to render a deed invalid. He did not speak on this question without authority. There had been Statutes passed, declaring that unless certain deeds were stamped at the time of execution they should be invalid. But he did not think it could be argued that the simple absence of a stamp should always render a deed invalid.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) said, that when a deed had to be executed there was sometimes eight or ten parties to it. For instance, a customer came to a bank and mortgaged a property, and when he wanted it released the whole of the parties had to sign the document. Some of them might be in America and some in South Africa, so that it would be impossible to say when the signatures of all would be obtained. He was sure of this—that unless they could get some date fixed, and if it was to be an open question when the deed was first executed, it would make the borrowing of money and the transfer of securities a very difficult thing, and instead of increasing the facility of the transfer of land it would add another difficulty in the matter.

Question put, and *negatived ;* sub-section *struck out.*

On the Motion of Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, the following Amendment made :—In Sub-section (*b*), page 8, line 1, after "instrument," insert the words, "unless it is written upon doubtful stamp material."

Mr. Goschen

Amendment proposed, in page 8, line 2, leave out "fourteen," and insert "thirty."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'fourteen' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. KIMBER (Wandsworth) said, he begged to submit that all experience on this point had shown that the existing period of two months was not a bit too long, in case of a deed of any importance. As to the Revenue being defrauded by the time allowed being 60 instead of 30 days, he imagined that in a case in which a deed were allowed 30 days for being stamped and it were stamped, if 60 days were allowed in the same case, it would be stamped just the same. And if in the one case it should not be stamped, he imagined it would not be stamped in the other. He was one of those who thought that this clause was hardly required; and he confirmed the opinion expressed by the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge). He had never known a case in which the Revenue had suffered by a deed being left in blank as regarded its date in order that it might afterwards be filled in. There was no greater solicitude exercised by a solicitor than in this matter of seeing that the time did not expire in which deeds ought to be stamped. If a deed were left blank, he was at a loss to see how the Revenue would be defrauded. If the blank were filled in afterwards the stamp was paid to the Government, and he could not see where the fraud would be, unless the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer laid it down that he wished to get revenue by not only the stamps, but penalties. paid if a certain period were exceeded. The time was only wanted in order to enable all the parties to put their signatures to the deed, and if the 60 days should be exceeded by circumstances over which no one could have any control, it seemed reasonable that a deed should be allowed to be stamped without penalty. He was at a loss to see why there was anything unreasonable in leaving a deed undated until it was completely executed.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the word 'thirty' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 8, lines 2 and 3, leave out the words "the date thereof," and insert the words "it is first executed."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Question put, "That the words 'the date thereof' stand part of the Clause;" and the great majority of Members declared for the Noes, and only one or two voices for the Ayes, whereon the Chairman declared that the Noes had it; but his decision being challenged, Mr. Courtney directed the Division Clerks to attend at the Table to take the names in conformity with the new Rule relating to Divisions frivolously or vexatiously claimed. The Chairman having again put the Question, and no further opposition appearing, the Chairman declared the Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 8, line 24, after "produced" insert "Provided that if the instrument has been prepared for signature or execution by a solicitor or writer to the signet, such solicitor or writer to the signet, and not the person executing the same, shall forfeit the personalty of ten pounds imposed by this section."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

An hon. MEMBER said, he intended to move to leave out the words rendering a solicitor liable to a penalty.

MR. GOSCHEN: That would not be sufficient. The hon. Member would have to move an Amendment in another form, as to strike out those words would simply make nonsense of the clause.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, that with regard to the objection taken by the hon. Member behind him, the point had been considered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government, and he had communicated with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton on the subject. They agreed that there must be some security that the stamp would be used; but they thought that where the deed was prepared by a solicitor or writer to the signet such person should forfeit the penalty. The other increased Stamp Duty only had to be paid when the deed was stamped after the proper time.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND said, that a deed could be prepared in some cases by filling up a form. Was that being prepared by a solicitor?

MR. QUILTER (Suffolk, S.) asked, if an instrument were prepared on a form and insufficiently stamped, would the stock or sharebroker be liable to a penalty for the accidental omission?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, the stock or sharebroker would not be liable, but the officer who executed the instrument. The effect of this provision would be that the person executing the deed would see that it was properly stamped. But they had thought it hard in the case of lady—in the case of a marriage settlement for instance—to call upon the person executing the deed to bear the penalty; and, therefore, it would be made the duty of the solicitor and not the contracting party to see that the settlement was duly affixed.

MR. QUILTER said, that in the case he mentioned it might be that a deed was signed by a lady or someone not versed in the law, in which case the signature might be witnessed by a servant or a friend, and it seemed to him that it would be very hard that such people should be made liable to a penalty of £10, if the person making the instrument, not being properly instructed, should happen to make a mistake.

MR. GOSCHEN said, that relief was given in the Bill in case of these penalties. It was not laid down that the penalty should be enforced in all these cases, but there were words dealing with the innocent omissions.

MR. QUILTER said, that was all he asked for.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE said, the whole of this clause was very hard. It was very hard on the parties who might be ladies, and it was just as hard on the solicitor who might happen to have prepared the document, that he should become liable, though in some cases it might be proper to make him so, in order to exonerate other parties. Take a case. A solicitor prepared a form of lease which was to be used on a large building estate, and handed it to an agent for use as the houses were let. The solicitor originally prepared the form, but did not himself prepare the instrument. It therefore might be held that he had prepared all the leases which were granted, although he had not been consulted in each particular case. He would then be held liable, under a penalty of £10, to see that the instrument was properly stamped. It might be that the contracting landowner in this case was a lady who had entrusted the matter to her surveyor. Obviously, it would be unfair to make the solicitor liable, and it would be equally unfair to make the lady liable; but it was fairer that she should be liable than the solicitor. Let them take another case of common occurrence—mortgages and deeds of settlement. In these cases, the solicitor who prepared the document was not the man whose client had to pay for the stamp. He had recently acted for trustees who lent £100,000 on a mortgage, which he prepared. It was intended for the trustees to sell their stocks until the mortgage deed was ready for delivery to them, executed by all parties and stamped. When he had prepared and engrossed the mortgage, the deed went out of his hands to the mortgagors and solicitors. He could not tell when it was first executed, and all his control over it was gone. Therefore, in order to be safe, he must have provided the money himself, £125, and have run the risk of losing it, if the deed were lost or the mortgage went off. As ultimately the mortgagor had to pay for the stamp, it was he or his solicitor who ought to be liable, if anybody was. In the case of a marriage settlement, where a pretty penniless girl was engaged to a wealthy man, he had to pay all the costs of the settlement, but he would not pay in advance. In such a case, was the lady, who might be unable, or her solicitor, to be compelled to find the stamp? The marriage might not come off. They had frequently known the ardour of a lover's affection to cool before the execution of the deed. Why, then, should the lady's solicitor, because he had prepared the deed, be liable to a penalty because someone else did not stamp it? He hoped the House would reject the whole clause, for which there was no necessity. Where was the evidence, beyond the mere statement of hon. Gentlemen, that the Stamp Duty was often evaded? Why the House should introduce the new principle of making parties liable to a penalty for non-compliance with the duty of affixing the stamp and of making the solicitor liable he failed to see, as no cause had been shown for it. He had seldom, if ever, known any evasion of the law in these cases, although he had been in practice for over 30 years.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, that perhaps he might be allowed to offer one word in answer to the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member must not assume that in this matter the Government were acting upon mere hearsay. They knew, from actual documents that had come under the notice of the Inland Revenue Authorities, that a considerable number of deeds were not stamped, and the provision they were now proposing was recommended by numerous solicitors whom they had consulted. The hon. Gentleman behind him (Mr. Gedge) asked them to strike the clause out altogether; but it would be impossible to do that, for it would leave no penalty at all, and they would be in exactly the same provision in regard to this matter as they occupied at present. It was suggested to them that there might be cases of hardship where there might be ladies who would act through their solicitors, and, therefore, these words had been inserted. The Government had done what they could to meet one class of grievance; and although there might be other individual grievances, they could not be expected to go out of their way to meet them all, and they certainly could not abandon the whole clause.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE said, he would point out, in answer to the argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman, that that was the first time in which any penalty of the kind has been thrown upon the members of his Profession. There had been no time for the Incorporated Law Society to consider the matter, and he was sure the whole Profession would be averse to it, and he did not think that it would do the Tory Party any good at the next Election.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER, the following Amendments made:—In page 8, line 26, leave out "fourteen," and insert "thirty;" and in line 27, leave out "two," and insert "six."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 17 (Conditions and agreements as to Stamp Duty void).

On the Motion of Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER, the following Amendment made:—In page 8, line 31, after the word "instrument," insert the words "executed after the passing of this Act."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 18 *agreed to.*

Clause 19 (Duty on succession to real property chargeable as annuity. How to be paid).

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE said, he begged to move the Amendment standing in his name to the clause. He had been asked to do so by an eminent member of his own Profession, a gentleman in extensive practice; and, as he was himself in favour of it, he had no hesitation in asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer to agree to it.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Hear, hear!

Amendment proposed,

In page 10, after Sub-section (3), insert the following Sub-section:—"(4.) A successor entitled to his succession upon the death of a person dying before the first day of July, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, shall have the option given by this section if no instalment of duty has become due from him, or if only one such instalment has become due from him, and has been paid before the first day of July, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight."—(*Mr. Sydney Gedge.*)

Question, "That that Sub-section be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Remaining Clauses *agreed to.*

New Clauses—

Page 7, after Clause 13, insert the following Clauses:—

(As to Stamp Duty on mortgages of stock, &c.)

"(1.) The Stamp Duty now payable upon a mortgage of any stock or marketable security is hereby repealed.

"(2.) Every instrument under hand only (not being a promissory note or bill of exchange) given upon the occasion of the deposit of any share warrant or stock certificate to bearer, or Foreign or Colonial share certificate, or any security for money transferable by delivery by way of security for any loan, shall be deemed to be an agreement, and shall be charged with the duty of six pence accordingly.

"(3.) Every instrument under hand only (not being a promissory note or bill of exchange) making redeemable or qualifying a duly stamped transfer, intended as a security, of any registered stock or marketable security, shall be deemed to be an agreement, and shall be charged with the duty of six pence accordingly.

"(4.) A release or discharge of any such instrument shall not be chargeable with any ad valorem duty.

"(5.) Any deed operating as a mortgage of any stock or marketable security shall be chargeable, in respect of such operation, with the ad valorem duty chargeable upon a mortgage under 'The Stamp Act, 1870.'"

(As to Stamp Duty on equitable mortgages.)

"(1.) The ad valorem duty chargeable upon a mortgage under 'The Stamp Act, 1870,' shall cease to be payable upon an equitable mortgage effected by an agreement or memorandum relating to the deposit of any title deeds or instruments constituting or being evidence of the title to any property whatever (other than stock or marketable security), and in lieu of such duty every such agreement or memorandum shall be charged with the duty of one shilling for every hundred pounds, and any fractional part of one hundred pounds, of the amount secured by the equitable mortgage.

"(2.) Where the total amount which may be at any time secured by any equitable mortgage is unascertained or unlimited in the first instance, and the ad valorem Stamp Duty impressed on the agreement or memorandum in conformity with this section is available under section one hundred and seven of 'The Stamp Act, 1870,' for such an amount only as such duty extends to cover, such agreement or memorandum shall be deemed to be a new and separate agreement or memorandum, bearing date on the day on which any advance or loan is made in excess of the amount covered by the duty impressed thereon."

Page 8, after Clause 16, insert the following Clause:—

(Provision as to the Stamp Duty on assignments of policies of life assurance.)

"(1.) No assignment of a policy of life assurance shall confer on the assignee therein named, his executors, administrators, or assigns, any right to sue for the moneys assured or secured thereby, or to give a valid discharge for the same, or any part thereof, unless such assignment is duly stamped, and no payment shall be made to any person claiming under any such assignment unless the same is duly stamped."

"(2.) If any payment shall be made in contravention of this section, the Stamp Duty not paid upon the assignment, together with the penalty payable on stamping the same, shall be a debt due to Her Majesty from the Company or person by whom such payment is made, and shall be recoverable as such accordingly,"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer,*)

—*brought up*, read a first and second time, and *added* to the Bill.

Mr. SLAGG (Burnley) said, he begged to move to insert the following Clause after Clause 3—:

(Silver and gold plate.)

"That, on and after the passing of this Act, or at such other date subsequent thereto, as Her Majesty may fix, by an order made with the advice of Her Privy Council, the Excise Duty now payable on plate of silver and gold made or wrought in Great Britain, or in Ireland, shall cease and determine; and that the Duty of Customs now payable under the Customs Tariff Act on imports of plate of silver gilt or ungilt, and on plates of gold, shall also, on the same date, cease to be charged, and all drawbacks now payable on plate of silver or gold on being exported from Great Britain or Ireland shall cease to be paid."

He regretted exceedingly that he was obliged to bring in the clause at a moment so unfavourable for its due consideration.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I would ask the hon. Member to be good enough to bring in this Amendment on Report. He would find that a much better opportunity.

MR. SLAGG said, he should be glad to do so, if an opportunity would be afforded him.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) said, he also begged to move to insert after Clause 22, as a new Clause, that—

> "Any person appealing against an assessment of Income Tax or Inhabited House Duty shall be entitled to appear by solicitor."

A person appealing against an assessment might require the services of a specialist, as he might find it impossible to put his case without assistance. Then, again, a large number of persons in Wales did not know English, or had not sufficient command of that language to be able to conduct a case against an experienced surveyor of taxes, who knew all the points of law.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) (interrupting) said, he should not be able to assent to the Amendment; but if the hon. Gentleman wished to discuss it, he would ask him to bring it up on Report.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, this was a very important matter, and there were some points he wished to put at that stage. He was afraid that the public suffered very largely from the practice indulged in by all Chancellors of the Exchequer, and all ex-Chancellors of the Exchequer, of insisting that Revenue must be got at all cost. The case of his hon. Friend was a very important one, particularly where the difficulty as to language came in. He was bound to say, from facts which had come to his knowledge, that there were crowds of people who submitted to gross imposition on the part of Income Tax Commissioners and surveyors, because they feared being out-faced by official strength being brought against them. What difficulty could there be in accepting an Amendment of this kind, seeing that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had on his side such qualified and experienced men as surveyors? What objection could there be to allow a person appealing against an assessment to be represented by a solicitor? It appeared to him (Mr. Illingworth) that it was only a matter of justice. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman on behalf of hundreds of thousands of people who had grievances on that score. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer might not be able to deal with the matter just now; but he hoped the subject would be taken into consideration.

It being ten minutes to Seven o'clock, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress.

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the Clock.

QUESTION.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

MR. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) said, he wished to put a Question to the Leader of the House with reference to the Motion he had on the Paper as to the Scotch Elementary Code of 1888, praying Her Majesty to withhold her Assent to the alteration in Article 6 (*d*) of the Code of the Scotch Education Department proposed for this year, which (contrary to the provisions of section 67 of "The Education (Scotland) Act, 1872") would have the effect of lowering the standards of education that now existed in the public schools of Scotland. The Motion would in ordinary course have come on that evening had there not been an Afternoon Sitting, and as the Code came into operation on the 30th of April, he wanted to know if the right hon. Gentleman would give facilities for it being considered on Monday night?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, so far as the Government were concerned, they would be perfectly ready to give facilities for raising the question on Monday after 12 o'clock, if, unfortunately, it was not reached before that hour.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. A. H. DYKE ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham), in rising to move—

> "That in the interests of technical, commercial, and agricultural instruction, as well as of general education, it is indispensable that the attention of the Government should be no longer limited to primary education and science and art teaching, but should be extended to the secondary education of the Country which remains without organization or public supervision under a responsible Minister of Education, notwithstanding the repeated recommendations of Royal Commissions and Select Committees of this House on the subject,"

said, it was a good many years since any discussion arose on this particular subject in the House. It was not what was called a popular subject; but he hoped that interest in it was growing in the country. Many middle-class ratepayers were beginning to entertain the suspicion that they might have something more for their own children at a small increase of expense and a very little additional trouble on the part of the State. He thought many working men had a suspicion that the ladder from the primary schools to the University was not in such a good state as it ought to be. He should leave out of sight almost entirely the higher branches of secondary education with which our great public schools and the schools which prepared for them were concerned, and refer only to that education which concerned our lower middle classes, and those members of the working classes whose capacities, if properly trained, would enable them to rise to a superior position. He would ask three questions—(1) What were the defects in our present system and their results; (2) How our present needs were being met; and (3) What could the State do in the matter? As to the number of children concerned, that was a point on which they had little information; but he reckoned, according to such figures as could be obtained, that they ought to have in their schools 20 per 1,000—12 boys and eight girls. Of the 500,000 for England and Wales that these figures would bring out, not more than 100,000 were in their endowed schools; there might be 300,000 in private schools; and that left another 100,000 who would take advantage of the privilege if they could get it. Of this 400,000, at least one-half were under no kind of check or guarantee whatever. They were not able to act in this as in other countries owing to our want of social unity. There was a large and wealthy class who could and did spend large sums in educating their children at private and public schools, and then the middle class, which could not reach this higher education, were unwilling from social reasons to avail themselves of primary education. They must recognize these social divisions. He passed from that to the great defect of all—the want of organization. That fact was so notorious that he need not dwell upon it. Many of the chief evils of secondary education were simply the result of want of organization, but to talk about re-organization by shifting endowments was to talk about a very difficult thing. This want of organization was felt most keenly in our great towns. Not only so, but the local Colleges, for which many hoped some State aid might be forthcoming, complained again and again that they were not able to do good technical and scientific work because their pupils came forward so hopelessly badly prepared, and the obvious cause of their being thus crippled was that secondary education was so ineffective. As to general organization throughout the country, it went without saying that there was no such thing. With regard to defects in schools, he would go so far as to say that if an endowed school was not in an effective state it had better not be where it was at all. He could point to places where, owing to endowed schools being ineffective, practically nothing was being done for education; whereas, if there were no such institutions, the wealthier inhabitants would put their hands to the oar and found a thoroughly good and effective modern school. Private schools could not fill up the existing gap, for as soon as a master was thoroughly successful there was everything to induce him to raise his fees, and thus the need to provide good education at a moderate price remained unsupplied. In many private schools, moreover, sanitary conditions were utterly neglected, and something ought to be done in this direction, as well as in checking the large number of adventurers who still fed upon our lower middle classes. Everyone knew the kind of appeal which spoke of a

> "Select boarding school, in which only a few young gentlemen are received, on the most moderate terms, without extras, including washing and pew rents, and where the utmost attention is paid to gentlemanly deportment."

Only the other day he saw the following in a newspaper:—

> "To Butchers and Grocers.—Education.—A young lady can be received in a first class and old established school on the sea coast on reciprocal terms."

He would not try to analyze the process of mind through which the butcher would go as he contemplated whether it would pay him, on the whole, to educate his daughter at a place where he would retail the meat for 9*d*. which he bought for 6*d*. This primitive method of barter in relation to education which was able to exist in England would probably startle some educationists in other civilized communities. He submitted that, without any harsh and severe method, it might be easy to form such a system of registration of teachers as, while encouraging the best teachers, would gradually leave the charlatans to die a natural death. He could not doubt that, by a certain amount of State encouragement and more public attention being called to the question, progress might be made in our secondary schools as great as the progress which had attended our system of primary education in the last 18 years. There were, he admitted, many good schools. But if every hon. Member for England and Wales were asked to mention the six best secondary schools he knew some schools would be mentioned two or three times over, and it was not with reference to the 25 per cent that might be really good, but rather for the other 75 per cent that he was now speaking. If our secondary education was in a defective state the result to the country must be bad. It might be true that children trained in elementary schools were in many instances cutting out the children of the middle class; but that was not good for the country. What they wished was that every class should be able to avail themselves of a cheap public system of education, and to encourage forethought and promptitude in every class. With regard to technical education, he had taken considerable interest in the question in connection with an association of which the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale was President, and wherever he went he was told—"You must improve and organize middle-class education." When they had done all that they could by Technical Education Bills there still remained much to do in putting such education on a sound basis. Germany had for years and years been building up a sound system of general education permeating the whole of her people, and we should never have anything worthy of being called a system of technical education unless we had a sound system of general education. With regard to commercial education, that was a question of secondary education; the two things went hand in hand. The agricultural question was a much more difficult one, and there, again, he was glad to find that the Departmental Committee that had lately reported were alive to the great need that existed in many of our agricultural district for effective secondary day schools. This need, in his opinion, must be met by a system of peripatetic teachers, such as already existed in the best organized of our towns, and he hoped also that the new County Councils would take a real interest in this subject. The late Mr. Matthew Arnold, for whose irreparable loss to the country nothing could make up, speaking of the relation of secondary to primary education, had said that the organization of secondary education was desirable, no doubt, in the interest of higher instruction, but that it was indispensable in the interest of popular instruction also. He would now refer to the question of how our present needs were being met. In the first place, with regard to money, assuming there were 500,000 children in need of secondary education; and, assuming roughly that the average cost for each would be £10 a-year, that gave a sum of £5,000,000 a-year to be expended on effective secondary education. Endowments only came to about

£500,000 a-year, but there were many parents who would be willing to pay, say, £7 10*s*., if necessary. Organization and public supervision and encouragement were what were wanted far more than money. It was not, therefore, wholly a question of money, and there were many parts of the country where the people were perfectly willing to find the money when wanted. The people of Wales, for instance, were willing and anxious to be enabled to put into effect the provisions of the Bills which were brought forward on both sides of the House dealing with this question. How far were our present needs being met with reference to effective tests? A good deal had been done, no doubt, to test, encourage, and stimulate secondary schools. The local examinations of Oxford and Cambridge and the work of the College of Preceptors had been most valuable, but these bodies did not touch more than one-third of the children. In all schools where public money was being used they wanted more inspection and more guarantee than existed at the present time. With regard to secondary teachers, also, more tests and more efficiency were required. Immense strides had been made by primary teachers, and some of the best of them were fit to stand the test by the side of any teachers in any schools in the country. That was brought about by a system of public training which had produced good results. They might talk about the great improvement which they desired to see brought about in education, but unless they got better teachers in the subjects to which he had referred very little progress would be made. The next question was, what could the State do? All work of this sort must be gradual, and too much State interference would do a great deal more harm than good. Two things might be done immediately. In the first place, they might obtain some information as to the facts. Only last year Mr. Matthew Arnold expressed the opinion that it was possible to get powers to ascertain what was the actual supply of secondary education and what was its character. He was of opinion that that information could be obtained without much difficulty or expense, and there was no doubt that it would be of infinite value to public bodies interested in education. In the second place, there ought to be a Minister of Education, and not a mere duplicate of the President of the Council, who would be able to bring the whole subject within his ken, and have by his side some sort of effective council. In addition to this, more effective inspection of public schools was also wanted, and private schools should be encouraged to pay attention to this matter. In the fourth place, there ought to be registration of teachers; and, lastly, Local Bodies should have power to deal with this question by way of rating if they chose. He felt that he had given but an imperfect sketch of a great subject, and urged but little that was new, or that had not again and again been placed before Commissions and Committees. He was glad, however, that there was not now so much tall talk about our great middle classes and State interference as there used to be 20 years ago, but rather a growing opinion on the part of teachers and parents alike that there was something wanting in this particular department of our national life. He hoped that the Government would not invent an answer just sufficient to prevent his taking a Division. This was not a Party question, but one which interested all parties. He believed there were large numbers among the working classes who could be helped to rise to most important positions in the industrial world, and we ought to beware of stifling talent among them. If anything could be done by the State it ought to be done, and encouragement and help ought to be afforded wherever there was a real demand. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in seconding the Resolution, said: My hon. Friend need not, I am sure, apologize to the House for anything at all inadequate in the statement which he has laid before the House, and I think he must have felt that he received from both sides of the House in an almost equal degree interest, sympathy, and approval. It is very agreeable to find that we are now upon ground upon which both sides of the House have a common interest and common views. I only differ the least in the world from my hon. Friend in one point. I thought my hon. Friend referred more than I should be inclined to do to the fact that the improvement of secondary education is to be carried on with a view to the special interests and technical instruction of the wage-earning and working classes. I am second to no man in this House in my conviction that the wage-earning classes have the first claim upon the regard and attention of the House for this reason if for no other—that they are more numerous than all the other classes of the community put together. But, at the same time, in dealing with this question, we have to think also of those who are called in France the directing classes, whose interests in education are at least as great, and in secondary education greater, than those of the wage-earning classes. My hon. Friend has presented to the House a most interesting picture of the present condition of middle-class education. I shall not follow him into any details, but I will rest my view of the case upon authority. I will take three kinds of authority—the man of science, the man of business, and the man of letters. The man of science is Professor Huxley, who is not only a man of science, but a man who is well acquainted, who is specially acquainted by long experience, with the whole of the methods and all the necessities of secondary education in this country. What Professor Huxley says is this—

> "The organization of industrial and commercial education is not the least of the great problems which await the future. That this problem has to be solved under penalty of national ruin proves to be no longer a mere alarmist fancy."

That is the opinion of the man of science. The man of business to whom I shall refer is a gentleman well known to all Members who take an interest in technical and advanced education — Mr. Swire Smith, of Keighley. He is a Commissioner of Technical Instruction, and has travelled through the United States, Germany, Austria, and France. He is, therefore, well qualified. What he says is this—

> "In a large proportion of the Northern manufacturing towns there are no really secondary schools at all. Such middle-class schools as exist are graded, not according to educational standards, but according to the social grades of the scholars; the result being that, instead of all the children, as in every other country, receiving their elementary education in the public schools, the larger ratepayers, for fear of contact with those below, send their children to private schools, where they obtain inferior elementary instruction at a higher price, supplemented by extras which in too many instances do not represent any solid teaching. The boarding and grammar schools, where the education of many is 'finished,' with some commendable exceptions, 'neglect that knowledge in which there is progress, and devote attention to those branches in which we are scarcely, if at all, superior to our ancestors.' The result upon the student is about what might be expected."

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman from what document he is quoting, as I am well informed as to the opinions of my friend Mr. Swire Smith?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: From an article written in *The Westminster Review* about two months ago, to which Mr. Swire Smith's name is appended. Now, Sir, finally, the man of letters is Mr. Matthew Arnold. I hope the House will not think it unbecoming if at this moment, so soon after the loss, after the disappearance of that bright ornament of his time, I express for many on both sides of the House our sense of the loss of one who was a man of letters of the first eminence and distinction, who, besides that, was a public servant of the greatest usefulness, and who, finally, constantly showed a very keen and luminous insight into some of the most urgent social, intellectual, and political needs of his generation and his country. What Mr. Arnold said upon the subject is conveyed in sentences of which I will read three or four to the House. They are pithy and pregnant—

> "Our middle classes are among the worst educated in the world. The education of the mass of the middle classes is vulgar and unsound. Our body of secondary schools is the most imperfect and unserviceable in civilized Europe. Our middle class is the worst-schooled in civilized Europe."

Mr. Arnold was very competent to speak of the state of education in Germany and France, and fully competent to speak of education in England. I do not think that, after this consensus from so many different sources, we need longer time to convince ourselves of the existence of the want which we have to remedy. The question is, what is to be done? I am only going to dwell upon two points, of which the first is the necessity of creating a real Minister of Public Instruction. Everybody admits the necessity for the organization of secondary education. It is not too much to say that everything in our educational system between the elementary schools and the Universities is in a state of neither more nor less than chaos. I am speaking in the presence of Gentlemen well acquainted with the state of education in this country. Every person who watches as to secondary education is only too familiar with the confusion of wasted and misapplied endowments, distracted trustees, and bewildered parents—a very Babel of abounding conflict and misdirected criticism. Education must come into contact with the wide range of our most important interests. We have University extension lectures, Oxford and Cambridge examinations; we have conferences of Head Masters, International Conferences on Education. What we want is a Minister round whom, as a nucleus of activity, all this mass of information, so variously collected, all the various points and interests raised in these controversies, may be brought into a clear and definite form. Now, Sir, I hope the House will not suppose that I, at least, am advocating any imitation of the French system, under which, according to the well-known story of the French Minister of Instruction, at a certain hour every boy in France was doing the same lesson. I agree with my friend Mr. Huxley that even the present chaos would be better than that mechanical system. I do not believe that anyone on either side of the House has any desire to transform English boys into the kind of boys whom we see on the Continent. We have no desire to see the Minister of Education, when he is created, unnecessarily meddling or making himself unnecessarily busy. What the Minister of Education would do would be to keep up a constant pressure in the direction of instructed public opinion. The friends of such a proposal think we should find in a Minister of that kind the most simple way of focussing the information on educational subjects. It should be the business of the Minister of Education to judge the direction in which the educational indications of the time are tending, and by degrees to force on those bodies which did not take voluntary action a modification of their system in the desired direction. My hon. Friend who brought forward this Motion referred to the creation of Colleges in great towns, and it is a remarkable fact that in England—I believe in every large town—they have found it necessary to start these Colleges; but they are finding they could only keep their heads above water by making them what are called "bread and butter Colleges"—by making them into mere schools of technical instruction. That is most indispensable; but some of us who are going to support this Motion—most of us—feel that we want to make those Colleges into something more—we want to make them great, broad, and general educational agents. What will be the relations of the Minister of Education to it? I hope the right hon. Gentleman opposite will give us something to look forward to in that respect. We do not ask that those relations should be the cast-iron relations of the War Office to the Army or the Admiralty to the Navy. What our view points to, I believe, is this—that the Minister should be a great intelligence department for the collection of all possible information from the best sources, and in turn diffusing that information to all those Colleges. It is the same with the endowed schools. What happens in their case is that the Charity Commissioners frame a scheme which lies on the Table of both Houses of Parliament, but the schemes once passed we hear no more of them, whether they turn out well or ill, and whether their operation is or is not what the Charity Commissioners intended it should be. The Minister of Education and the Department would have a constant stream of light shed on those schools, and it would be poured out on the whole education system of the country. It is said that the Charity Commissioners have legal powers to make trustees do their duty. I know they have; but that is a very different thing from having powers to ascertain the educational efficiency of the school, and for this the Charity Commissioners have no apparatus. What we want is that the most experienced officers of the Education Department and the Charity Commissioners should become an authority and be represented in Parliament by a head who would be responsible to and able to satisfy Parliament as to the continued efficiency of those institutions. There is no more excellent authority in all matters of education than Mr. Fitch, and he said in his evidence before the

Select Committee of two years ago that—

> "A responsible Minister of Education would be valuable in relation to endowed schools."

I ask the attention of the House to this, in order that they may know definitely what it is that a Minister of Instruction would be. He would

> "Not, of course, have to administer a grant in aid, because they ought all to be practically self-supporting, nor to lay down any code of regulations so as to require secondary education to be always of one type or follow the same course; but to inform parents and the public of the nature of the existing provisions and of the state of efficiency of all the endowed schools."

The plain truth is that we want a Minister of Instruction to prevent endowed schools from falling back into a condition analogous to that in which they were before the Endowed Schools Act. My hon. Friend has referred to the Endowed Schools Act. My hon. Friend has referred to the probability that within a short time the County Councils will have to deal with educational funds and important educational interest. I am not to-night going to touch the financial aspect of this question. I can only make this remark—that in Germany the State begins its contribution to education at the opposite end to that at which we begin. It gives no grant, I am informed, to primary education, though it sends Inspectors to test the work done. What it does is to reserve its grants for the higher education. And here I should like to read a few lines from the last Report that Mr. Arnold ever wrote—

> "We are misled if we are merely told that the schools for the lower classes in Berlin are free, while those for the middle and upper classes charge school fees. What would the schools for those classes be in Berlin or anywhere else in Germany if they had merely the school fees to depend upon? The schools are built and maintained, their teachers are paid by the State or the municipality; the school fees of the pupils, always very moderate according to their notions, are merely a contribution in aid of the expense of admirable schools provided really like the elementary schools by the public."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer is a very zealous and a very competent friend of higher education in this country, and I do not know how he will reconcile his undoubted zeal for secondary education with demands which will necessarily and speedily be made upon the Exchequer for secondary education. It is too late to ask whether we should not have done better to have begun at the same end as the Germans, because nobody denies that part of the funds contributed to primary education in this country are little better than wasted in giving a thin veneer of education, which is very rapidly worn off by the friction of daily life. But though it is too late to ask whether we would not have done better to have begun at the other end, it is not too late to ask whether, if you admit the principle that it is the duty of the State to share the burden of primary education with the localities, it is not the duty of the State to share the burden of higher education too. When this is done it will be one reason the more for having a Minister of Public Instruction. The County Councils will undoubtedly be called upon to take charge of education, but they will need guidance and they will need light, and their efficiency from an educational point of view will depend upon their having access, through some natural and self-working machine such as an Educational Minister would be, to information in the ever-advancing science of education. What Parliament will want is that there shall be a responsible Department to see that the country is getting money's worth for its money. I will detain the House only for a moment or two upon the attitude of this House towards a Minister of Public Instruction. The School Inquiry Commission of 1868 recommended in their Report that there should be a great central educational authority, and suggested that this central authority should be got by enlarging the powers of the Charity Commission; but they pointed out that the Minister of Education is the proper head of the Commission, because the Minister would be supported by the whole strength of the Government. There is a further and stronger reason from the point of view of the Commission of 1868 why there should be a Minister of Instruction—it is the only way in which you would get real responsibility to Parliament. In 1868 the Duke of Marlborough, then President of the Council in the Administration of Mr. Disraeli, introduced in the House of Lords a Bill to create a Secretary of State to deal with educational matters. When Mr. Disraeli was challenged in a debate in 1874 by the right hon. Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair) with having gone back on the proposal in the Duke of Marlborough's Bill, Mr. Disraeli said that he had found out in the course of the six years which had elapsed that the proposal was premature. The next step was taken in 1883, when my hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) brought the subject before the House, and the end of his action was a Committee which reported in 1884. That Committee was presided over by the right hon. Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). The Report was to the effect that (1) a Board of Education should be appointed under a President who should be real as well as nominal Minister, in this respect holding a position like that of the President of the Board of Trade, and that the duties of this Minister should be recognized as not less important than those of some of the Secretaries of State. (2) That the Minister should have authority over the endowed schools to the extent of calling on the Governing Bodies to furnish him with such Reports and information as he may require, and to direct any inquiries or inspection which he may deem necessary. (3) In the case of public schools that he should be authorized to call for information, but they were not of opinion that his powers should extend to inspection. It is on the Report of the Committee of 1884 that we base our strong desire that now to-night, if it be possible, we should receive an assurance from the Government that they seriously contemplate carrying out that recommendation as to a Minister of Education. I know it may be said by the right hon. Gentleman that he or the President of the Council is a Minister of Education. But whether it is the President or the Vice President of the Council who is the actual head of that Department, I submit that at present he is not a Minister of Public Instruction at all, but simply a giant school-manager—a manager of elementary schools. What we want, what the Resolution points to, is a man who will survey the whole field of public instruction, who will keep his eyes open all round, who will find out at every point the defects of the secondary system, and will, wherever it is necessary, constantly come before Parliament to apply for powers to remedy these defects. Mr. Lowe, in 1874, said that there was not in the Education Department material enough to occupy a Minister of the first class. It may be so or it may not; but if the functions of the Minister were enlarged in the sense I have indicated they would undoubtedly be worthy in England, as they have long been thought worthy in France, of the whole energies of a Minister of the highest dignity and position. There is only one other point to which I will refer before I sit down. Neither the Mover of the Resolution nor I are here to frame a Bill; but there is one point to which I would refer—namely, the registration of secondary schools and of teachers. I do not know how far opinion is yet ripe for the proposition I am going to lay down; but I feel confident that the time will come, if it has not come already, when England, like some other countries, will insist that no schools shall be opened by any man or woman without the properly recognized qualifications. That is a counsel of perfection I dare say, but I think it is one of those aims which we ought to keep before our view. As things are now, any man broken down in any other calling of life thinks he is good enough for a schoolmaster. Parliament has passed many Registration Acts. It has even passed a Veterinary Surgeons' Registration Act, and I think the time has come when we may expect a Teachers' Registration Act to pass, and that by-and-bye measures should be taken to prevent any persons opening a secondary school unless they possess some title to qualify them for registration. That is not a new point; Mr. Forster brought forward what was called No. 2 Bill, and it contained a clause for registration; and in 1881 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair) brought in his Teachers' Registration Bill. Both of those Bills had what appeared to many of us the defect of being voluntary. I hope the time will come when this House will not be afraid of a Teachers' Registration Bill which shall be not voluntary, but compulsory. I know the objection to it is that if you make it compulsory, then the State will appear to be giving a guarantee as to the competency of the person so registered. We must take that objection for what it is worth, but it has not been held valid against the Medical Registration Act. We may go so far as to say that you can have no guarantee of the efficiency of a school unless it is annually examined; and if the right hon. Gentleman should say that such annual examination is impossible, I shall only remind him that in Scotland the Government does examine and inspect all the endowed schools, and, I think, all the higher schools.

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Sir William Hart Dyke) (Kent, Dartford): Private adventure?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: If it can be done in Scotland, I do not see why our higher schools in England should not also be examined.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Only such as applied.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): Oh, I beg pardon.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I think they examine all, but I will leave my right hon. Friends to settle that between themselves. The Lord Advocate does not contradict me.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Only those which apply are examined.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: Our difficulties with respect to private adventure schools in the future are lessened, and will be progressively lessened, by this very interesting fact, which I am told is true by the best educational authorities—that since 1868 the principal educational movement in this country has been in the direction of establishing secondary schools on a public basis and of a public character. Mr. Fitch said in 1886—

> "If it was the duty of the Education Department to present to Parliament a list of all efficient secondary schools in a given district, all really good schools, whether private or proprietary, would be glad to be included in that list, and would volunteer to ask for inspection and examination, in order that parents might have greater confidence in them and their work."

I have endeavoured to put before the House one or two points with regard to a Minister of Education and with regard to registration. The want is admitted—the necessity for this serious step is admitted on both sides—without reference to political Parties. All our present education that is good is intolerably dear, while the moderately cheap is exceedingly bad. My contention is that by imprinting the stamp of publicity and the stamp of the State upon these secondary schools we shall not only be exalting the professional spirit of the teachers, which in itself would be an immense again, but we should do more than anything else we can do to enlarge, to quicken, and to vivify the minds of the learners, and without impairing the native boldness or virility of the British stock we shall be stimulating that intellectual alertness and strengthening that moral force which are the only solid foundations of national greatness.

Amendment proposed,

> To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the interests of technical, commercial, and agricultural instruction, as well as of general education, it is indispensable that the attention of the Government should be no longer limited to primary education and science and art teaching, but should be extended to the secondary education of the Country, which remains without organization or public supervision under a responsible Minister of Education, notwithstanding the repeated recommendations of Royal Commissions and Select Committees of this House on the subject,"—(*Mr. Arthur Acland,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. KENYON (Denbigh, &c.) said, he hoped he should not be considered presumptuous in intervening at this somewhat early period of this exceedingly interesting debate. His reason for so doing was that he desired to treat the subject from a particular point of view—because he wished to speak solely on the question of intermediate and technical education in the Principality of Wales. The subject was one which demanded some consideration from the Front Benches, because they had from time to time given pledges to Members interested in it. What was its history? Why this—so long ago as the year 1880 a Royal Commission was appointed to consider the subject, and a strong Royal Commission represented by men who had the confidence of the whole of the Principality. That Commission was appointed with the consent of both the political Parties in the House, and its President was a man whose name, without doubt, commanded the assent and confidence of every Welshman—he meant Lord Aberdare. Well, that Commission visited every part of Wales; it took evidence all over the Principality; and the conclusions it arrived at, after a most searching investigation of the whole subject, were given in a somewhat lengthy volume, which he would not inflict upon the House. The effect, however, of the conclusions they arrived at as to the dearth or want of intermediate and technical education in the whole of the Principality he would read. These were the principal points they referred to—

> "The very inferior aggregate number of scholars attending intermediate or technical schools in Wales as compared with the remainder of the United Kingdom. The whole number of scholars attending intermediate schools in Wales only amounted to the small number of 4,000, and of those the proportion in town schools was only 1,540, the rest being in private country schools."

That one point showed the small number of scholars educated by the intermediate schools in the Principality. He did not wish to weary the House with figures, but he should like to ask them to compare the statistics relating to Wales with those showing the number of scholars educated by these schools in other parts of the United Kingdom—

> "In Ireland the comparison of children between 10 and 14 years of age who are educated is as one to 3,121; in Scotland it is as one to 840; whereas in Wales the comparison is as one to 8,000."

Could it for a moment be contended that the intermediate education system was doing its work in Wales when only one child was educated where the number ought to be 8,000, and when one in 840 were educated in Scotland? It seemed to him that this proved almost to demonstration that there must be something radically wrong in the system. Another point he would like just to allude to was this. It was asked why different rules and different laws should be applied to Wales to those which were applied to other parts of the United Kingdom? The answer to that was fairly given in the Report of the Royal Commission. The first point was the isolation—the comparative isolation—of Wales, partly owing to its geographical features, and partly owing to its Cymric language. Then, again, there was the poverty of the Principality, and with regard to that point he should like to mention one or two facts. People said—"Why is Wales a poor country?" They said—"It is a great industrial country." So it was a great industrial country, but all the same it was an extremely poor country. He should like to call attention to a few figures which he thought were thoroughly trustworthy, and which threw some light on this question of prosperity. It had been proved conclusively from the Income Tax Returns that whereas in England the Income Tax averaged £15 per head in the English counties, in the Welsh counties it only averaged £12 per head, and in one particular county—probably the poorest in Wales—namely, Cardiganshire—only £8 per head. In the English boroughs, it was shown, the Income Tax averaged £24 per head, whereas in the Welsh boroughs it only averaged £13 per head. This seemed to him a very fair comparison of the wealth and prosperity of Wales and England. Now, he wanted to point out a few of the specific grievances which he thought the Welsh people suffered under, and these he took mainly from the Report of the Royal Commission, to which he had already alluded. Wales, as the House knew, had a very mixed population. It had a population a great portion of which was agricultural, but it also had mining industries. He did not suppose there was any part of the United Kingdom where there were so many mixed industries as there were in Wales. They had in the Principality lead mines and iron mines; they had or had had copper mines; they had coal mines; they had very large slate quarries, a large industry in pottery and terra cotta; and, last of all, they had the great industry coming to the front, gold mines. [*Laughter.*] This last industry might be looked upon as somewhat of an *ignis fatuus;* but, at any rate, they had lately seen the proprietor of these mines coming up to London with three bars of gold in his possession, valued at £3,000, taken from his mines, and when that was the case it was not for the House of Commons to laugh. What he wanted to say on these points was this. There they had all these various industries, and what had they got in the shape of technical or intermediate education to train the people and fit them to make the best of them? Those industries must require great knowledge of metallurgy, engineering, and all those technical subjects which the hon. Gentleman who moved the Motion (Mr. A. H. Dyke Acland) would say they were interested in. And had not the Welsh industries been injured by the fact that there were no good technical or intermediate schools for the education of the children? He would give the House a small illustration of what he meant, and it might not, perhaps, be a very unhappy one. When the Liverpool Corporation were borrowing water from Wales by means of a great aqueduct, and works involving the employment of a large number of persons and requiring a large amount of engineering skill and technical knowledge were in progress, amongst the great body of men engaged there were, comparatively speaking, no Welshmen on skilled work. And why? He did not believe himself that it was from any congenital want of intellectual power in Welshmen in acquiring engineering skill, but because they had not had the opportunity given them of studying these matters. The work Welshmen ought to have had was given to others. He thought that was an argument in favour of what was advocated—namely, the giving of more power and assistance to intermediate schools in Wales. And there was another point. Wales was a great watershed. If they wanted water in London, where would they go for it? They would have to go to the watershed of Merionethshire. Then give the Welsh the opportunity meanwhile of educating their people, and give them the chance of knowing something technical as to the method of making use of their natural advantages. Do not let them handicap the poor Welsh people unfairly in these matters. They were naturally of an engineering disposition. It might not be known to Englishmen that the first water brought to London——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must point out to the hon. and learned Gentleman that he is treating the broad Question before the House in a very special manner.

Mr. KENYON said, he felt it his duty to make an appeal to the Front Bench on this question of educating the people which had been so long before them. He should like to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), and he trusted that in so doing he should not be trespassing against the Rules of the House. The Marquess of Salisbury visited Wales the other day, and delivered a great speech to the people. There was only one fault he had to find with the speech. It was a great disappointment to find that intermediate education was not dealt with in it. The Welsh Liberal papers, after the noble Lord's visit, said this—which he was afraid represented to a great extent the feeling of the Welsh people on this subject—

> "Wales will get nothing from him or his Party. We expect the effect of his visit will be to rid North Wales of every Tory who now misrepresents it."

He (Mr. Kenyon) would make a pathetic appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to avoid, if possible, so terrible a catastrophe. In all sorrowful earnestness, he said, the Conservative Party now had the chance of dealing with the matter of doing something for Wales. Wales had been neglected in the matter of education, and he would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether some place could not be given to Wales in connection with this burning question—for it was a burning question—of intermediate and technical education. If he would do so, he would, he (Mr. Kenyon) was sure, earn the gratitude not only of Welshmen sitting on that (the Conservative) side of the House, but of his Welsh Friends sitting opposite, who were fully prepared, he thought, to accept a reasonable and conciliatory measure, from whatever quarter it might come.

Mr. PRESTON BRUCE (Fifeshire, W.) said, he rose to ask the indulgence of the House for a few moments, to allow him to consider this Motion from the point of view of Scotland. He was afraid he could not hope to treat the matter in the pathetic style in which the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had treated the case of Wales. But he desired to ask how far this Motion was applicable to the case of Scotland, and to express his opinion that in its general purport this Motion was applicable to Scotland as well as to England. The defect which had been pointed out—that was to say, the want of efficient schools—existed in Scotland as well as in England; and the remedy which was pointed at—the aid of the State in organizing, supervising, and assisting those schools—was a remedy highly necessary, he thought, in that country also. At the same time, there were very marked differences between the educational arrangements in Scotland and those which prevailed in England. For example, he was struck by the frequent references made by the hon. Gentleman the Mover of the Motion (Mr. A. Dyke Acland) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) to the middle class. They treated this question as if it was almost exclusively a matter for the middle class. Now, he (Mr. Preston Bruce) thought that the people of Scotland had never been accustomed to regard their educational institutions as class institutions. Their old parochial schools were not schools of a particular class; the present board schools were not schools of a particular class; and the Universities of Scotland were not the Universities of a class; and the sort of secondary schools which were wanted in Scotland would not be the schools of one class, or for a particular class, but schools for the benefit of all classes. Well, it had also been an honourable tradition of their old parochial schools that children should get there; not onlyelementary education, but a good deal of higher education, and he gladly acknowledged that many of the board schools now existing had carried on that tradition, and did supply a great deal more than merely elementary education. At the same time, while that was true, he believed that no educationist would deny that an intermediate class of schools between the National Board Schools and the Universities was a necessity in Scotland. Well, then there was one other point with regard to Scotland which he should like to mention. Their schools there were essentially day schools. In England boarding schools, he believed, had been very successful, but the boarding school had never taken root in Scotland. The day school system was what they were accustomed to there, and the result of that peculiarity was that what they required in regard to secondary schools was a very extended system of secondary schools. It was not enough that they should have secondary schools in a few of their largest towns, but they must have them in every considerable centre of population, in order that the children might come in from the surrounding districts and attend them as day scholars, returning to their homes in the evening. That being so, he thought the only question was, could they get a sufficient supply of secondary schools without asking the aid of the State in the matter? A few years ago many people in Scotland were inclined to say—"You should not go to the State for this. These schools ought to be supplied out of your educational endowments." He (Mr. Preston Bruce) wished to say, under correction from the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Glasgow University (Mr. J. A. Campbell) whom he saw opposite, one of the Education Endowments Commissioners, that he believed he was correct in saying that that Commission had now had through its hands practically all the educational endowments of Scotland. They therefore knew how far the want of secondary schools could be supplied out of educational endowments, and the result which they had from the Chairman of the Commission was that these endowments were not sufficient to supply what was wanted in the matter of secondary education. He would ask leave to quote just one sentence from the speech of Lord Balfour of Burleigh, delivered at Glasgow in September last. The noble Lord said—

> "I am most anxious that the public should not suppose that when the Commission has done all its work that all that it is necessary to do for higher education in Scotland will have been done. I look forward to the time—and I hope it is not far distant—when higher education will come more within the sphere of Parliamentary action, and more within the sphere of assistance from the rates, than it is at the present time."

And he went on to say afterwards—

> "Parliament has acknowledged its duty to the elementary schools and to the Universities, and both are aided from the public funds. Why is secondary education alone to be left out in the cold to be starved and neglected?"

Now, Lord Balfour of Burleigh held Office under the present Government. He was a great supporter of the Conservative cause in Scotland, and he (Mr. Preston Bruce) called on the Government not to be behind this supporter of theirs in the matter of their educational policy. If the Government adopted the views of Lord Balfour of Burleigh on this point, they would be very nearly adopting the views of the hon. Gentleman who had moved the Motion. Now, he must just quote one other authority on this subject, and he would do so from the last Report of the Scotch Education Department. They had during the last two years begun a system of inspecting the higher schools, which system had been referred to to-night already, and they said—

> "In view of the fears which have been expressed as to the decadence of secondary education in Scotland, we have naturally looked with great interest to the reports which have as yet reached us. We regret to find that these do, to a considerable extent, confirm the fears to which we allude."

And in the special Report of Professor Chrystal, who was employed by the Department, and who inspected 12 of these schools, there occurs this remark—

> "The time has arrived for plain speaking regarding our system of secondary education. Year by year since the re-organization of the English schools under the Charity Commission, my experience as an Examiner in Scotland has forced more and more on me the unwelcome conclusion that, with a few exceptions here and there, we have been falling behind in higher education properly so-called."

Well, now, he (Mr. Preston Bruce) thought he had sufficiently shown that this want, already referred to in the Motion before the House, existed in Scotland. He would not venture to detain the House by any special remarks on the question of technical education, or evening schools, or special points of that kind. What he wished to show was this—that this want equally existed in Scotland, and he agreed with the hon. Gentlemen the Mover and Seconder of the Motion that organization was the main thing required. They wanted assistance in the shape of funds, but organization was even more important than money in this matter. He did not think it could be said that there was as yet any formed public opinion in Scotland as to exactly in what shape and in what degree the State should interfere in this matter; but, on the other hand, his experience was that there was in that country a great enthusiasm for the cause of education looked at broadly. He believed that any Government that appealed boldly to that feeling and brought in a broad and comprehensive measure for the advancement of secondary education, would find a very hearty response among the people of Scotland, and a very warm support of such a measure. There was just one other point to which he would allude before he sat down. The Motion before the House mentioned the subject of a Minister of Education, and a great part of the speech of the Seconder of that Motion was devoted to that matter. Now, it would be in the recollection of those who took any interest in Scotch affairs that two or three years ago Scotch education was handed over to the Scotch Office, being transferred from the English Department, and connected with the Scotch Department, and that it was now practically, although not in theory, under the Secretary for Scotland. He did not wish it to be supposed that he, in supporting this Motion, as he very heartily did, wished to intimate an opinion in favour of going back upon that arrangement. He did not think it would be at all wise, having regard to the tendency of public opinion in this matter, to attempt to go back on that and replace Scotch education under the same Office as English education; nor did he believe that that would be desirable in itself. Much as he thought education required assistance and organization by aid of a central authority, on the other hand he was of opinion that nothing was less to be desired in education than excessive centralization. Surely it was much better that Scotland and Wales and other parts of the Kingdom should be allowed to develop their education on their own lines, rather than that any attempt should be made to drive them into one mould. The higher the education with which they were dealing, the more objectionable it seemed to him to attempt anything like similarity or uniformity in it. Subject to this one remark with regard to a Minister of Education, he gave his most cordial support to the Motion. He earnestly hoped that it would not be long, as Lord Balfour of Burleigh had said in the speech he had quoted, before there was some movement and some action taken in this direction, and there was an effective organization of our secondary education introduced throughout Scotland and England alike.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): Sir, I think, at all events Her Majesty's Government cannot pretend to have any ground for complaint at a question of this importance having been raised in this House with reference to educational matters, and still less can they have any cause for complaint in regard to the manner and matter of the speeches addressed to us from the other side of the House. Although I am afraid I cannot agree with all that may be urged as to this Resolution, at the same time I can join most heartily in the suggestions that have come from the other side in reference to these matters of education being no longer matters of Party controversy in this House. I think I may urge with some justice that this Resolution, from the very form of it, is one that it is very difficult to deal with. I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Rotherham Division of York (Mr. A. Dyke Acland), who so ably brought it before your notice to-night, is the actual author of it; but I think I may venture to say that whoever has drafted this Resolution has reduced to something like a fine art the system of mystical and hazy draftsmanship. I will refer to the terms of the Resolution. In the first place it urges—

> "That, in the interests of technical, commercial, and agricultural instruction, as well as of general education, it is indispensable that the attention of the Government should be no longer limited to primary education and science and art teaching."

Well, I do not think, with reference to a matter of this importance, that there could be a much more vague and hazy term than this word "attention." If the Resolution had urged upon the House some proposition of this kind, that the time had arrived for immediately dealing with the question of secondary education, that would have been a matter upon which the House would have had to pronounce a clear decision, and with regard to which the Government would have had to give some definite announcement of policy. And if, as I have said, this Resolution be somewhat vague in its character, I think I may also venture to urge that the speeches of the Proposer and Seconder of it, if not entirely vague, yet are wanting, at all events, in this respect—that though they indicate that changes are necessary, and though they indicate, and rightly indicate, that as regards our system of secondary education in this country it is not altogether in a satisfactory state, yet, what I do complain of is that they do not come to close quarters and indicate any clear policy that might be pursued. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) has stated that in regard to this question of secondary education it is in a complete state of chaos at this moment. When the right hon. Gentleman makes that statement, and supports it by the evidence which he has adduced from very authentic sources, I cannot help asking myself—it is natural that I should ask myself, and it is also natural that many of my hon. Friends sitting behind me should also ask themselves—if this state of chaos really existed to-day, what happened during the five years from 1880 to 1885, when right hon. Gentlemen sitting beside the right hon. Member for Newcastle were in Office? It seems to me that if anything like a state of confusion existed in 1880 it was the duty of those the right hon. Gentleman was then acting with to have taken up the matter and dealt with it.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I was not in the House in 1880.

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE: Now, I should like, if the House will bear with me, to deal with one or two points connected with this Motion. In the first place, I should like to deal with that portion of the Motion with reference to the question of technical, commercial, and agricultural instruction. So far as that part of the Motion has regard to the attention of the Government being called to these subjects, I think it is fair that I should, at all events, point out that very shortly after Her Majesty's Government entered Office they broke through what I may call the old official *régime* observed in these matters, and did give their attention to this branch of education. I remember that I was rash enough—having held the Office I now hold only a few months—to endeavour to frame a Bill dealing with technical, commercial, and agricultural instruction. I think it is fair that Her Majesty's Government should claim some credit in that regard, because, although they were unable to carry a Bill in reference to England, yet they were successful in carrying a measure through in regard to Scotland last Session; and as the House is aware they are pledged in the Speech from the Throne to deal practically with this question this Session. Therefore, as regards the "attention" of Her Majesty's Government being extended to these particular subjects, I think we can claim some credit in that regard. As to another matter that arises in connection with this part of the Resolution—namely, the subject of University Colleges—the highest class of secondary instruction—that, again, has been particularly alluded to in the course of this debate, and there again, whether rightly or wrongly, or whether within our province or not, the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been directed during the present Session. I have received a deputation, and so has the Lord President of the Council (Viscount Cranbrook) on behalf of the University Colleges, and we are now daily engaged in getting information with regard to their financial position and the whole system of the training pursued at them. Although, of course, it would be wrong for me to pledge Her Majesty Government for one moment in regard to this question, I think it is only fair and right, on this occasion at all events, to say that we are gathering this information with the view of discussing the question whether we should not grant State aid in some way or other. I should now like to proceed to what, after all, is the more important part of this Resolution. Of course, I need hardly urge that it is that part of the Resolution which refers generally to the position of secondary education in this country. I notice that the Mover of this Resolution seemed rather to slur over, or to slight, the work which has been done up to this date by the Charity Commissioners in respect to the Endowed Schools; but I was glad to observe that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) did not take the same view on that point. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to consider that the operation of the Charity Commissioners, at all events in respect to Endowed Schools, had some very important bearing upon the question of secondary education.

Mr. A. H. DYKE ACLAND: I did not intend any slur whatever upon the work of the Charity Commissioners. I approve most highly of the work the Charity Commissioners have done in the last few years.

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE: I was referring more particularly to that portion of the hon. Gentleman's speech in which he referred to endowments; and I think he stated he had known cases where endowments had done more harm than good. I am bound to say that, although there may be cases possibly where the existence of endowments has done harm, still there are hundreds of cases where the existence of a very small endowment has led to much voluntary effort, resulting in the establishment of a most excellent school. I should like to point out that, up to the end of 1887, 826 schemes have received the Royal Assent. Many of those schemes provide for exhibitions tenable at places of technical and scientific instruction, 159 provide for technical and scientific instruction connected with local industries, while others provide for instruction in land surveying, and other useful occupations. Certainly, I think, there is no section in the House who will assert that the work the Charity Commission has done since the Act of 1869 was passed has been in any sense thrown away. I will refer a little later on to the remarks which have been made by the right hon. Gentleman in reference to inspection and other matters. Well, Sir, I, for one, think that there is some danger of the future operation of this Commission being impeded by the course taken by certain Gentlemen in this House. I see opposite to me the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Lyon Playfair) who was the Chairman of a Committee on Endowed Schools, which reported in 1887. My right hon. Friend will, I am sure, give me his attention when I allude to a point which he feels deeply upon, and which is, I believe, a matter of serious importance in regard to the good results in the future of schemes which may be framed by this Commission. I refer more particularly to what is called the ladder system. Now-a-days, it is very easy to get up the cry in democratic constituencies of the robbery of the poor; and although, of course, we are all most anxious that so far as the poorer classes are concerned, they should have ample and full justice done them, and that all these schemes should be most jealously watched and safeguarded, there is some danger still that this cry of the robbery of the poor may have this result, that all schemes dealing with the ladder system may possibly be opposed in this House, and that it will be difficult in the future to carry out the policy of the Commission to the end. It is only fair that this should be mentioned. I have heard hon. Members say that they do not believe in the ladder system, and they do not think it right, or just, or fair, that in any possible case where a child has received free elementary instruction, that free instruction should be taken away for the sake of giving a chance to that child to rise through the different grades possibly up to the University. They do not think that is any adequate compensation at all. This subject was gone into most carefully by a Committee of this House upstairs; most valuable and important evidence was given in regard to it, and not only was that evidence most conclusive that this ladder system of the Commissioners was included within the four corners of the Act, but that it ought to be persevered with to the end. I need hardly weary the House by quoting from the Report; but hon. Members who take the trouble to refer to that Report will see that that policy is most emphatically endorsed by the Committee. I merely mention this subject now because I know it is so easy in popular democratic constituencies to get up a cry that such and such a scheme is simply robbery of the poor, and for Motions to be brought forward in the House seriously interfering with the success of schemes. Now, I should like to deal more specifically with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. John Morley). I noticed that so long as the right hon. Gentleman was, so to speak, firing at long range, he said much with which one must agree; but when he came to close quarters, I think we have some reason to complain that he was not more specific in his language. I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman one or two questions upon the subject of secondary education. I observed that the right hon. Gentleman did not exactly advocate an inspection of schools, but only prophesied that the time might come when an inspection of private adventure schools would take place in this country. I should like to know, supposing the labours of the Charity Commission are concluded, and that gap as to secondary education which the right hon. Gentleman regrets still remains, how he would prepose to fill up that gap; because it seemed to me that in his speech he indicated no policy with respect to this point. He asks the Government to accept this vague Resolution, a Resolution which is so worded that it may mean a great deal, or it may mean but very little; and it is the language of the Resolution, coupled with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, which makes it difficult indeed for Her Majesty's Government to accept it as it stands. But, Sir, we had no indication from the right hon. Gentleman how he would fill up the gap of which he complains; he did not indicate to us whether he would like to see this done upon the lines of the Education Act of 1870—whether he would like to see the existing education supplemented by State aid locally applied, or State aid in the shape of Imperial grants. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman has sufficiently considered the grave difficulties which must confront any Government in dealing with secondary education. I am not here to-day to say it can never be dealt with, and I am not here to-day to say that the system which now exists is altogether satisfactory. But, when the right hon. Gentleman quotes Germany and other countries, and tells us with such facility of diction that that which exists now should be immediately improved, I do not think he dealt quite fairly with the question. Take the case of private adventure schools. Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to tell us that he is prepared to-morrow to inaugurate a system of examination, and generally to interfere with the private adventure schools in this country? I confess that, in my opinion, that would be a very hazardous step for us to take. At present we have no power of interference of that nature even with regard to primary schools. So far as I understand the Act of 1870, or the position of the Education Department, we have no right to interfere with any primary school in the country where teaching is going on; and I think it would be a very strong measure to take, with all your centralized force at Whitehall, if you were to inaugurate this new policy of interference with private adventure schools either as regards examination or registration. Now, the Government do not wish to enter any strong *non possumus* in regard to the matter urged upon them. With respect, for instance, to the schemes which are now in existence under the Charity Commission, I hold a strong opinion that the inspection and the examination of the schools is not that which it ought to be, and that some further system of inspection ought to be adopted. It is true that a system of inspection now exists, but it is of a very partial character. I think I stated the other day, in answer to a Question, that it is well known that the staff of the Charity Commission is pretty well occupied at present in the formation of schemes. [An hon. MEMBER: The inspection is not educational.] I am coming to that directly. I was saying that the staff of the Commission is now pretty well occupied in the formation of schemes, and that if they are to inspect the operation of schemes, it would be necessary for them to very largely increase their staff. There are two branches of this subject. The inspection of schemes is undoubtedly distinct from the examination of the quality of the teaching given in the schools. The question of examination is a matter which requires very serious consideration, and I can only say, on behalf of the Government, that in principle I approve that examination. I will say, however, that I will give the matter further consideration with the view, if possible, of establishing something of the kind; but with regard to the former branch of the subject, I would not like to make the same pledge. I think, however, that the House has every claim upon the Government, both as regards the inspection of schemes and the examination of the actual work, good or ill from an educational point of view, which is being carried out. I am quite willing, in that spirit at all events, to accept the remarks which have been made by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Then it may be said it is all very well to go so far, but why not go a little farther and deal with the private adventure and other schools? But that is a matter which requires the very gravest and widest consideration. I, personally, am not prepared to adopt any such system as active interference with these schools; I believe you will promote the strongest hostility if you endeavour to carry out such a system. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] That is, however, my opinion; but I am open, of course, to conviction. With regard to the very schemes which are from day to day being framed, there is an intense local jealousy in the dealing with endowments. That is the great practical difficulty you have to deal with in this matter. Take the scheme concerning which Motions were put down week after week not long ago—namely, the Hitchin scheme. That scheme is a sample of the difficulties which meet any Government which attempts to deal with secondary education in the sense of utilizing, to the utmost extent, all local funds and capabilities, for, after all, that is the practical way of approaching the subject. We are not going to throw over the labours of the Commission, and still less are we going to snub or check voluntary effort with regard to secondary education. We must bring all our forces to bear upon the work. Now, what was this Hitchin scheme which I have mentioned? If ever there was a scheme framed by the Charity Commission which was to be supported on grounds of equity and common sense, and which could be said to be strictly within the four corners of the Endowed Schools Act, it was this Hitchin scheme. What did it propose to do? Among other things, it dealt with a small charity in a small village outside Hitchin. This village had 187 inhabitants in all, it had a good elementary school, and was well endowed both as regards charities, and, I think, there was also a payment to the vicar. The village was certainly more handsomely dealt with than any other village in the Kingdom. The scheme proposed to deal with the surplus fund, the fund which could not be utilised in the village, the endowment was so rich. When it was proposed that in aid of a large scheme for an excellent grammar school in the town of Hitchin close by, where the inhabitants had subscribed £3,000, £100 per annum should be appropriated as a scholarship fund for competition among the elementary school children, as a matter of fact, the scheme was opposed in the House of Lords, and no less than three hostile Amendments have been at different times placed on the Notice Paper of the House of Commons. I merely point this out as an instance, and I think it is a very fair and just instance, to show the huge difficulty any Government will have if it attempts to deal, in a practical way, with the great question of education. I do not propose to detain the House much longer; but I must say a few words in regard to a matter which has been dealt with at length very eloquently by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for

Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), and that is the question of the appointment of a Minister of Education. The right hon. Gentleman has suggested the appointment of a Minister of Education, who would supervize the whole of our educational machinery; but I did not gather from his remarks what the precise functions of this Minister were to be as regards our primary instruction, secondary instruction, and University instruction. It does strike one that this is a retrograde step in the present day. The whole of our present legislation is tending surely rather in a decentralizing than in a centralizing direction. All the Bills in regard to technical, commercial, and other instruction which we have been discussing have been essentially permissive in their character, and their object has been to allow localities to deal with this question with as much freedom and as little State interference as possible. The evidence which was given before the Committee of 1884, in regard to the appointment of a Minister of Education, was not at all conclusive. It is perfectly true that, in the Report, a strong recommendation was made in the direction of the appointment of a Minister of Education; but I can quote a witness whom hon. Members opposite will be prepared to listen to, I am sure, with great respect. Lord Granville, speaking, after eight years' experience as Lord President of the Council, once said he thought the present arrangement was a very good one, and that he did not know of any other arrangement which would give more weight to the Department in the Cabinet or in the Houses of Parliament. It seems to me that the time has practically gone by for any such step as that now proposed. I should like to ask the House whether, if this Minister is appointed, his functions are to extend over Ireland and Scotland? The strongest evidence was given before the Committee of 1884, by the late Mr. Forster, against any interference by such a Minister with Irish education; and, as regards Scotland, we have already had to-night an earnest protest from the hon. Member for West Fifeshire (Mr. Preston Bruce) against any interference by such a Minister with Scotch education. Is it proposed by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley) that this Minister of Education should be appointed for England? If that be the proposal, surely it is perfectly natural that a claim and demand must at once be made for such a Minister for Ireland and for Scotland. It certainly does not appear to me that the proposal is one which can be entertained in the present day; indeed, so far as I am concerned, I would rather fall back upon the opinion of Lord Granville. I believe honestly that, on the whole, the present system is the best system that can be adopted to meet the educational wants of the country. In the Committee of 1884 Mr. Forster was again and again asked whether, when he carried the Act of 1870, he could have carried a better Act if he had been Minister of Education only, or whether the present system was not the best? The highest evidence was given that when the Bill of 1870 was carried the constant communication with the Lord President of the Council, and the system then adopted, and continued now, was the best, on the whole, that could be adopted in regard to the interests of education. I am afraid that I have not altogether satisfied hon. Members in regard to the Motion. My chief complaint against the Motion is on account of its indefinite character; it might bind the Government very little, or it might bind them a great deal. It is vague in its terms, and, while it contains much with which I personally sympathize, yet, on behalf of the Government, I feel bound to say that we cannot give our assent to the Motion.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman did not suppose that the mover and seconder of the Motion complained in any way of Her Majesty's Government in their speeches, or that there was any intention to make such a complaint in the Resolution placed before the House—[Sir William Hart Dyke: Oh, no!]—because the right hon. Gentleman asked his right hon. Friend why something was not done by the last Government, or why they did not make more progress with the subject. Now, as he (Mr. Mundella) was the responsible Minister for educational matters from the year 1880 to 1885, he might frankly say that he held the views then that he held now, and he so urged his views on the then Government that every year some considerable progress was made. Advances were made that the right hon. Gentleman had failed to recognise in his speech. He had no desire to make comparisons between what had been done by this Government or that—it was a question of too much national importance, and should be dealt with apart from any Party recriminations. Still, he might say that he succeeded in securing from his Colleagues as much, or more, than any Minister of the Educational Department. A great Bill was passed dealing with the endowed schools for Scotland, and a ystem for dealing with, not only the public and endowed schools of Scotland, but private schools was arranged before he left Office. He held an inquiry into the position of Intermediate Education in Wales, and introduced a Bill which, if the Government had not been turned out of Office, they would have carried, and for which a promise of £14,000 was made by the Treasury, and he trusted that Treasury promise still stood good to this day, and would stand good until a scheme of Intermediate Education for Wales came into operation. Much more was done, of which he did not wish to talk, but would keep to what the House had before it at the moment. The right hon. Gentleman made a strange and new protest against the appointment of a Minister of Education. He said the day had gone by for the appointment of such an official; he said he did not at all see why such a Minister should be appointed for England or Scotland, or what he would find to do. Setting Scotland apart, there was a population of 27,000,000 in England and Wales, and the lamentable defects that existed in the educational system for this population would supply ample occupation for such a Minister. Was not the right hon. Gentleman Vice President of the Council for England and Wales? Was there not a Secretary and Vice President for Scotland; and was not the Lord President the Minister over both and final resort in both cases? What would be the difference in the position of a Minister of Education, except that, instead of being President of the Council, President of the Department of Agriculture, with work increasing year by year, President of the Endowments Commission, besides all the duties in connection with the Court of Council, you would have a real Minister of Education to take his place in the Cabinet and see that Education was dealt with in a proper manner. The right hon. Gentleman quoted the late Mr. Forster; but he seemed to have forgotten that Mr. Forster gave evidence before a Committee in favour of a Minister of Education, and in 1874 he seconded the Motion of the right hon. Member for Leeds for the appointment of a Minister of Education, and to his dying day Mr. Forster was a strong advocate for a Minister of Education, as he (Mr. Mundella) had good reason to know. It was a little surprising that the right hon. Gentleman (Sir William Hart Dyke) should make the statement he did make, for did he not, on April 21, 1887, agree with the unanimous Report of the Commission of which he was a Member, part of which ran in these terms—

> "The responsibilities of the Commission (that is the Charity Commission) should be clearly defined and made complete. This might be readily accomplished by carrying into effect the recommendations of the Commission of 1884, that a responsible Minister of Education should be appointed, and should be charged with the general supervision of endowed schools."

He thought the right hon. Gentleman was the first Vice President of the Council who was not in favour of a Minister of Education. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) who sat near him had always been strongly in favour of it, and advocated it very effectively in his evidence before the Commission. The question what such a Minister would find to do might be dismissed, for it was only necessary to look around at the condition of education in England and Wales and find that there was work enough. He agreed with the excellent speech of the hon. Member for West Fife (Mr. Preston Bruce), and always welcomed an educational speech from him; they were always of value, and went straight to the point, and the hon. Member had put good work on the Statute Book in respect to Scotland. He agreed with the hon. Member that there ought to be no attempt on the part of any Minister of Education to produce uniformity in the educational system throughout the country. Scotland should have its own system under the control of its own Minister, and he would go further, and say that Wales should have its own system adapted to its requirements. There was no reason why Wales should not be put in an equally good position, and the Bill he introduced provided for the appointment of a Council for the supervision of Endowed schools, placing them under Local Authority. He rejoiced that the Local Government Bill would afford facilities for dealing with this question through and by means of local authorities. The local Councils should be brought more in touch with the education question, and should take a really active part in the intermediate education of the counties. He would like to see them exercising much more control over endowments, not that this control should be entirely centralized. His right hon. Friend (Mr. John Morley) spoke strongly against the French system as a bad drill and barrack system, and he spoke strongly in favour of the development of national life in our country districts. In that there would be general agreement. He was very glad indeed to find that the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council agreed that there ought to be some inspection of Endowed schools. For years the Charity Commissioners had made reports again and again in that direction. The Commissioners framed schemes; those schemes passed from their hands, and practically they did not know what became of the schemes afterwards. They were now sending some Sub-Commissioners to ascertain if certain schemes were being carried out, but he had before him the Report of the Commissioners for 1882, which had impressed itself strongly on his mind. The Commissioners spoke of having dealt with schemes amounting in the aggregate to £471,000 a-year, and that 22 years ago it was estimated that the amount they had to deal with was £660,000. Then they went on to say—

> "Judging from occasional opportunities of observation afforded to us in the course of ordinary business under the Charitable Trusts Act, we are led to believe that in many instances they are disregarded (that is the schemes). We know of no means for securing their due execution except by the creation of some system of periodical inspection of Endowed schools as we have already advocated in previous reports."

They went on again to advocate the inspection of Endowed schools, for they had too much reason to fear that schemes were not being carried out. What had happened in regard to that? He framed a Bill to carry out a system of inspection, but afterwards attention was called to the subject in the House of Lords, and on that occasion the noble Marquess the present Prime Minister (the Marquess of Salisbury) denounced—with all that force of sarcasm and invective of which he was such a master, the audacity of—the men who dared to propose to interfere with the working of Endowed schools. After hearing that speech of the Marquess of Salisbury, he met the then Chief Charity Commissioner, Sir Seymour Fitzgerald, who also had heard the speech, and remembered his expression of regret at it. After that he (Mr. Mundella) knew it would be impossible to carry through the House of Lords any measure for the inspection of Endowed schools, and was obliged to drop it. He was glad, however, to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President speak in favour of such an inspection. On those schools mainly rested middle class education in the country. Enormous progress had been made under the Endowed Schools Act since 1885, and that in the face of great difficulties and the fiercest opposition. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) would forgive him if he referred to one scheme which at the outset of the Act nearly wrecked the Commission and the Government too; he referred to the Emanuel School at Westminster. The right hon. Gentleman was one of the strongest opponents of that scheme, but he could now appeal to him and ask could there have been a more beneficent change? Every Governor of that school had told him that the opposition to the scheme was one of the greatest mistakes, and to-day the school was doing noble work in the City the right hon. Gentleman so worthily represented. Elsewhere the same thing had happened. There was the Hitchin scheme, which had passed through both Houses, opposition to it in the other House being defeated, and it only awaited the Royal assent to become law. But then there was a great scheme like that for dealing with Christ's Hospital, for years on the anvil, and was now tossed to and fro and pulled to pieces again and again and again. And whence came the opposition to it? From vested interests, local prejudice, and stupid obscurantism. There was money enough to educate three or four times as many students as now attended the schools and to do the work better, but the scheme was delayed because there was a want of force behind the Charity Commission to carry it through. Associated as he had been with those Commissioners, he could testify to the admirable work they had done. Often he had heard them criticized and abused, and often he had defended them, and, take them for all in all, no public body in the country had done better service to the cause of education than the Charity Commissioners. But let not the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President suppose that when a system of inspection of Endowed schools was established, then all would be done that could be done. Inspection would have the very best effect on schools at work, but it would not plant new schools where now there were none. Manchester, Birmingham, and Bristol were the only three provincial towns that had anything approaching a fair supply of secondary education; and he believed the hon. Members for Birmingham would say that that town had not enough, but there were great towns in the North, numbers of them, with scarcely any endowments or any means of secondary education. Inspection would not fill up these gaps. Many parts of London, too, were as badly off. The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President complained that the speeches in support of the Motion were vague, but he (Mr. Mundella) did not think so. He thought his hon. Friend was specific in his language. He quoted the German system, and he said where there were vacancies, provision must be made to fill them. He said money would be wanted as well as inspection, and no Government would be fulfilling its duty that did not make an attempt to meet the wants of the community with respect to secondary education. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Surely you would not venture to propose to inspect voluntary schools, private adventure schools."

But did he not know that in Scotland that was being done to-day?

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE: Where it is asked for.

Mr. MUNDELLA: The demand was made, and the schools could not live without it.

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not think for a moment that he was opposed to such inspection where it was asked for. He was speaking of cases where it might be objected to.

Mr. MUNDELLA was glad to find the right hon. Gentleman had advanced thus far. In Scotland there was a very different state of things to that in England and Wales—["Hear, hear!"]. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) acknowledged that with a cheer. In this country we wanted that legislation that had been promised to put the country on an equality with Scotland, nor would he be content until that was obtained. Was it not a fact that all over Scotland there were what were called public schools—they were not called elementary schools—Scotchmen would resent that—they were public schools for education at the public expense, with grants from the National Exchequer, and whence young men were sent up to the Universities direct in hundreds every year? There were some 25 or 26 High Schools throughout Scotland—at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and elsewhere—all under the School Board, all maintained by the aid of rates, and all inspected at the expense of the National Exchequer. Was not an Endowments Act for Scotland passed, and in six years the Commission had dealt with all the endowments in Scotland, and splendid work they had done? A clause was inserted in that Act that every Endowed school should be inspected, and every such school was being inspected annually. And with what result? He wished there was time to go into that question. Professor Crystal, in reference to the first examination, put the facts clearly, indicating the mischiefs that came from long neglect of inspection, and the good that would come from the system. That was what was wanted in England. England had vast educational endowments—estimated 20 years ago at £660,000 a year—applicable to secondary education, and which to-day would be worth £1,000,000 sterling, and this £1,000,000 should be turned to the very best possible account. There should be no longer such opposition as was offered to the Christ's Hospital scheme, and other great schemes; they should all be brought under public control. Wherever there was a gap in the supply, that should be filled up. Let it be obligatory upon the new County Councils to fill up such deficiencies, and complete the educational system connecting elementary with secondary education. But the blackest spot in our whole educational system was Wales. It was a scandal and disgrace, and words could not adequately describe how bad things were there. Instead of 16,000 youths attending secondary schools in Wales, Lord Aberdare and his Colleagues pointed out there were not more than 1,600 scholars attending secondary schools there. This was from no want of appreciation of the advantages of education on the part of Welsh parents. The Welsh people had made great efforts, and subscriptions among all classes, including quarrymen, miners, and others, varying in amount from 2*s*. 6*d*. to £5, had established three University Colleges. But they could not establish a system of Intermediate Education; they must wait for the Government to do that, and they had waited for three years. The Government need not ask what plan was proposed; the scheme was in the Council Office, and when the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President came into Office, it was on the Table of the House, and the Treasury had promised the money. All that was required was for the Government to reproduce that plan and send it to a Committee Upstairs to work out the details. It was to be regretted that a debate of this kind should be relegated to the fag end of the last day of the week, and he deplored that only four hours should be devoted to it. He had trespassed so often on the House with this subject, and should probably often ask the indulgence again, that he would now make way for someone else. But, before sitting down, he would ask hon. Members not to sneer at the German system. When the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington stood up and described the German military system, the House listened with breathless attention. Attention was always paid to the German military system, why not to their educational system? Not long since he (Mr. Mundella) had the pleasure of a conversation with that most distinguished man, Professor Hoffman, to whom the afflicted German Emperor sent a patent of nobility on his birthday. Professor Hoffman said—

> "Whatever we Germans are in arms, in arts, or in commerce, we have accomplished it all by our educational system."

He further said, in answer to questions, that he sent his four sons to a school in the town, and their education cost 25 marks a-quarter, or £5 a-year each. With a smile and shrug of the shoulders, the Professor added that their education was a great deal better than that given at English public schools. The Germans had by their system made education good and cheap and acceptable to all classes of the community. One of the noblest State documents of modern times was that letter the Emperor, on ascending the Throne, addressed to Prince Bismarck, in which he said—

> "After all we have done, we must still do more for higher education. We must make higher education accessible to the whole population."

Why should the English people stand lower in this respect than the Germans, or any other nation? The quality of English brains was as good, if not better, than that of any nation in the world. It was only opportunity that was wanting, and that we should never have without organization. Voluntary effort was of no use in this case; organization was required, that the work might be taken up by local authorities on the best and most useful lines laid down by the State.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, that though the hour was late he hoped he might be allowed to make a few observations on the subject to which he had given much attention, though he had not had the opportunity of speaking upon it in the House. A debt of gratitude was due to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), who seconded the Resolution, for the manner in which he had imparted a higher tone to the subject than that in which it had been often treated. He (Mr. F. S. Powell) confessed he was somewhat weary of what might be described as the bread and butter view of the subject, looking at it simply from the breadwinners' point of view. Such had been the view in the United States; but the United States had not ceased fighting with the wilderness, and were not in the position to give their people that higher culture and more elevated tone to which our own people ought to rise. He desired to call the attention of his right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) to the want of information which existed in regard to middle-class education. There was a Report of the Schools' Enquiry Commission nearly 20 years ago, but since that time the public had had no information of a reliable character on the subject. He had endeavoured, in connection with clerical movements, and also in reference to efforts of a more strictly secular character, to obtain information, but all those endeavours had failed, because those schools which most required examination entirely declined to submit to inspection. Where inspection was most wanted it was not conceded. He hoped the Government would cause some further inquiries to be made, because, until the House had the facts before it, it could not deal with the circumstances or apply the remedy which ought to be applied. In the course of the debate he had been struck with the fact that hon. Members had referred somewhat too much to past events. Progress had been made in the course of the last 10 years, and he did not think that sufficient attention was given to the advance which had taken place. Some reference had been made to the want of inspection by the Endowed Schools Commissioners; but he did not think it had been sufficiently borne in mind that all the schemes of the Endowed School Commissioners now imposed upon the Government bodies the duty of holding an examination every year, and of sending to the Commissioners a Report of the result of that examination. Such being the case, it was in the power of Parliament to require from every school an annual statement respecting the results of the examinations. He had been glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Seconder of the Resolution, and also the hon. Gentleman the Mover, speak of the essential importance, with a view to technical education, of elementary education. There seemed to be an opinion in some quarters that technical education could be given to a young person who was ignorant of the rudiments of learning. The only possible method of giving technical education which was to be of any real use, was to lay the superstructure of technical education upon the sound foundation of elementary knowledge. He had intended to address the House upon some other points; but he feared that the hour was very late, and would therefore refrain from making any further observations, and on that occasion would not do more than thank the House for the patience with which they had listened to the remarks which he had made.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) said, he had been sorry not to hear anything more encouraging from the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke), but hoped he had rightly understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that Her Majesty's Government would grant certain assistance to the University Colleges. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of Universities, but he (Sir John Lubbock) supposed that was merely a *lapsus linguæ*, and that he meant University Colleges.

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE: Yes. Colleges.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK said, that since 1880 a great deal had happened, and the Committee which sat in 1883 went into the whole question at considerable length, and gave many reasons why it would be extremely desirable to appoint a Minister of Education. When the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council said the Committee of 1883 merely gave an indication of a wish for the appointment of a Minister for Education, he must have forgotten the words of the Report, for the recommendation was as plain and distinct as anything could be. It was clear the Committee were strongly in favour of the appointment of such a Minister, and the Report even went the length of pointing out what his duties should be. The Committee said that a Minister of Education should be authorized, with respect to public schools, to call for Reports and information from time to time, and that with regard to Endowed Schools, it was desirable not only to have good schemes, but to see that those schemes were kept in good working order. This did not necessarily mean that the Minister for Education was to interfere with the working of the schools. The Committee also thought that with regard to the Universities which received grants, information might be given annually to Parliament, and that the miscellaneous grants for science and art should be under the control of some responsible Minister. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) had remarked that the great progress of Germany in commerce was very much owing to the education which the people received. He (Sir John Lubbock) might point out that recently the Chambers of Commerce considered the question of appointment of a Minister for Education, and passed a unanimous Resolution in support of the proposal. He hoped the Government would give the question their attention from a commercial point of view, as well as from the other standpoints which had been put before the House.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he did not desire to occupy the attention of the House long. In the first place, he wished to return thanks to the hon. Member the Mover, and to the right hon. Gentleman the Seconder, of the Motion, for the very kindly manner in which they had dealt with the subject. They had both entirely divested it of anything approaching a Party character, while at the same time insisting upon the primary importance of education to all Parties in the country. The Government most cordially approved of, and concurred in, the spirit of the speeches of the Mover and Seconder of the Motion, in every sense of the word. It must, however, be remembered that the Resolution was of a somewhat abstract character, and the Government, therefore, desired to reserve a certain amount of liberty in interpreting it. Ministers, of course, felt that they had a responsibility to the House and to the country which was greater than that of Gentlemen who introduced propositions of this kind for the consideration of the House. His right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) had stated, on behalf of the Government, that they did recognize the importance of at least one of the propositions contained in the Resolution, and the speeches which had been delivered in support of it. They recognized the importance and the necessity for the inspection of Endowed schools after the schemes of the Endowed Schools Commissioners had been laid on the Table of that House and had taken effect. The Government felt that the course which had been pursued in Scotland was one which might with very great advantage be followed in England, and that steps ought to be taken for securing that the intentions with which those schemes were drawn up should be properly observed and carried out. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) went somewhat beyond that, and insisted upon the necessity for the appointment of a Minister of Education. Well, it might be said that at the present moment there were two Ministers for Education, the Lord President of the Council and his right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) did not contend that the present system was by any means perfect. He did not exclude the matter from the consideration of the Government; but he might be allowed, perhaps, to be somewhat sceptical as to the important advantages which it was supposed were always to be derived from the action of a Minister. He had noticed, both in that House and in the country, that if there was any body of gentlemen who were much in earnest in promoting any reform, they generally wanted to obtain official assistance. He regarded as of much greater value than official assistance, the effect of public opinion and that self-reliance for which Englishmen had usually been distinguished, and as being much more likely to furnish the force which was necessary to impel and move forward affairs in regard to education, as well as with reference to many other matters of the same character. He acknowledged, however, that it was the duty of the Government to ascertain for themselves whether the system at present existing was one which was, on the whole, the best calculated to secure the result which all desired to see attained. He was perfectly willing on behalf of the Government to undertake that the matter should be carefully reconsidered, with a view to seeing whether they could better arrange the supervision of education so as to preserve the characteristics of English education—namely, that independence which they all prided themselves upon, and the absence of that cast-iron system which prevailed in some countries, and which pressed all children into the same mould, apparently with the object of producing the same results. He thought this country had much to be proud of in the system of education now prevailing in it, and in the very valuable results produced. With respect to what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella), he thought it would be a very great misfortune if any attempt were made to distribute endowments, as the distribution of endowments would give the greatest possible discouragement to those who, even in the present day, were willing to bestow their wealth in the endowment of objects in which they took geat interest. If Parliament insisted upon distributing endowments in a manner altogether foreign to the intention of the donors, he thought no greater discouragement could be given to the proper application of endowments. He wished to draw attention to the fact that there had been a certain amount of discrepancy between the speeches of some hon. Gentlemen who had, he believed, precisely the same object in view. He believed his right hon. Friend opposite was of opinion that it was not necessary to call on the State for any large contribution towards secondary education. He thought that also was probably the view of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. This did not, however, appear to be the view of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) should be very reluctant to find that there was any desire on the part of that House or of the country that the Government should give a large contribution towards secondary education. He did not believe it was necessary. He believed, also, that it would tend directly to check that liberty which prevailed among private individuals at the present time, and who could be relied upon to supply the necessary support to secondary schools wherever such schools were wanted. The Government admitted the expediency and the duty on the part of the State of providing for the extension of Endowed schools. They admitted that the benefits conferred by those schools should be extended, if the managers of such schools were willing to teach other secondary schools which were ready to avail themselves of them. The Government were willing that the system which prevailed in Scotland should be extended to England, and they were also willing to consider whether they could place the administration of the Education Department in a position which was more in conformity with the views of those who were called educational reformers than that which it at present occupied. He could not, however, enter into an engagement with the House that a so-called Minister of Education should replace the President of the Council and the Vice President of the Council for Education; all he could say was that the Government were thoroughly in sympathy with all those who desired that the education of the country should be supervised and directed in the best possible way, but at the same time in such a manner as to leave the most complete liberty to the managers of schools to conduct their own affairs as they might think best, and to secure the education which was regarded as most suitable for their children. Under the circumstances, he hoped the hon. Gentleman the Mover of the Motion would not think it necessary to press it to a Division.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON (Lancashire, Rossendale) said, that as his hon. Friend the Member for the Rotherham Division of the West Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. A. Dyke Acland) had to a certain extent brought forward his Motion in connection with an Association for the promotion of secondary education with which he (The Marquess of Hartington) was connected, and as he took great interest in the object of that Association, he thought he might be allowed to say a few words. He believed that his hon. Friend might be extremely satisfied with the character of the discussion which he had originated. No doubt his hon. Friend had not obtained from the Government all the assurances and all the encouragement which might be desired; but it was tolerably evident, from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart-Dyke) that the particular aspects of the question which had been brought forward that evening had not recently engaged the very serious attention of the Government. This was not at all to be wondered at, considering the very arduous duties which the Government had to undertake in other directions; but whatever the reason, it was pretty clear that Ministers had not recently been deeply considering the question of secondary education in this country. The important discussion which had taken place this evening must, however, have the effect of turning their attention to the subject; and he thought the House might rely upon the promise which had just been given by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) that the views which had been brought forward would receive serious attention. He thought, also, it might be hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would endeavour to take some practical action in the direction indicated. He (the Marquess of Hartington) did not profess to be, in the smallest degree, an authority on educational questions. His attention had been solely directed to the subject in connection with that of technical education, and he had never attempted to look at the question from a high intellectual or moral standpoint. He had, however, been immensely impressed with the great importance of securing a good system of secondary education in connection with the necessity which, he believed, existed of keeping ourselves abreast of foreign countries in industry and commerce. He did not believe any Member of the Government would undertake to say that our secondary education at present was in a satisfactory position. It was not the business of any Member of the Government to do so; and any Member of the Government who ventured to make such a declaration would be exceeding the limit of his duty. What had been contended on that—the Opposition—side of the House was not only that a more efficient administration of the Educational Department might be secured by the appointment of a Minister, who should be more directly responsible to Parliament, but that it should be the duty of such a Minister to have regard to the efficiency of the system of education, both secondary and primary, than was at present the case. He did not say that secondary education should not be provided by private enterprize; but he did say that some responsible Minister of Her Majesty's Government ought to be able to give to the House information as to the position in which such education stood, and to advise Parliament as to what ought to be done in regard to the matter. That was the view he and his Friends took on the subject; and it was not merely the appointment of a new Minister of State and the re-organization of the Office that they asked for. He hoped the Government would consider the question from this point of view. After what had been said, he trusted that his hon. Friend the Member for the Rotherham Division of Yorkshire would not think it necessary to place the Government in any apparent position of opposition to himself, when they themselves did not desire to take up such a position. He, therefore, hoped that the Motion would not be pressed to a Division.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) said, he thought he was expressing the views generally of those who sat on the Opposition side of the House, when he declared that the speeches of the two right hon. Gentlemen who had spoken on behalf of the Government had been thoroughly unsatisfactory. The right hon. Gentlemen had refused point blank to accede to the demand for the appointment of a Minister of Education. All the Government had promised was that the Technical Education Bill of last Session was to be introduced again. In his opinion, the Bill of last Session was unsatisfactory, as it met very few of the views advocated by hon. Members of the Opposition. He had another complaint to make respecting the statements of the two right hon. Gentlemen. Not a single word had the right hon. Gentlemen opposite spoken on the question of intermediate education in Wales. The Government had promised to deal with the question, and now that they had a chance of giving practical application to the generous and benevolent views they were supposed to entertain, they simply shelved the subject. The House was told that there was no time to deal with the larger question respecting England, that it was impossible to interfere with private schools, and that the time of the Government was so taken up with Imperial Business that they could not devote much attention to the question of intermediate education in Wales. But there was really not a shred of excuse for the neglect of this subject by the Government, because there was a Bill now in the Education Department which met the wants of Wales on the subject. The Chancellor of the Exchequer of the last Government gave his assent to the spending of a certain amount of Imperial money in order to meet the expense of increasing intermediate education in Wales; and the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had, therefore, a golden opportunity to give practical effect to his sentiments respecting education. The demand was made by the Welsh Members on no Party grounds whatever. They simply asked the Government to bring the Bill forward as an experiment in the direction of the re-organization of secondary education. Wales was a comparatively small part of the Kingdom, and it was distinct in its needs and circumstances and conditions. It was a part of the country which was sincerely anxious to deal with the question of education, and which had made many sacrifices in order to obtain education. There was a Bill on the subject ready to bring before Parliament. That Bill had been fully considered by the country, and its main principles had had the attention of Welsh Members on both sides of the House. Under those circumstances, he asked the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to give the House a definite and specific undertaking that the Bill should be introduced without delay.

It being One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House, without Question put, till *Monday* next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 30*th April*, 1888.

MINUTES.] — Select Committee — High Sheriffs, Lord Inchiquin *added*.

Public Bills — *Second Reading* — Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, Amendment * (68).

Select Committee—Land Transfer * (21), *nominated*.

Royal Assent—Metropolitan Board of Works Commission [51 *Vict*. c. 3].

IRISH PUBLIC WORKS—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord MONTEAGLE of BRANDON, in rising to call attention to the First and Second Reports of the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works; and to ask, Whether Her Majesty's Government propose to take any steps during this Session to carry out its recommendations, especially those not involving legislation? said, his object in doing so was to endeavour to reinforce and to further the policy with regard to Irish public works which was laid down in the recommendations contained in those Reports. The question of encouraging public works in Ireland had frequently been brought under the notice of Parliament, and various attempts had been made from time to time to carry into effect the different proposals which had been made on the subject. He did not propose to detain the House with a long historical review of what had been done in past times in reference to those works; but he might say that nearly 50 years ago a great opportunity was lost for carrying out large improvements in the country by means of public works. In the year 1836 a Commission was appointed by the Liberal or Whig Party then in power for considering the question of railway development in Ireland. Their Report on the main lines was very similar to the one now before the House; but, unfortunately, when the Report of that Commission came up and the question was brought before Parliament in a substantive shape, the Bill which passed through the House of Commons was rejected in this House by the Conservative Party of that day. He could not refrain from saying that it was a happy augury that the initiative which then came from the Liberal Party, now came from the Conservative Party with the same object, showing that the subject was regarded as one of a non-Party character. Nothing further was done until certain Bills were brought forward in 1883 by the noble Earl (Earl Spencer) who was then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whom he now begged to thank for his action in the matter. The great public interest that was taken in reference to this subject in Ireland was shown by the fact that a large number of copies of these Reports had been sold in that country, and he hoped that Her Majesty's Government would use every despatch in giving some tangible shape to the recommendations of the Commission. The questions with which the Commission had to deal were eminently practical ones, while the Commissioners themselves were experts, and the conclusions at which they unanimously arrived were of an extremely comprehensive and practical character. The main conclusions at which the Commissioners arrived were based upon the principle that the time had arrived when the Government was bound to take the initiative, and not only to assist the movement by means of money, but also by counsel and advice. The first question to be dealt with was that of arterial drainage, and upon this point the Commissioners had made a recommendation that would relieve the different localities from all the expense and responsibility of the initial survey and preliminary engineering. This subject was of considerable importance, and the noble Earl (Earl Cadogan) would probably be able to tell them whether Her Majesty's Government had undertaken any of these preliminary surveys at present, and what surveys were to be made in the future. They further recommended that a Conservancy Authority should be appointed in Ireland similar in its character to those which had been recommended for England. As a preliminary survey of the country would not involve any legislative action, he trusted that Her Majesty's Government would see their way to accepting the proposal of the Commissioners upon the point. He understood that Bills were in course of preparation in "another place" to deal with the three great rivers—the Shannon, the Barrow, and the Bann—which were not capable of treatment by the Local Authorities; but no mention had been made of the very important schemes of arterial drainage which had already been commenced and partly carried out—namely, the Suck and the Erne. He hoped that when dealing with the other three rivers the Government would also see their way to include the two he had mentioned in the scope of their measures, and to help those who had helped themselves. One of the most important objects, he should like to remind the House, which the noble Earl had in view in promoting public works in Ireland, was the relief of the congested districts in the West. But this matter of arterial drainage would not touch in the slightest degree the distress of the West. With regard to the development of the deep-sea fisheries, he might remark that harbours constructed for fishing purposes could not be expected in certain localities to become remunerative until after the lapse of a great many years. Therefore, he thought there was a strong case for assistance to harbour works by means of State grants. He would also suggest to Her Majesty's Government the expediency of giving effect to the recommendation of the Commissioners that the fishing grounds should be surveyed by one of Her Majesty's ships ordinarily employed in taking surveys for hydrographical purposes. In many places there were good harbours which afforded ample protection to fishing-boats, but which could not be safely approached at all by night and hardly by day, except by men who were thoroughly acquainted with the coast, in consequence of there being no lights or buoys. The comparatively small sum of £10,000 or £20,000 expended in lighting and buoying would effect an enormous improvement in those respects, and would enable fishing-boats to use the harbours. Any measures for developing Deep Sea Fisheries would also do much to relieve distress in the West. With respect to the question of railways, there could be no doubt that the construction of such works in Ireland would have the effect of greatly relieving the distress that prevailed so extensively, and would unquestionably do a great deal of good. He was strongly in favour of the amalgamation of the Irish railways; but as that subject involved the important question of policy of the State purchase of railways, he did not propose to go into it at the present time. The appointment of a separate Railway Board for Ireland was strongly recommended by the Commissioners, and he was of opinion that the appointment of such a separate tribunal for Ireland would be much more advantageous than the existing Railway Commission as amended by the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill. If such a Board were appointed it could deal with the question of the fish traffic and railway rates generally. There was one question he should like to ask the noble Lord with respect to railway management, and that was whether the Board of Trade had power, in the interests of public safety, to insist upon the adoption of continuous brakes by Railway Companies? It was a great scandal that they should not be in use on some Irish railways.

LORD EMLY said, he had been asked by the Dublin Chamber of Commerce—a Body which, as there Lordships knew, represented the wealth and loyal intelligence of Ireland—to support the appeal made by his noble Friend to the noble Marquess. His noble Friend, in his able and exhaustive statement, had left him nothing to say on the first two recommendations of the Royal Commission presided over by Sir James Allport. He would, therefore, confine the few words he had to trouble their Lordships with to the third recommendation, which dealt with the Irish railway system. On that subject the Report had very special authority, as Sir James Allport was the highest authority in the United Kingdom on railway matters. The portions of the Report and evidence which dealt with Irish railways were not very pleasant reading. He did not think he used too strong language when he said that the system of their management was scandalous and disgraceful. The cost of their management was so great that the reduction of the working expenses of Irish railways to the Scotch proportion of 50 per cent on the gross receipts would produce an annual saving of £74,000 a-year. Their total receipts were under £3,000,000. There were 20 Boards of Directors and 313 Directors. The receipts of the Great Western Railway of England, with about the same as the Irish mileage, were about £5,000,000. It had one Board and 19 Directors, who administered a property representing £70,000,000 or £80,000,000 of capital. With short railways under different management, it could not be wondered at that there was a general complaint of the difficulty of obtaining through rates in Ireland. Certainly, in these cases too many cooks spoilt the broth. On some classes of goods the rates charged were so high as to be prohibitive of trade. First-class fares were higher than they were in England, and second-class fares so much higher than those on the best English lines that the excess in some cases ranged as high as 50 per cent. So little care was taken to develop third-class traffic that, while it had nearly tripled in the last 15 years in England, in Ireland it had made hardly any progress. The high prices, and the want of through rates he had described, affected especially the poorest parts of the country, which were the furthest removed from the English market. The facts he had mentioned were not new to anyone who had paid any attention to the subject. Twenty-three years ago he brought them before the House of Commons. It was no Party question, and his right hon. Friend the late Chief Justice Whiteside seconded him. They were supported by almost every Member connected with Ireland. His right hon. Friend Mr. Gladstone, Leader of the House under Lord Palmerston's Government, received their Motion with favour. He recollected he said that if any pecuniary boon were to be conferred on Ireland, in no way could that boon be conferred so comprehensive and effective in its application as some measure taken with the view to secure to Ireland the benefits of cheap railway transit. Lord Derby's Government came into Office, and his noble Friend the late Earl of Mayo, who was Chief Secretary for Ireland, vigorously took up railway reform, and had, he believed, when the Government of which he was a Member was turned out, almost matured a Bill for carrying it out. Since then, whether through want of time or apathy he could not say, no reform of any kind had been made. Now, as then, they had a system following the English model, but proved by disastrous experience to be utterly unsuited to Ireland. Could it be good policy to leave a grievance of so gigantic a character unredressed? Agitators and revolutionists would not touch such grievances. They were the sharpest weapons in their armoury. He had constant experience of their policy in another matter in which he took a deep interest. Their University system was the last relic left of the Penal Laws. While the minority had ample University endowments, there was not one Catholic endowed College from the Giant's Causeway to Cape Clear. When he had tried to remedy this strange and cruel anomaly, he met with no sympathy from that Party—far otherwise. But there was a large Party in Ireland, very Irish in feeling, not a little distrustful of what they called English rule, but utterly disgusted with the methods which had been recently used to overthrow it, who would be won over to the Constitutional cause if they saw the Imperial Government set earnestly to work to remove every real grievance, and to adapt Irish institutions to the character of the people and to the requirements of the country. He recognized fully the courage and the great abilities with which Mr. Balfour had restored the reign of law in those districts where it had been rudely shaken. He could give no greater blow to the enemies with whom he had been victoriously contending, and to the revolution they abetted, than by devoting that same courage and those same abilities to improving the material condition of Ireland and to removing those few moral and religious grievances which still remained unredressed. He earnestly hoped that, as a step in that direction, the noble Marquess would that night accept the suggestion of his noble Friend to carry out the recommendations of his own Commission.

THE EARL OF LEITRIM said, there was one point to which he desired to call attention. The noble Lord opposite had said that the Commission had entered upon their duties in a very comprehensive manner. But in his opinion the terms of Reference were not so comprehensive as they ought to have been. There was no doubt that all the small fishing piers built during the last 50 years on the West Coast of Ireland were much more used for commercial purposes than for the fisheries. He was supported in this opinion by Mr. O'Doherty, the Nationalist Member for North Donegal, who was better qualified to speak on the subject than almost any other man; by General Sankey's Memorandum, by the county surveyors of Galway and Donegal, and by Mr. Ernest Hart. Yet, whenever witnesses addressed themselves to this point, the Royal Commissioners informed them that they had nothing to do with commercial purposes. No doubt, objection might be taken to State interference in commercial questions, but it was certainly desirable that some comparison should be instituted with regard to the usefulness of these piers for commercial as opposed to fishing purposes. At a comparatively small cost these small piers might be greatly improved, both for general trade and for the fisheries, besides affording a refuge to fishermen in case of stormy weather. The Report stated that the general idea of the people was that railway extension was of secondary importance, the natural means of communication being the sea. Mr. Findlay, the manager of the London and North-Western Railway, expressed in his evidence his surprise as a railway man that all the traders and shopkeepers looked at the shipping interest as the main factor of Irish prosperity. It was in fact only by opening up the western seaports that the condition of the fringe of people behind the coast line could be much ameliorated. He used the term "fringe" advisedly, as the inland parts of Donegal and the western counties were wholly unimprovable and unproductive. Complaint had been made that the £250,000 had been frittered away on small piers. He did not join in that complaint, as it was absolutely necessary that a considerable number of small piers should be established to satisfy the wants of the Irish fishing population, and of a character to suit the boats in general use. Large piers also might be serviceable if brought into immediate connection with railways; and it might be also said that considerable sums had been thrown away in piers on the West Coast. But there was no doubt that these small piers had been extremely useful to the people. With regard to railways and tramways, he might say he entirely agreed with some evidence which he had been able to examine. He did not think that the grand juries would be the best authority to deal with it, because they were locally interested. There might be two claims before the grand jury, one from the northern part of the county and another from the south, and there would be a great temptation to vote for one scheme if a particular member agreed to vote for the other. He hoped the Government would steer clear of that. He had not gone into the Report at length, but had merely dealt with matters of which he had a personal knowledge.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, it would be quite impossible to go into details. He had a confident expectation that Her Majesty's Government would take up this question in a serious and practical spirit, and the reason he expressed that opinion was that the Royal Commission, which had now reported, had been appointed by the Government immediately after they took Office. The subjects brought before that Commission were most important for the material development of Ireland; and last year Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, when Chief Secretary for Ireland, gave a strong expression of opinion that the Government would do their best, and that before long some measure would be proposed to relieve the unfortunate inhabitants of the congested districts in Ireland. It was with reference to those districts he desired to speak. They deserved the attention of Parliament on historical grounds, for it was well known that the population of those districts were driven there by the English settlers, and it was pretty clear that neither the Land Act of 1870 nor that of 1881 had affected the congested districts. Both as regarded history and recent legislation there was a great demand for dealing with this question. There was also reason for urging it on, upon grounds of mere expediency, in the interests of the English taxpayer. If anyone looked into the Reports of the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, he would find no less a sum than £8,000,000 of public money, originally lent for various purposes, had been remitted. Where distress existed no Government could tolerate it without relieving that distress. Why, even within the last few years there had been Acts of Parliament for the purpose of giving relief to the congested districts in Ireland. Although throughout the whole of Ireland generally a great improvement had taken place in the last 40 years, yet that improvement had not extended to those parts of the country where the population were poorest, and the result was that in those districts, whenever the ordinary food of the people failed, not only did such distress arise as shocked the feelings of every Englishman, but extensive and illusive measures were hastily taken which left no good effect behind. That being the case with respect to the congested districts, surely it was right on the part of the Government that they should have on several occasions expressed their intention and desire to deal vigorously and comprehensively with this state of things. In doing so, they could not find any opposition from those who sat opposite them, whatever opinions these might hold upon other subjects connected with Ireland. The question came up during the Administration of Mr. Gladstone, of which he had the honour to be a Member, and in 1883, besides supporting a measure giving a large contribution to fisheries, Sir George Trevelyan deliberately took a new departure, and it was declared in the debate that in dealing with a poor country like Ireland it would be absurd to apply principles which had worked well enough in England, but nowhere else in Europe. By an Act which he introduced, rather curiously called the Tramways Act, the system of Government guarantee to railroads in Ireland was established for the first time. Besides that, which was the most important part of the Tramways Act, there were provisions for the formation of companies to buy up estates in the congested districts, and for the encouragement of emigration. Therefore, the principles upon which the Government might act in dealing with the congested districts had already been embodied to a certain extent in former Acts of Parliament. No two questions could be more important in this connection than those of fisheries and railroads. The fishing industry could not profitably be carried on off the West Coast unless the fish could be sent to some market regularly and quickly; while, as regards railways, it had been well pointed out that England was the only country in Europe where railways had been carried on without some assistance from the State in the shape of guarantees. In India the system of guaranteeing railways has been one of the most beneficient, far-sighted, and successful measures of the Indian Administration. He ventured to submit, however, that a direct system of Government guarantee should be introduced rather than the somewhat complicated plan of the Act of 1883, which had not worked satisfactorily. The result of that legislation had not been to benefit the very districts which the Government of that day intended to reach; only a few of the lines which had been made at all affecting the congested districts. He threw out that suggestion for the consideration of the Government as indicating a way in which it would be possible in connection with the existing railroad companies, to complete some, at any rate, of the most important lines of communication in Ireland to the congested districts. It was not well for an Englishman in giving an opinion upon any

Irish question to generalize. He believed different districts might require different measures; but, at any rate, he relied upon it that the Government were very sensible of the importance of this question, and they were considering the recommendations of the Commissioners, and above all things, that they would direct their most earnest efforts to remedying what was almost a scandal in the administration of the Sister Isle.

Earl SPENCER said, the question was one of great scope, dealing not only with the land but the rivers and lakes of Ireland and the seas which bound the coast. It was, therefore, not surprising that the subject should be taken up by their Lordships and discussed by many noble Lords who had a practical acquaintance with Ireland, and who, like the noble Earl opposite, had done a great deal towards developing the trade of the district in which they lived. He felt some diffidence in joining in the discussion, but he thought their Lordships would understand that anyone who had been for a long time in the position of Lord Lieutenant of that country must have been mixed up a great deal in all those difficult subjects, and that if he had evinced any real interest in the country he must have taken a deep interest in all the matters referred to. He did not propose, however, to go at length through all the matters dealt with in the Report. Any one of the subjects specified might with advantage occupy an evening's debate. Arterial drainage was of enormous importance, and had been discussed time after time in Parliament and had been dealt with in a great variety of ways. It was of the utmost importance to Ireland that they should arrive at sound principles in dealing with this subject. He did not think it would be right to go at length into the question now. No doubt the matter would be dealt with boldly and comprehensively, and if the Government produced any measure he should be glad to give it his attention. The fishery question was also of very great importance, affecting as it did the population of Ireland all round the coast. It would, however, be inconvenient to go into the matter now, because their Lordships had not yet received the evidence on which the Commissioners based their Report. He thought it was exceedingly inconvenient to discuss such a subject at any length on an important Report without having been able to study the evidence. The same remark applied to railways; no evidence with regard to that part of the question had been presented. He confessed that he was inclined to differ from the opinion of the Commissioners on certain points. There was the point referred to by the noble Earl (the Earl of Leitrim) with regard to the policy of the Commission which had charge of a grant from the Church Fund as to piers and harbours. He agreed with what the noble Earl said on that head. He thought the recommendation and the criticism of the Commissioners in that respect were open to very considerable objection. At the same time he should not like to make any lengthened statement about it without having the evidence produced which had led to the Report. It was only respectful to a Commission of such importance to consider the evidence before any criticism was made on the Report. Those remarks applied with greater force to the criticism which the Commissioners made on an Act passed in 1883. Sir George Trevelyan introduced that Act in "another place," and though from his position of Lord Lieutenant, he himself was not able to take any part in debate in Parliament with regard to that measure, he, at the same time, had taken the greatest interest in the preparation of the Act; indeed, he was to a great extent responsible for it. He had observed somewhat severe criticisms of the Commissioners, not only with regard to the framing of that Act, but also with reference to its administration. If he was responsible to a great extent for the framing of the Act, he was to a still greater degree responsible for its administration. He thought he had a most complete answer to the criticisms made by the Commissioners, both as to the policy of that Act and its administration. It would be better, however, to reserve what he had to say on those points until the evidence was produced which led the Commissioners to make those somewhat elaborate criticisms—almost attacks—on the policy and administration of the Act. It had been stated with great truth that when the Liberal Government introduced that measure they hoped to do a great deal towards developing and improving what were called the congested districts in

Ireland. That was a hope which he had personally entertained. He was responsible for the Act and the shape in which it was produced. At the same time, he might say that during the discussion before the Act was introduced he had to give way on various points, and the Act in its final shape, for which he was responsible, was not exactly such as he should have liked to see with regard to congested districts. It would, however, be inconvenient to go at length into the reasons why the Act had failed until they had the whole of the evidence before them. He admitted with great regret that the Act had not succeeded in those districts, and he greatly feared that it had not penetrated them on account of the immense difficulties resulting from the poverty of the people. Another opportunity would arise later on to go fully into these questions when the Government introduced a measure, as he understood they intended to do, with regard to these subjects. He was sure their Lordships would give any proposal of the Government the most careful consideration, and consider at the same time the opportuneness of them, and whether or not they were likely to succeed.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN) said, if he had anything to regret in connection with this important discussion it was the fact that it must be considered at this moment premature. It was true that the Report had been in the hands of their Lordships for a short time. The first Report of the Commission had been accompanied by the minutes of evidence; but with regard to the second Report, to which the greater part of the noble Lord's speech referred, their Lordships were not even in possession of the evidence upon which the Commissioners arrived at their conclusions. It was, therefore, impossible for him to enter into the large and important question which had been raised. In his view, the proper time for the Government to answer such a question as that put to them by the noble Lord was when they introduced a measure which it would be their duty to lay before Parliament at no distant day. On a recent occasion, in reply to a Question, he informed the House that, in accordance with the action taken by the Commissioners in dealing first in their Report with the subject of arterial drainage, and postponing the other and still larger question which had been referred to them, it was the intention of the Government to deal as soon as possible with the question of arterial drainage, and bring forward a measure in furtherance of the recommendations. He had now to state that his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland proposed to lay two Bills on the subject of arterial drainage in Ireland upon the Table of the House of Commons before the Whitsuntide Recess, and it was hoped that Parliament would at once be able to turn its attention to the matter, which involved a very important question. With regard to fisheries, harbours, the amalgamation of railways, Government gurantees for railways, and similar questions, those were matters which were under the serious and anxious consideration of Her Majesty's Government, and he hoped that the House would not accept that intimation in the somewhat limited extent which was generally applied to an official statement of that kind, because his right hon. Friend was carefully considering those questions, and he hoped, before any undue time elapsed, to lay before Parliament his proposals in connection with them. The Commissioners in their Report had deprecated undue haste in deciding upon matters of such great difficulty and uncertainty as those he had indicated; and he trusted their Lordships would not consider him wanting in courtesy in any respect if he declined on the present occasion to go at any length into the suggestions which had been made during the discussion. He could only say that the Government had been from the first alive to the enormous importance of the question of public works in Ireland, as was shown indeed by the fact that one of their first acts on coming into Office was to appoint this Commission. Nothing was nearer to their hearts than the wish to carry out to the full the recommendations of the Commission, many of which seemed to the Government such as they were prepared to recommend to Parliament. They would do so with as little delay as possible, and with an anxious desire to do all they could to promote the welfare and the prosperity of Ireland.

THE EARL OF HOWTH said, Ireland was the only civilized country in the world in which the sea fisheries had not been thoroughly considered. What he wanted to say and press clearly upon the noble Earl was, that the Government should take into earnest consideration the recommendations of the Report to have all the bays, seas, and fishing grounds of Ireland surveyed immediately and without delay on the same system as that which had been adopted with so much success in America, because it must be clear to their Lordships that it was idle to be talking about piers and harbours and other things, when the Minister of the day was not aware of the actual amount of fish that existed round the Irish coasts.

Lord MONTEAGLE of BRANDON asked, what was the nature of the legislation proposed by Her Majesty's Government?

Earl CADOGAN said, that the two Bills, which would be immediately introduced into the House of Commons, dealt with the drainage of the River Barrow and the River Bann.

Lord MONTEAGLE of BRANDON asked when the evidence upon which the second Report of the Commission was based would be circulated?

Earl CADOGAN said, he believed that it would be circulated among their Lordships very shortly.

Earl SPENCER asked, whether the Government intended before long to bring forward other measures dealing with Irish railways and fisheries?

Earl CADOGAN replied, that he could only say that those subjects were under the careful consideration of the Government. It was impossible to state when legislation with regard to them would be attempted.

ROADS AND BRIDGES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1878, AMENDMENT BILL—(No. 68.)

(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that in order to remove any objection to it, he would propose in Committee to omit from it all reference to counties.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

Lord BALFOUR said, that in consequence of the explanation of the noble Earl, he would not move the Motion which he had on the Paper to reject the Bill. At the same time, he must be allowed to say that the way in which the Bill had been drafted and introduced into the other House of Parliament was a conspicuous example of how a great amount of confusion could be produced from not having a sufficient amount of knowledge. The law as to the maintenance and making of new roads in counties and burghs was different, and the Bill had been drafted by a person knowing the matter as it affected burghs, and not as it affected counties. The Preamble of the Bill was essentially misleading. It did not at all lead anyone to see that two clauses of the Roads and Bridges Act would be affected by the Bill. In fact, it seemed to state that only one clause would be affected. The Bill was introduced into the House of Commons, and, so far as he could learn, was got through in the early hours of the morning without a single word of discussion.

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (The Marquess of Lothian) said, he had no objection to the passing of the Bill after the statement of the noble Earl (the Earl of Camperdown) that he was willing to withdraw the counties from its operation. He understood that the person who drew up the Bill put in the burghs, but that through some slip afterwards the word counties was introduced. By the Act of 1878, all new work in counties fell upon the owners alone, and under the same Act in burghs the assessment for new roads was levied both upon the owners and occupiers. If, however, the word counties was omitted, and the Bill referred only to burghs, he had no objection to it passing.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

LAND TRANSFER BILL. [H.L.]

Select Committee on; The Lords following were named of the Committee;

L. Chancellor.
E. Stanhope.
E. Milltown.
E. Morley.
E. Beauchamp.
E. Kimberley.
E. Feversham.
E. Northbrook.
E. Selborne.
L. Arundell of Wardour
L. Watson.
L. Hobhouse.
L. Esher.
L. Herschell.
L. Thring.

The Committee to meet on *Wednesday* next, at Four o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman: The petitions presented on the 27th of March and Friday last for amendment of the Bill *referred* to the Committee.

House adjourned at half-past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 30*th April*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—John Wynford Philipps, esquire, *for* the County of Lanark (Mid Division).

Select Committee—*Report*—House of Commons (Admission of Strangers) [No. 132].

Public Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Registration of Clubs * [232].

Second Reading—Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland [201]; Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) * [199]; Libel Law Amendment * [17]; Clerks of the Peace * [185].

Committee — *Report* — Customs and Inland Revenue * [202].

Considered as amended—Third Reading—Fishery Acts Amendment (Ireland) * [32], and *passed*.

Provisional Order Bills—*Second Reading*—Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 2) * [216]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 4) * [218].

QUESTIONS.

WAR OFFICE—MEDICAL OFFICERS IN HOSPITAL SHIPS—MEDALS, &c.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER (Sussex, Lewes) asked the Secretary of State for War, If it has been customary to grant medals, gratuities, and other rewards to the medical officers and establishments employed on board hospital ships in time of war; and, if it is the case that the medical officers who served on board hospital ships in the Abyssinian, Ashantee, Egyptian, and Soudan Campaigns received medals, including those who served on board the Indian hospital ship *Cesarewitch* at Suakin?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): My answer to both Questions is "Yes."

THE MAGISTRACY—THE CIRENCESTER BENCH—A FINE ON A LABOURER.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will inquire into the case of an agricultural labourer, named James Southam, aged 23, who was, on the 16th of April, charged by his employer, Henry Horton, a farmer, before the Cirencester Bench of Magistrates, with absenting himself from his work for one day, and was fined 5*s.*; whether his attention has been called to the evidence in this case, which showed that Southam's wages were only 8*s.* a-week, and that he had not had a day's holiday for 18 months; whether he is aware that, in addition to the fine of 5*s.*, his employer deducted 2*s.* 8*d.* from his wages for the time he was absent and for the time which was taken up in hearing the summons, making altogether only 4*d.* short of one week's wages; whether the employer stated that his object in taking proceedings was to show Southam that he could not go away without leave; and the Chairman of the Bench (Colonel Chester-Master) said that he might thank his master for letting him off so easily; and, whether he will make any recommendation to the magistrates as to the case?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a Report from the Justices of Cirencester as to this case, from which I learn that the defendant's work was to attend to the dairy and cattle, and owing to his absence for two days his master had to employ other persons. The defendant made no defence. He was not fined at all; but the magistrates assessed the damages at 2*s.*, and gave judgment for that sum with 3*s.* costs. I have no information as to the amount of this man's weekly wages, nor what, if any, deduction was made from them. The facts are as stated in the fourth paragraph. No proceedings have been taken to enforce payment of the magistrates' order; and I see no reason to interfere with their action in the matter.

POST OFFICE—PRINTED CIRCULARS OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES—POSTAGE.

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that printed Circulars issued by Friendly Societies to members in arrear of subscriptions are charged 1*d.* inland postage, whilst mercantile invoices of goods sold or sent are allowed to pass with ½*d.* inland postage; and, whether there is any good reason for this different rate of postage; and, if not, whether the Government will place the Circulars of Friendly Societies on a footing of equality with mercantile invoices?

Sir EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) also had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the Posmaster General, Whether, taking into consideration the fact that on the 25th of August last year, in answer to a Question relative to members of Friendly Societies having to pay 1*d.* postage on Circulars, and which, if enclosed in another paper, are charged only ½*d.*, and to his reply to the same, he can now see his way to remove the anomaly in the present practice?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): The Question standing in the name of the hon. Member for St. Rollox and that in the name of the hon. Member for East Norfolk relate to the same subject, and it will be well, perhaps, to answer them together. I would explain that the documents intimating arrears, &c., which, of course, vary in their details, do not come within the definition of "circulars," and are liable to the letter rate of postage. I have, however, for some time past had under consideration the claims brought before me on behalf of Friendly Societies by the hon. Members for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck) and South Islington (Sir Albert Rollit); and shall be very glad if I am able, without embarrassment to the Public Service, in any way to meet the views of those whom they represent. I understand that a Bill in some shape dealing with the subject has been brought in by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the London University (Sir John Lubbock), and an opportunity may, perhaps, arise for getting at the sense of the House on the matter.

Mr. CALDWELL said, the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the latter part of the Question, as to why the circulars of Friendly Societies should not be treated on a similar footing to mercantile invoices?

Mr. RAIKES said, no doubt the mercantile invoices were sent at a halfpenny postage; but two wrongs did not make a right.

Mr. CALDWELL: Then, will the right hon. Gentleman make both right?

INDIA—CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS —REPEAL.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House, Copies of the Correspondence which has taken place during the past 12 months between the India Office and the Government of India, with respect to the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts; and Copies of the documents on the subject transmitted to the India Office in connection with that Correspondence?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The despatch recently received from the Government of India on the subject of the Contagious Diseases Acts is now under the consideration of the Secretary of State in Council. As soon as that consideration is complete the despatch will be laid upon the Table, with other Papers upon the subject.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—FAIR RENTS, CO. WESTMEATH.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many fair rent applications from leaseholders and present tenants in the County of Westmeath still remain undisposed of; and, when will the Sub-Commission hold its next sitting in that county?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that the number of fair rent applications in the County Westmeath remaining unheard is—from leaseholders 395, and from yearly tenants 676. A Sub-Commission will, as at present arranged, sit in the county towards the end of June, to dispose of such of these cases as had been listed for hearing at the recent sitting in February and March, but which remained unheard at the termination of that sitting.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS—RETIREMENT.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he can state how many Civil Service Writers have availed themselves of the provisions of the Treasury Minute of December 22, 1886, and have retired from the Service, receiving a gratuity, and what is the average length of service such writers have rendered; and, what number of men writers still remain on the Register, excluding candidates who have qualified for higher appointments?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): One hundred and twenty-two copyists have retired up to date with gratuities, their average length of service being about nine years. Excluding candidates qualified for higher appointments, there remain about 1,200 copyists on the Register.

THE WAR IN BURMAH—THE HOSPITAL SHIP "TENASSERIM"—WAR MEDAL AND GRATUITIES.

SIR HENRY FLETCHER (Sussex, Lewes) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the medical officers and establishments who served on board the hospital ship *Tenasserim* in the late Burmese War, and who had sole charge of the invalids, sick, and wounded, which invalids were brought down the river to Rangoon from Mandalay, and placed on board the ship simply because she drew too much water to go up the river, are entitled to the medal and gratuity as if the ship had gone up the river, which is the only reason assigned for not treating them as medical officers in a similar position have always been treated?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The medical officers in question are not entitled to the medal or clasp, the issue of which is limited to those who were either in Upper Burmah or in actual conflict with the enemy. The case of the gratuity is different. It is not known whether the medical officers on board the *Tenasserim* received it; but it was granted to the crews of Her Majesty's ships of war in the Rangoon waters.

BANK ACT, 1844—SCOTCH BANKS OF ISSUE.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the case that, owing to the separation of the Issue Department from the Banking Department of the Bank of England, under the Bank Act of 1844, there is held in trust, for the repayment of the bank notes issued, Government Debt, other securities, and gold coin and bullion to the value of the bank notes so issued, thus securing the holders of these notes against possible loss; whilst in Scotland, owing to the want of separation of the Issue Department from the Banking Department, the holder of bank notes, in the event of bankruptcy of a Scotch Bank, has no better security for repayment than any ordinary creditor of the Bank; and, whether, looking to the fact that all, or at least the majority, of the Scotch Banks have adopted the principle of limited liability, he will bring in a Bill to introduce such legislative changes as will place the holders of bank notes issued in Scotland on a footing of safety equal to that enjoyed by the holders of bank notes issued in England?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am afraid Her Majesty's Government have too many subjects on hand for them to venture this Session to lay sacrilegious hands on the sacred institution of the Scottish Banks.

BANK ACT, 1844—THE GOVERNMENT DEBT AND THE BANK OF ENGLAND.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What rate and what amount of interest, if any, the Government pay to the Bank of England in respect of the Government Debt of £11,015,100, held in security by the Issue Department of that Bank, and opposite which bank notes are issued?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Government Debt to the Bank of England has, ever since 1757, borne interest at the rate of 3 per cent per annum. I may add that the amount at which the Debt stood in 1844—namely, £11,015,100, was, by the Act of 1844, made part of the securities required to be transferred to the Issue Department; and that the arrangements made by Sir Robert Peel were based on the supposition that the gross profits derivable from note issue, of which, as the House is aware, the Government derives a substantial share, would be 3 per cent. Accordingly, the rate of interest payable on the Bank Debt, affecting as it does the profits of the Bank in its Issue Department, is a question which can properly be only taken into consideration on there being a general revision of the financial relations of the Government with the Bank of England.

NORTH PADDINGTON—THE REGENT'S CANAL — SUPERVISION BY THE POLICE.

Mr. AIRD (Paddington, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, having regard to the frequency of suicides in the Canal running through North Paddington, he would cause inquiries to be instituted, with the view, if possible, of ensuring better protection along the banks of such Canal, increased lighting, and greater supervision on the part of the Police Authorities?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have consulted the Chief Commissioner of Police on this matter; and he informs me that the banks and towing-path of this Canal are private property, and are not patrolled or supervised by the police. He has not been able to ascertain that suicides are frequent in this Canal, and the lighting is reported to be good. If my hon. Friend can give more detailed information on the subject, I shall be happy to give it every attention.

THE TRUCK ACT (BELFAST)—MESSRS. MARCUS WARD AND COMPANY.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the breaches of the Truck Act by Messrs. Marcus Ward and Company (Limited), which are now taking place in Belfast, in that deductions for the Royal Ulster Works Sick and Accident Fund are being compulsorily made, no agreement in writing authorizing the deductions having been signed by the workmen, and no audit of deductions having taken place; whether it is true that no meeting of members of the Royal Ulster Sick and Accident Fund has taken place for upwards of 10 years; whether the whole of such deductions from the wages of the men, though nominally made for the fund, are actually retained by the said Marcus Ward and Company (Limited); whether this is without any cash statement or statement of assets and liabilities having been for many years communicated to the men; and, whether any steps will be taken to enforce the law?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): As the result of inquiries, I have ascertained that the matter has been investigated and reported on by the Inspector of Factories for the district. This officer is under the Home Office, and the matter is within the control of that Department. It has been reported that the provisions of the Truck Acts have not been complied with, but that the offence is believed to have been unwittingly committed; that the Directors, their attention having been called to the matter, are ready to set it right at once; and, further, that the fund is indebted to Messrs. Marcus Ward and Company at the present time. With reference to the last paragraph of the Question, I must point out that further inquiries should be addressed to the Home Secretary, the matter being within his Department.

Mr. BRADLAUGH asked the Home Secretary, whether his attention had been called to the subject?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) said, he had no information about it.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I understand that a Report has been made to the right hon. Gentleman's Department. Will the right hon. Gentleman ascertain what information is in his Department, and take care that the law is enforced?

Mr. MATTHEWS: Certainly.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER BANN.

Sir CHARLES LEWIS (Antrim, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Government propose to introduce the measure relating to the drainage of the River Bann before Whitsuntide?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.) (who replied) said: That is my hope.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —NIGHT MAILS TO PLYMOUTH.

Viscount LYMINGTON (Devon, South Molton) asked the Postmaster General, Whether any arrangements are being made to secure the carriage of mails by night on the South Western Railway from London to Plymouth?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): A deputation has already attended at this Office to urge on the Department the arrangement alluded to in the noble Viscount's Question. The matter is receiving careful consideration, and some little time must elapse before the needful inquiries can be completed. But there shall be no unnecessary delay in arriving at a decision.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — CHARGE AGAINST MR. P. FERRITER.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that Mr. Patrick Ferriter, of Dingle, held the office of collector of rates, or some similar post, in that district of County Kerry; for how long did he hold that office, and whether he still holds it; whether, during his tenure of that office, any single allegation has ever been made or proved against him; whether he is aware of the fact that, during the last Session, several Questions were asked of the then Chief Secretary for Ireland, and offers were made by gentlemen, who had been present at the meeting in Dingle, to submit evidence conclusively disproving the charge made against Mr. Ferriter, of having, at such meeting, incited the crowd to attack either the police or the Government reporter; and, whether he will receive and consider the evidence so offered by hon. Members of this House?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, it was not the case that Ferriter ever held the office of rate collector; but he was elected relieving officer by the Dingle Board of Guardians towards the end of 1886, and acted as such for a short time. The Local Government Board refused to sanction the appointment. During that period there was one conviction against him, and he was sentenced to two months' imprisonment, and there was another man appointed in his place. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was aware that the hon. Member (Mr. Conybeare), who put a Question on the same subject in March of last year, stated that he had information which would go to prove that Ferriter was innocent. At the time he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) expressed his readiness to consider any evidence that might be put before him, and he had the same answer to give that day.

MR. CONYBEARE: I wish to inform the right hon. Gentleman that the information I had to give him was my own personal evidence. Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the conviction was a Crimes Act conviction?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe, Sir, it was not.

MR. CONYBEARE: Then what was it under?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Under the ordinary law.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether the only conviction against Mr. Ferriter, and that on which the Local Government Board refused to sanction his appointment as relieving officer, was the conviction for calling "Take that down, Jerry Stringer;" and, also, whether the sentence of two months was in default of bail?

MR. CONYBEARE: I also wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether it was not in reference to this conviction that I offered my own personal evidence.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know anything about the hon. Gentleman's personal evidence. The reason the Local Government Board did not sanction the appointment of Ferriter was not because of this conviction, for the conviction occurred subsequently; but because they thought that Ferriter was unfit for the post of relieving officer.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: More defamation of character.

BURMAH—THE RUBY MINES.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Government of India, in a telegram to the Secretary of State, of the 5th of June, 1887, relating to the lease of the Burmah Ruby Mines to Mr. Streeter, stated, "we see no just ground for cancelling this arrangement;" and, whether the Government of India has subsequently discovered any just ground for cancelling the arrangement referred to; and, if not, whether Her Majesty's Government will sanction the arrangement?

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked when the Correspondence on the subject of the Ruby Mines concession will be laid upon the Table of the House; and, whether the Correspondence will be printed in full; if not, why not?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): (1), Yes; the words are correctly quoted; (2), No; but if the hon. Member will look at page 31 of the Papers he will see that the Government of India reported that no binding agreement had been entered into; and at page 32 he will see that the Secretary of State maintained his original position of refusing to sanction any lease of the mines until full information respecting their value and respecting Native rights had been received. In reply to the second Question, I have to say that the Papers were laid on the Table at the end of last Session; and they contain all the information at present in the possession of the Secretary of State with regard to the Burmah Ruby Mines.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE asked, whether the House was to understand that Her Majesty's Government would sanction the arrangement if they found, on further inquiry, that it was a just one?

Sir JOHN GORST said, he had frequently informed the House that the Secretary of State for India had sent an expert to the Burmah Ruby Mines. That expert had visited the mines, and had made—or was on the point of making—a Report to the Government of India; and the Secretary of State had every confidence that the Viceroy and the Council would do full justice to the Revenues of India and to the various parties concerned when they had a full and complete Report before them.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON asked, when the Report of the expert might be expected in London?

Sir JOHN GORST replied, that he had just stated that it had already been made—or was on the point of being made—to the Government of India.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE COMPENSATION CLAUSES.

Mr. T. FRY (Darlington) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If there is any power given in the Compensation Clauses of the licensing portion of the Local Government Bill to prevent higher compensation being paid for licences which may be removed to better premises, after the passing of the Act, than those where the licence was held before that date, and which, in some cases, may have been destroyed in the meantime?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I think that when a new building is erected in the place of premises which were licensed at the date of the passing of the Local Government Bill, the effect of Clause 13 (3) of the Bill will be that, in the event of the renewal of the licence being refused, the compensation will have to be determined with reference to the premises which existed at the passing of the Act, and not to the new premises; as the compensation is to be assessed on the basis of the difference between the value of the licensed premises immediately before the passing of the Act and the value which such premises would have then borne if the licence had then determined.

Mr. T. FRY said, he could not understand how the value of premises that might be destroyed or in the meantime entirely rebuilt could be ascertained for purposes of valuation five years afterwards. Some kind of valuation must be made of those public-houses.

Mr. RITCHIE: I do not know whether the hon. Member asks me the Question; but I should say that that will have to be determined by the arbitrators.

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): May I ask if the value of the premises is the only ground of compensation; and whether any compensation is to be given for loss of trade?

Mr. RITCHIE: The compensation, according to the Bill, is for the value of the premises with a licence, as against the premises without a licence.

LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—DEATH OF JOHN MACKAY, OF SOUTH HARRIS.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he has yet received a Report regarding the case of John Mackay, aged 17, recently found dead in the Island of South Harris, and whose death was ascribed by the police to exposure; whether it is true, as stated by the lad's mother, that his body was stabbed in two places, and bore other marks of violence indicative of death by foul play; and, whether any regular official inquiry has been held into the circumstances of the case, beyond that which the mother mentions as having been made by the local policeman?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Yes, Sir. This case was reported by the local constable to the Procurator Fiscal, who made inquiries. The body was examined by Dr. Stewart, of Tarbert, who gave a certificate that the death was caused by exposure. In answer to the second paragraph, I have to say that there were a few slight marks on the body, none of which could have caused or accelerated death, and which there was no evidence to show had been caused by inflicted violence. In answer to the third paragraph, I have to say that on the case being reported to the Crown Council, the Advocate Deputy ordered a further inquiry, and an additional Report was forwarded. Crown Counsel then ordered that no further proceedings should take place. In consequence of a communication received by me since this Question was put on the Paper, I have directed some further inquiries to be made.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—MAT MAKING.

MR. CRAIG SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick) (for Mr. QUILTER) (Suffolk, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What is the daily average of prisoners employed in mat making for the year ending 31st March, 1888?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: The Returns are not yet complete enough to enable me to give my hon. Friend the exact figure. I expect, however, that it will turn out to have been somewhere about 1,550.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE TAX ON CARTS AND WAGGONS.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the new duty to be imposed on carts and waggons, will relieve the owners from being charged for any damage done to the roads by what is called "extraordinary traffic?"

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; I presume it will not. The damage done by extraordinary traffic is clearly different from very heavy ordinary traffic.

POST OFFICE—DESPATCH OF MAILS, &c. FROM SCOTLAND FOR THE EAST.

MR. M'LAGAN (Linlithgow) asked the Postmaster General, If it is the case that, since the withdrawal of the morning mail from Glasgow and Edinburgh to London, the weekly papers from these and other towns in Scotland posted to residents in India, China, and Australia now reach London too late to catch the mail each Friday evening for Brindisi, and whether these papers now reach their destination a week later than hitherto in consequence; whether, now that the 6 a.m. mail from Glasgow and Edinburgh has been withdrawn, it is possible to make some other arrangements by which letters, newspapers, &c. posted after 9.30 p.m. in these cities, and the corresponding mails from other towns in Scotland, should be delivered in London on the following evening; and, whether any arrangement can be made for securing that correspondence, similarly posted, addressed to places on the Continent shall be carried by the night mail from London, thus avoiding the present delay of 12 hours?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): It is the case that since the withdrawal of the 6 a.m. train from Glasgow and Edinburgh to the South newspapers published early on Friday morning cannot be included in the Eastern mails forwarded from London on Friday evening *viâ* Brindisi. The re-establishment of the 6 a.m. train would, according to the information hitherto supplied, involve a larger additional outlay than the circumstances appear to warrant; but I will consider further whether it is possible to make any other arrangements which by some, at any rate, of the facilities formerly existing may be restored.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT, 1887—THE SPECIAL RULES—SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COLLIERIES.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the objections to the Special Rules under "The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887," which were posted up at the collieries in the Cannock Chase district of South Staffordshire, and which were duly formulated and officially posted in the terms of the Act by the miners of the "Midland Counties Miners' Federation," were received and considered by the Home Office; and, whether the members of the said Federation have any power of further pressing their objections to the said Rules, or amended Rules, which have again been recently posted up in that district?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Certain objections to Special Rules in the Cannock Chase District were received and considered by the Home Office. They did not, however, appear to proceed from the Midland Counties Miners' Federation. With respect to any mine where Special Rules have not been established, it will be open to all persons to press their objections to any proposed Rules. Where Rules have been established, the Secretary of State would not exercise his power of amendment unless strong cause were shown.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS — HORSE AND WHEEL TAXES—EXTENSION TO SCOTLAND.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can now state the decision as to which he has arrived on the extension of the Horse and Wheel Taxes to Scotland?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I think it would be more satisfactory that hon. Members who take an interest in Scotland should see the Bill first, which I hope will be in their hands on Wednesday morning. It will also be interesting to them that they should see what we propose with regard to the distribution of the tax, which may, perhaps, I think, have some influence with them as to whether they will want it or not for Scotland this year.

Mr. BUCHANAN: Is that to be stated in the Bill?

Mr. GOSCHEN: No, Sir; it will not.

Subsequently,

Mr. PRESTON BRUCE (Fifeshire, W.) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman could now state when the scheme of the distribution of funds in aid of local taxation in Scotland would be submitted?

Mr. GOSCHEN: No, Sir; I am not able to state that.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — BOOKS USED IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether he is aware that the frequent change of books used in board schools causes much dissatisfaction, more especially in the rural districts; and, whether he will take steps to lessen an expense which presses heavily on many poor people?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir William Hart Dyke) (Kent, Dartford), in reply, said, that no expression of dissatisfaction, such as that indicated in the Question, had reached the Department. The supply of books was part of the School Board's administration, which it would be exceedingly difficult for the Department to interfere with; but if any specific case were brought to the notice of the Department, attention would be given to it.

ARMY — THE BEDFORDSHIRE REGIMENT—FERMOY BARRACKS.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) (for Dr. Tanner) (Cork Co., Mid), asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether a serious outbreak of pneumonia has taken place in the Bedfordshire Regiment stationed in Fermoy; if it is true that a considerable number of men are, and have been, in hospital; if so, how many; has any case proved fatal; is it a fact that the principal causes of the epidemic are stated by the medical authorities to be intemperance and exposure; and, whether it is true that the straw supplied for bedding and sanitary arrangements in the barracks promoted the disease?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Probably, on account of the changeable weather, lung disease has been rather prevalent in the West of Ireland; and in the Weekly Return to the 20th of April from the Bedfordshire Regiment at Fermoy, it is shown that there had been 13 admissions for pneumonia and one death. The sanitary state of the barracks is reported to be satisfactory; and no cause other than the weather has been assigned for the outbreak. Further inquiry has, however, been ordered.

LIVERPOOL CORPORATION WATER-WORKS ACT, 1880—THE AQUEDUCT OF PENY-BONT-FAWR.

Mr. KENYON (Denbigh, &c.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the account of the bursting of one of the large pipes in the aqueduct of the Liverpool Corporation Water-works Company, at Peny-bont-fawr, at the exit of the Hirnant Tunnel, by which considerable damage was done to adjacent property; whether he has any information as to the pressure of the water at the point where the accident occurred; what will be the average pressure along the line of pipes when the works are complete; and, whether there are any clauses in the Act providing for possible damage in the future?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am informed that the newspaper account as to the bursting of a pipe at Peny-bont-fawr is inaccurate, and that the amount of the damage caused is probably about £40. The pressure at the point of fracture was about 130 feet. The average pressure of the aqueduct would be 220 feet. I understand that there was nothing exceptional in the bursting, which occurred in the testing of the pipes when they were first filled, the testing being for the purpose of detecting defects. Pipes in other parts of the aqueduct were subjected to 300 feet pressure, and remained quite sound. The works are being constructed under the provisions of the Liverpool Corporation Water Works Act, 1880, which contains no special provision as to damages.

ADMIRALTY—NAVIES (ENGLAND AND OTHER COUNTRIES).

Captain COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether there is any objection to including in the Return, Navies (England and other Countries), a marginal reference distinguishing the vessels in commission, and showing where they are stationed or employed, and showing the ports at which the vessels not in commission are stationed or building at the date of the Return?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): We have not the information required as regards the ships of Foreign Navies in an authoritative form, and the information concerning English ships is in *The Navy List.*

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND) —EDUCATION ACT, 1883—SECTION 8.

Mr. THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Scottish Education Department will take into consideration a modification of the Education Code, so as to admit of a pupil who has passed in two subjects, say in the 5th Standard, to be kept therein, so as to comply with the provisions of section 8 of the Education Act of 1883, and also to earn a grant therein?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, My Lords are prepared to give all reasonable facility for the examination of children for labour certificates whatever their position in school. But they do not think that a grant should be paid except under the conditions now laid down in the Code; as otherwise an inducement might be offered to retain a pupil in a lower standard to his disadvantage for the purpose of securing the grant.

CONSULAR CHARGES IN ENGLAND—INVOICES FOR THE UNITED STATES.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is aware that it is the custom of the United States Consuls in this country, when certifying an invoice of a shipment to the United States, to make a charge of 10*s*. 6*d*. as fee and a charge of 2*s*. 6*d*. for declaration; whether this charge of 2*s*. 6*d*. is also levied on German shippers to the United States; and, if not so levied, why are English shippers put at a disadvantage; and, whether he will use his best offices to have this inequality removed?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Man-

chester, N.E.): There is no information in the possession of the Foreign Office to the effect that any different charge is made by United States Consuls in this country to British and to German shippers; and the Board of Trade, of whom I have made inquiry, are equally unaware of such a practice. If any specific instance of such differential charges can be brought to the notice of the Secretary of State inquiries will be made, and, if possible, redress procured.

PORTUGAL—THE TREATY OF 1884—ARTICLES IX. AND X.—EAST AFRICA—TRANSIT DUTIES.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Treaty with Portugal, signed 26th February, 1884, is still in force; and, whether Articles IX. and X. (especially sub-section 2) of that Treaty provide for the treatment of goods in transit through the Portuguese territories on the East Coast of Africa, and that dues on such goods shall not exceed 3 per cent *ad valorem*?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: The Treaty signed February 26, 1884, by Earl Granville was never ratified, and has, therefore, never been in force.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—INCREASE OF SENTENCES ON APPEAL.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether there is any legal procedure in the nature of an appeal, or otherwise, by which the legality under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," of the increased sentences recently passed by the County Court Judges in Ireland upon those who appealed to them against sentences imposed by the Resident Magistrates, can be tested by the Superior Courts; and, if so, whether the Government will institute such appeal or other proceedings?

Sir CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether he has carefully considered the legality of the recently increased sentences on appeal in Ireland; how the question of legality can be raised according to the procedure of the Courts in Ireland, whether by application for writ of *habeas corpus* or otherwise; and, whether the Government will facilitate the raising of the question with a view to its determination in the Superior Courts in Ireland?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): The Law Officers of the Crown have carefully considered the question of the legality of the sentences referred to, and they are of opinion that the County Court Judges acted within their powers, and that the sentences are accordingly legal. The law of Ireland affords to any person imprisoned under a sentence which he regards as illegal the same facilities for having the question of its legality determined as exist in England. There are no proceedings which can be taken on the part of the Crown for the purpose of testing the legality of those sentences, as suggested by the hon. Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall. The Crown will, I need hardly say, place no obstacles in the way of any person who desires to question the legality of any sentence under which he is imprisoned; but it is not in their power to facilitate the course of the proceedings by interfering with the arrangements of the Courts of Justice.

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—THE DISTURBANCE AT MACROOM — SERGEANT O'SHEA.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) (for Dr. Tanner) (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What was the technical character of the injuries inflicted upon Sergeant O'Shea by Creedon, in Macroom, on the 8th of April last, and how these injuries placed O'Shea's life in jeopardy; were they inflicted by any weapon; and, what were the professional reasons alleged to have been given by Dr. Crooke for his refusal to allow Dr. White to visit Sergeant O'Shea?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, that from the Report of the Inspector General of Constabulary it appeared that the injuries which caused concussion of the brain were inflicted by a heavy broken bough of a tree. The reason Dr. Crooke objected to Dr. White visiting Sergeant O'Shea, was that he did not consider it necessary to have a second doctor.

CENTRAL AFRICA—ARAB ATTACK ON SCOTCH MISSION STATIONS.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has received any intelligence pointing to a renewal of the Arab attack on the Scottish Mission Stations in Central Africa?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have received no intelligence of any fighting near the Scottish Mission Stations in Central Africa, subsequent to that mentioned in the answer given to the hon. Member for Wandsworth (Mr. Kimber), on the 19th of March. A telegram from Her Majesty's Consul at Mozambique, dated the 27th instant, states that he had received a letter from the acting British Consul at Nyassa, reporting that he had held an interview with certain Arab Chiefs at the north end of the Lake respecting the attack on Karongas.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —CENTRAL TELEGRAPH STATION— PROMOTION OF CLERKS.

VISCOUNT CURZON (Bucks, Wycombe) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is a fact that in October and February last clerks at the Central Telegraph Station were promoted from the second to the first class three years before they reached the maximum of their class; whether it is a fact that clerks of from 17 to 19 years' service have been waiting at the maximum of the first class for 13 months; and, whether there is anything against the ability or character of these clerks; and, if not, why this partiality is shown to one class?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the noble Viscount, I have to state that the facts set forth in his Question are substantially correct. It will, I think, suffice to say in answer that in the one case there were vacancies at the time on the higher class; whereas in the present case there are no vacancies, and consequently no promotions can be made.

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—SHERIFFS—FEES ON APPOINTMEMT OF RETURNING OFFICERS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is an indictable offence for a Sheriff to exact anything beyond the statutory fees for the execution of his duty as Sheriff; whether any statutory fee is payable in connection with the appointment of Returning Officer in any division of a shire; whether it has been brought to his notice that Mr. Rose Innes, Under Sheriff of Middlesex, has by letter and verbal message to Mr. William Miller, now Returning Officer for the Chelsea Division of Middlesex, demanded from that gentleman the sum of two guineas in connection with his appointment as Returning Officer; whether a Sheriff holds his office on condition of "good behaviour;" and, whether it is the duty of the Home Secretary to decide as to the behaviour of a Sheriff in case of complaint; and, if so, whether he will take steps to put a stop to such demands as have been made on Mr. Miller by the Sheriff of Middlesex?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The Question in the first paragraph raises a point of law which I could not undertake to solve in answer to a Question. As far as I am aware, the answer to the second paragraph is in the negative. My right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury has already stated to the House the circumstances under which the fee of two guineas was demanded of Mr. Miller. The warrant of appointment of Sheriffs named by the Queen is during Her Majesty's pleasure, and there is a statutory provision that the nomination is only for one year. The Sheriffs of Middlesex are appointed by the Liverymen of the City Companies. The law does not impose on the Home Secretary the duty of deciding as to a Sheriff's behaviour. In this particular case I have received a letter from the Under Sheriffs stating that they have of their own accord sent back to each of the Returning Officers the amount of the fee, which had been already paid by them. A demand such as that made on Mr. Miller is not likely to be repeated.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE — DEDUCTION OF PAY FOR SICKNESS.

Mr. CAREW (Kildare, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the deduction of pay during the absence from duty of clerks employed at the Central Telegraph Office, owing to sickness, was made subsequent to the transfer of the Telegraph Companies to the Government in 1870, in order to check absence without sufficient cause; whether this reason is inoperative in cases of serious illness certified by the chief medical officer or by a duly qualified doctor; whether clerks employed in the Intelligence Department of the General Post Office, who are officers of similar rank to the clerks above referred to, receive full pay; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will consider the desirability of granting full pay to the officers of both Departments?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): On the acquisition of the telegraphs by the State, the reason for subjecting the telegraphists at the Central Station to a deduction during absence from illness was that they might not be subject to different Rules from those which applied to Post Office servants of similar grade. These Rules have been considered again and again, and I am not prepared to alter them. Full pay during absence is confined, as a rule, to those who occupy the more responsible positions. The officers of the Intelligence Branch are picked men, selected from the whole body of telegraphists throughout the Kingdom.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT, BELFAST—P. COOPER.

Mr. CAREW (Kildare, N.) (for Mr. M'Cartan) (Down, S.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that Patrick Cooper, of Alexander Street (West) Belfast, who passed his examination on the 25th of July last for the Telegraph Department in the Post Office, Belfast, was examined by Dr. Browne, and was refused the necessary certificate; whether, before refusing the certificate, Dr. Browne, among other questions, asked Cooper what school he had been attending, and was informed by him that it was at a school of the Christian Brothers; whether Mr. Shepherd, the Postmaster at Belfast, wrote to Mrs. Cooper, the boy's mother, on the 5th of April instant, that Dr. Browne did "not question that her son's general health is satisfactory;" whether certificates from Professor Cuming, M.D., and Dr. Dempsey, J.P., certifying that Cooper was physically fit to fill any position in the Postal Telegraph Service, were sent to Mr. Shepherd, but without avail; and, whether, under the circumstances, and considering that Cooper is the son of a coastguard who died some time ago, having spent his life in the British Service, he will consider his claims to appointment?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University), in reply, said, Patrick Cooper was only on the 25th of July last subjected to a private examination by the Postmaster prior to his nomination as a telegraphist at Belfast. On his being subsequently examined as to his physical condition, Dr. Browne declined to certify him as fit. Dr. Browne did not ask him what school he had been attending, but how he had been employed, and he answered, "As a monitor in the Christian Brothers' School." He was again examined in March last. Mrs. Cooper was informed by the Postmaster on the 5th April last that Dr. Browne did not question that her son's general health was satisfactory; but that, on account of a tendency to an affection of the lungs, he could not be recommended for the appointment. Certificates were received from Dr. Cuming and Dr. Dempsey, but, while agreeing with the statement as to general health, Dr. Browne did not see any reason to alter his opinion. As Dr. Browne cannot furnish a satisfactory certificate, the Civil Service Commissioners will not grant Cooper the necessary certificate to qualify him for appointment. I am very sorry for the young man's disappointment; but the hon. Member will see that it is not in my power to afford him any assistance.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WHEEL TAX—HEARSES.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is aware that there are over 400 hearses in the Metropolis; and, whether these have been included in his Estimate of the produce of the Wheel Tax?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; hearses are not included in the definition of a trade cart. They have, therefore, not been included in my Estimate.

METROPOLITAN POLICE — MR. MONTAGU WILLIAMS, POLICE MAGISTRATE.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What has been, or is being, done with respect to the statement made by Mr. Montagu Williams at the Wandsworth Police Court on the 5th instant, in the case of "R. *v.* Baker," that—

> "The conduct of the police from the highest to the lowest was eminently unsatisfactory, and must be inquired into?"

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) asked the right hon. Gentleman, whether he would consider the desirableness of giving a full inquiry into the position and action of the London police?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, he was not aware of any ground for the inquiry which the hon. Member for Dundee suggested. With reference to the Question of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, the case had been since the 8th instant in the hands of the Director General of Prosecutions, who was taking such steps in the matter as he considered proper and necessary under the advice of counsel.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) — MIDDLESEX SESSIONS — CASE OF CHARLES MOORE.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will be prepared to grant an inquiry into the conduct of the Assistant Judge of the Middlesex Sessions in the case of Charles Moore, if he is placed in possession of evidence of the accuracy of the statements in *The Pall Mall Gazette* of the 24th?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): No, Sir; I am not prepared to grant an inquiry into the conduct of the Assistant Judge.

Mr. Pickersgill

MR. J. ROWLANDS: If I supply the evidence of one of the Justices present, to the effect that the decision was settled after two votes, the first being in favour of the prisoner, and the second against him, will he cause inquiry to be made?

MR. MATTHEWS: I think it would be a very evil example if any Public Department were, on the statement of one of the gentlemen present, to inquire into what took place at a confidential discussion of magistrates when settling their decision. Such an inquiry could not possibly be satisfactory, or lead to any good results.

CRIMINAL CASES (IRELAND) — INCREASE OF SENTENCES ON APPEAL —ENNIS COUNTY COURT.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether sentences of three months' imprisonment with hard labour, passed under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," on W. Dynes, P. Collins, and J. O'Brien, were, on appeal to the County Court Judge at Ennis, on the 19th instant, increased to six months in each case; whether a sentence of three months' imprisonment with hard labour, passed on T. Flannigan, was also increased, on appeal at Ennis on the 21st instant, to six months; and, whether any modification of any kind was introduced into any of the four sentences so extended?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, may I ask him whether he still adheres to the statement that Mr. Blane's sentence has not been increased? I may say that I have received the most positive assurance from a person who saw the warrant that the original sentence of four months was without hard labour.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The right hon. Gentleman's statement on a question of fact is one which I do not like to traverse. He is aware that I made the statement to which he refers on Friday, in answer to a Question which was put without Notice. I did it on the strength of a Report of the Sessional Crown Solicitor, which I happened to have been reading that afternoon. I feel sure that that gentleman would not have intentionally misrepresented the facts; but as he was writing without any view to a Question or controversy upon the point, he may have made a slip, and I will at once inquire into the matter. As to the Question on the Paper, I am informed that the facts are as stated, with the exception that the date in Flannigan's case was the 20th. No modification appears to have been introduced into any of these increased sentences. The hon. Member is doubtless aware that the crime dealt with by the Court was the odious Boycotting of Hannah Connell.

IRELAND—INQUEST ON JOHN MADDEN, AN INMATE OF THE CRANNA ORPHANAGE, NEAR NENAGH, CO. TIPPERARY.

Mr. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has yet received the Report in answer to the full inquiry which he promised into the circumstances of the case of the Cranna Orphanage in County Tipperary; whether it is in accordance with the facts as reported at the Coroner's inquest on the body of the boy Madden; whether the remaining children in that Institution are still on the dietary, the nature of which was then disclosed; and, whether he will take steps to have this and similar Institutions in Ireland visited at intervals by authorized Government Inspectors, so as to afford some protection to the orphan children therein confined, and to prevent the recurrence of such inhuman treatment as has been proved in the case of the Cranna orphans?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Executive Government were in communication with the proper authorities on the subject referred to in the Question, and had not yet had time to receive a reply to the inquiries they had made.

BRAZIL—ALLEGED INHUMAN POISONING OF INDIANS.

Mr. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to a communication which appeared in *The Times* of the 21st of April, describing the poisoning of a village of 3,000 Indians, and of a village of 800 Indians, by strychnine and chloride of mercury in Brazil, the same communication further declaring that it is in contemplation to destroy another village of 5,000 Indians by the treacherous use of poison in a similar way; and, whether, as a reference is made to some connection, in a manner not explained, with the idea of missionary work, the Government will communicate with the Brazilian Government upon the ground of the interest and anxiety which we share with the Brazilian nation in whatever affects the honour of Christianity?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government cannot believe that such atrocities have been committed under a civilized and Christian Government, and hope that if there have been any such occurrences their extent has been greatly exaggerated, and that their authors have been visited with just punishment. But it is not the duty of Her Majesty's Government to question a Foreign Government with regard to affairs entirely domestic. No Government can be insensible to the public opinion of the world, and to the detestation which would attend such acts if tolerated.

INLAND REVENUE—PUBLIC-HOUSE LICENCES—SUCCESSION DUTY.

Mr. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the Treasury has ever received a payment of Succession Duty on the value of a public-house licence in the event of the death of the holder of such licence, and its continuance by the Licensing Authorities to the person inheriting the public-house property?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer this Question. I am informed by the Revenue Authorities that in all cases of the freehold or lease of a public-house passing by death, the value at which it is assessed to Succession Duty, or to Probate and Succession Duty, is determined with reference to the fact of the premises being licensed, and in most cases appreciably enhanced by that fact.

Mr. CAINE asked, what happened when the licence was transferred to a person who had not an interest in the property, but who got the licence?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, the hon. Member had better give Notice of the Question.

Mr. CAINE said, he would do so.

CRIMINAL CASES (IRELAND) — INCREASE OF SENTENCES ON APPEAL.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government will consider the propriety of advising the Crown to exercise its prerogative of mercy, and remit the additional sentences imposed by the County Court Judges upon the prisoners who appealed to them, under the provisions of "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," against the sentences passed upon them by the Resident Magistrates?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): No, Sir; I cannot enter into any engagement of the kind with the hon. Gentleman.

SCOTCH EDUCATION CODE—GRANTS FOR COOKERY AND DRAWING.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the promised Departmental Minutes amending the Scottish Code in respect of the grants for cookery and drawing will be laid upon the Table?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The only Minute promised in regard to the Scottish Code was that suspending the proposed change in regard to the conditions of the cookery grant. The question, with respect to the drawing grant being subject to the limitation of 17*s.* 6*d.*, is one which cannot be dealt with except by removing the drawing grant from the Code, and transferring it to the Science and Art Department; the Scotch Education Department and the Treasury are now in communication with regard to this. The Minute regarding cookery has already been placed on the Table; but it is right to say that we have received strong representations from those who have taken the greatest interest, and have the largest experience in the teaching of this subject, as to the necessity of restricting the numbers taught at one time, if efficient teaching is to be secured; and while the conditions of the previous Code are provisionally continued in order to allow further time for consideration, it must be understood that some further restrictions of this kind will be introduced into the Code for next year.

LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANIES—LEGISLATION.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that the aggregate of the capitals of Companies registered between January 2 and April 17 of the present year amounts to £99,403,657; whether his attention has been drawn to an article in *The Statist* newspaper, in which it is declared that "the public are being fleeced right and left;" and, when the Government intend to introduce the Bill promised in the Gracious Speech from the Throne "for remedying abuses in the formation of Companies under limited liability?"

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The nominal capital of Companies registered between the 1st of January and the 17th of April, 1888, reaches a figure of £100,206,857, while during the same period of last year the figure was £40,525,266 only. The difference is believed to be caused by the desire to escape payment of the Stamp Duty of 2*s.* per cent on the nominal capital of Companies which will be exigible as soon as the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill becomes law. I am aware that *The Statist* has for some time been calling attention to the working, &c., of a certain class of Company; but I have no information as to whether the deductions drawn by *The Statist* are correct. With regard to the introduction of the Limited Liability Bill into the House of Lords, I am unable to add anything to the answer I gave on the 17th instant—namely, that it would be introduced as soon as possible.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION — THE DEBATE OF FRIDAY LAST.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the fact that only four hours were allotted to the discussion of the Motion on Technical Education last Friday night, of which nearly three were occupied by right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Benches, he would not offer facilities at an early date for a resumption of the debate, in order to give private Members an opportunity of expressing their views on this important subject?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Gentleman has only just given me Notice of the Question; but I am sure that he must see that it is quite out of my power to give him the facilities he asks for.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN WALES.

Mr. BYRON REED (Bradford, E.) asked the hon. Member for Swansea, Whether he intended to persevere with his Motion for the disestablishment of the Church in Wales to-morrow evening; and whether he would give an undertaking to the House not to proceed with it after a reasonable hour?

Mr. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) said, he had already given Notice to postpone his Motion until the 15th of May.

IRISH LAND COURT — DELAY IN EDENDERRY.

Dr. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When he will permit the Land Court to hear the cases of the Edenderry tenants, some of whom have been over three years trying to get fair rents fixed?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): As the hon. Gentleman is aware, it does not rest with me to "permit" the Land Court to do anything in the way of hearing cases. I am as anxious as anybody that the arrears now lying in this Court should be dealt with; and, as the hon. Gentleman is aware, there is a Bill before the House, which I hope will be discussed to-night, dealing with this very question.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY TO THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND BILL.—[Bill 201.]

(*Mr. Willian Henry Smith, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Jackson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): As the House is aware, this Bill has been already discussed on two separate occasions at considerable length, and with no inconsiderable vehemence—[*Cries of* "No!"]—Yes; and I do not rise to prolong the discussion. The House is well aware that, this being a Money Bill, it has to be brought in in Committee of the Whole House. There were two Resolutions, and on each of these Resolutions hon. Members were in Order in discussing the principle of the Bill; so that, in fact, the Bill has already had a stormy youth at a period when other measures are languishing in infantile obscurity. I rise at the present moment for the purpose of making something in the nature of a personal explanation. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), in the earlier stages of the debate, accused the Government of having deceived the House in regard to this Bill, in having led the House to believe, as I understand the matter, that, in the first place, they did not propose to introduce a Bill in regard to the Office of Under Secretary, and that if they did introduce a Bill of that kind it would not provide for the payment of a salary. The right hon. Gentleman couched that accusation in somewhat vehement language. The debate was running rather hot, but I do not make any complaint of that. What I do complain of is the charge brought against the Government by the right hon. Gentleman of consciously keeping the House in the dark with regard to this Bill. Now, the Government are not aware of having done anything of the kind, but they took the House entirely into their confidence—[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will be as pleased as I am to find that the Government have not been in any way guilty of keeping the House in the dark, but that there is evidence that the House was completely in possession of the intention of the Government with regard to this matter. I find that my memory has not deceived me in the matter; but it is clear that the right hon. Gentleman was either not in the House when certain Questions were asked on this subject, or that his memory has deceived him. I find that, on May 20, the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) asked when it was intended to bring in the promised Bill to regulate the Office of Parliamentary Under Secretary, so that it was thoroughly understood at that time that the Office was about to be created. I replied that the Bill would be brought in as soon as practicable, and, consequently, I then clearly committed the Government to bring in a Bill. It remains to consider whether the Government are open to the second count in the indictment of the right hon. Gentleman—namely, that even if they intended to bring in a Bill it was not intended to provide a salary. On that point the evidence is equally clear. The hon. Gentleman the Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), on May 20, asked the following Question:—

> "Is the Bill to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred of such a nature as that it will have to be founded on a Resolution in Committee?"—(3 *Hansard*, [315] 721.)

It is quite obvious that what the hon. Member meant to ask by that Question was, whether the Bill involved payment from the Exchequer, and whether the new official was or was not to be paid out of public money? The answer I gave to that Question was that in all probability that would be the case. If the right hon. Gentleman will search *Hansard*, he will find evidence upon these points. It will be seen, from what I have stated, that not even unintentionally have the Government bept the House in the dark, but that, on the contrary, they have stated that they would bring in a Bill, and that when it was brought in it would provide for a salary. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will be satisfied with the answer I have now given, and that there will be an end to a controversy which is assuming a very unnecessarily bitter form. I will not reply to remarks which have been made by hon. Gentlemen opposite. I hope hon. Gentlemen will recollect that they have had ample opportunities of discussing this Bill, and that they have fully availed themselves of them. I move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I will not plead guilty to the charge of having used too vehement language on the earlier stage of this Bill. The strongest expression I used was that the answers of the right hon. Gentlemen (Mr. A. J. Balfour) and the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) amounted to an endeavour to hoodwink the House; and after hearing the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman, and the reference he has made to certain answers given in the House on the 20th of May, I still think the attitude of the Government at the time I refer to was an attempt to hoodwink the House. It is quite true that the right hon. Gentleman gave the reply he has referred to in answer to a Question put by the hon. Member for East Donegal on the 20th of May; but on the 15th of April, in answering a Question put by me, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury stated distinctly that no salary would be asked for. That was pretty plain; but I will give another answer which bears more directly on the Bill. My right hon. Friend the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) asked a Question on May 12 on the same subject, and the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury answered that an arrangement had been made to meet the pressing demands made upon the time of the Chief Secretary at that time in connection with the discharge of his duties, and that no inference must be drawn from that arrangement, either that it was intended to be permanent, or that it would affect any other Department of the Government.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: These answers referred to the Office of Under Secretary as it was constituted last Session, and as it remains at the present moment; but they do not refer to the new Office to be constituted by the Bill which hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite knew had been promised.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I am anxious to give the right hon. Gentleman the benefit of all he has said; but when I reflect on the pains which the right hon. Gentleman takes in political matters—when the House considers how broad is the phylactery worn by the right hon. Gentleman—I am afraid I must say that this appears to be one of the most equivocal, evasive, and pitiful of manœuvres. Sir, what is the necessity for the Office? The answer which I have received from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury shows the view taken by the Government of the necessity of this Office at the time when they had two important Bills—the Coercion Bill and the Land Bill—in hand, and when the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary needed a Colleague to assist him owing to the pressing demands upon his time. The right hon. Gentleman has compared his position with that of his Predecessors in Office. It cannot, therefore, be invidious if I follow the right hon. Gentleman. He has spoken of, and he said that Mr. Forster, when Chief Secretary for Ireland, was not in charge of any great Bill. That was perfectly true. But Mr. Forster was in the Cabinet, and being in the Cabinet was adduced as one reason why there should be an Assistant Parliamentary Secretary. Secondly, in Mr. Forster's time the Questions put to the Chief Secretary were three or four times more numerous than the Questions now put to the right hon. Gentleman. In the third place, in the then condition of Parliament, Motions for Adjournment were most frequent and prolonged. And, fourthly, Mr. Forster was—whether wisely or unwisely I will not say—constantly travelling to and fro between England and Ireland. Mr. Forster felt it was a most important part of his duty to see his own officials on the spot, and to be in constant communication with them. Therefore, the comparison of advantage and of ease is wholly on the side of the right hon. Gentleman. Then, with reference to his immediate Predecessors, the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), the right hon. Gentleman stated that when they were filling the Office of Chief Secretary the administration of Ireland was actually carried on upon the spot by a Cabinet Minister, Lord Spencer, who was Lord Lieutenant. But have we not now a Cabinet Minister resident in Ireland? What is Lord Ashbourne doing? Does he take no action in the Executive Government of Ireland; does he hold no consultations with the Irish Attorney General, and take counsel with him upon points of administration? It may not be so; but if it be not so, all I can say is that it is a most extraordinary thing. Moreover, in the Cabinet there is a third Minister charged with Irish affairs—Lord Cadogan, the Lord Privy Seal; and, therefore, the advantage in point of leisure and of the comparative ease of the Office is wholly on the side of the right hon. Gentleman. Now, Sir, what is to be the work of the new Minister in Parliament whom it is proposed by this Bill to create? He is to answer Questions, as the House has already found by experience, and it is apparently proposed to continue the practice. Now, I will venture to lay down two propositions in reference to practice. The practice of answering Questions by the Under Secretary is, in the first place, very bad, and very unsatisfactory to Irish Members, and to English Members who take an interest in Irish affairs; and, secondly, it is extremely bad for the Chief Secretary himself. On the first point, it needs no words to show how unsatisfactory it is that answers to Questions on administrative points put to the Chief Secretary for Ireland should come from an irresponsible Member sitting within a few feet of the Minister who is responsible. I hope the House will judge the importance of Irish Questions as they ought to be judged. The House has to remember that putting Questions to the Chief Secretary is the only means Irish Members have of effectually criticizing the Irish administration; and, therefore, for my part, I view with extreme jealousy any plan for releasing the Chief Secretary from all responsibility for answering those Questions. Secondly, it is bad for the Chief Secretary himself, because Questions put to the Chief Secretary, though they touch a great number of details and detached matters which, no doubt, the right hon. Gentleman—like his Predecessors before him—have found to be trivial and uninteresting —Questions touching the workhouses, evictions, and so forth — yet those Questions, although they may seem trivial and uninteresting, relate to matters which touch the feelings of the people whom the Chief Secretary has to govern; they go to the very core of the national life in Ireland. Therefore, I say it is no advantage, but a very grave and serious disadvantage, to the Chief Secretary, to be relieved from the necessity of having to look into these matters with his own eyes. I am very much inclined to think that this Bill, when I examine it and try to find out what it is, must have been framed with the view, if the Government had a Parliamentary Under Secretary on their hands, of artificially finding something for the Under Secretary to do. It is one of the most absurd, and irrational Bills which I think I have ever heard of. The Parliamentary Under Secretary is to be a Member of the Local Government Board in Ireland, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in the course of the discussion said that it is desirable, because he is himself unable to attend. Then I want to know how is the Parliamentary Under Secretary any better placed for attending the meetings of the Local Government Board in Ireland?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not say that.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: Yes; it was a statement made by the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think what I said was that I could not attend the meetings of the Board; but the Board never meets.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: The Board never meets. Then it is quite obvious that the Under Secretary, who is appointed to relieve him, could not attend them. It is equally obvious that the Under Secretary, who has been invented for the purpose of aiding the right hon. Gentleman, cannot attend the meetings of the Local Government Board. Therefore, the Government would have no more acquaintance with the details of the work and views of the Local Government Board in Ireland than they have at this moment. The Under Secretary will simply have to give answers furnished to him by the Local Government Board, and will have no more power of supervision over the details than the Chief Secretary has now. With reference to Clause 3 of the Bill, I think it is equally open to objection with Clause 2. The Chief Secretary has at present to sign transfers of children to reformatory schools, and also to sign tickets-of-leave. That may or may not be a function the Chief Secretary ought to perform; but, whatever it is, it is a function that ought not to be performed by a Parliamentary Under Secretary, but by an important responsible officer. The responsible officer is there. Why should not the Lord Lieutenant undertake the duty? He, at all events, is not overburdened with work. When I was Chief Secretary myself, I found the transfers to reformatories shed a most interesting and instructive light upon the details of the conditions of Irish life, and I think it a great loss to the Chief Secretary not to have the advantage of acquaintance with those details. I am very unwilling to pass to the next point and to introduce the personal element, but it cannot be avoided. The Under Secretary is at present unfortunately absent—for a reason, as I understand, which the House must sincerely deplore. But it is impossible to criticize the Bill without considering that it has been brought in to create an Office for a Minister who has already been appointed; and, therefore, I have to consider how far in creating this Office Her Majesty's Ministers were furthering the purposes of good government in Ireland. I will not enter into the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's (Colonel King-Harman's) relations with his tenantry, but everybody knows that those relations are strained; and in view of that strain it was inevitable that, owing to this appointment, the Irish tenants should regard Dublin as taking sides in the new social war now being waged in Ireland. We are not left without evidence of that in the discussions which have arisen in this House. Not only the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) stated with great force the reasons why the Under Secretary is obnoxious to the great mass of the Irish population, but the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) has told us distinctly what the opinion of the Party he represents is. He told us something of the antecedents of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, and he asked what would be thought if the right hon. and gallant Gentleman were so placed as to have his hand upon the spring of the machinery in Dublin Castle? He went on to say it was his deliberate opinion that his constituents would regard the appointment as an open declaration of war. It is not immaterial that this view should be taken, but it is most material, because, from the peculiar position of the Local Government Board, in which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is to hold a high place, it is most important that we should have a Minister whom the Irish people should regard as above suspicion. The Irish Local Goverment Board is concerned, for instance, in the administration of those important Acts, the Labourers Acts, and one part of their duty is to appoint arbitrators in the disputes between landlords and Boards of Guardians who wish to erect dwellings. As it is, there is a constant complaint that these arbitrators are not impartial; how much greater would be the complaints when the Minister who has been placed at the head of the Local Government Board, and who has the appointment of these arbitrators, is so biassed and so prejudiced on one side, as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman who now fills the Office of Parliamentary Under Secretary undoubtedly is? There is another point connected with the relations between the Local Government Board and the Boards of Guardians. As it is, as everybody knows who is acquainted with Ireland, there has been pretty constant friction between Boards of Guardians and the Local Government Board—questions of Auditors, Inspectors, the conduct of Chairmen, and so forth, are constantly arising. Now, it is a great evil that in all these matters the Local Government Board, even as it is, is out of sympathy with the bulk of the Irish population. When it is known that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet has the main voice in these matters, and directs the administrative policy of the Board, will the sympathy between the people and the Local Government Board become any closer or warmer? I do not want to press what may appear to be minor points; but although they may seem to be minute they are most valid objections to such an appointment as that which this Bill asks the House to sanction. I will push the matter one step further, and see how the appointment which is proposed to be made under this Bill affects the general attitude of Her Majesty's Government towards self-government in Ireland. Now, Sir, on September 15, 1886, the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), who was then Leader of the House, made a very important declaration, even more important, to my mind, than the declaration which the noble Lord made in August when the Government was first formed, and to which the noble Lord drew attention the other afternoon in the very interesting speech which he then delivered. On the 15th of September, 1886, the noble Lord, speaking in a discussion upon the Vote for the Local Government Board which had been going on for some time, and which he was endeavouring, if possible, to arrest, used these words—

> "In regard to what has fallen from the hon. Member (Mr. Clancy) generally, as to the Board of Works and the Local Government Board, the functions of these Boards are matters which the Government consider call for from them the most practical consideration, with a view, if possible, of the development of the functions of those Boards in a manner in accordance, as far as may be, with the views of the Irish Representatives. . . . . . It is the firm and decided intention of the Government to make a proposal to Parliament as early as may be, and we hope with a view of placing the control of all these questions of local government and public works more within the hands of the Irish people."—(3 *Hansard*, [309] 560-1.)

That was, and was felt to be, a most important declaration. If that declaration has not been adhered to, then it is clear that the Government have gone back from the pledges which they gave, not only upon the hustings, but also in this House, because it can scarcely be contended that the Government are going to develop the functions of the Local Government Board in accordance with the views of the Irish Representatives, when they were going to set over that Board a Gentleman against whom both groups of Irish Members—both the hon. Member for South Tyrone and the hon. and learned Member for North Longford—protested as being the most obnoxious Gentleman who could be placed in that position. Then, with what face can it be said that you are aiming at placing the Local Government of Ireland in the hands of the people, when you appoint a Minister who has committed himself absolutely against the improvement of local government? When I say that, what I mean is this—that in 1886, when the Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill was before this House, not only did the right hon. and gallant Gentleman move the rejection of that Bill—as he had a perfect right to do—but he also declared that he was in favour of continuing the maintenance of the system of *ex officio* Guardians, and that it was only in proportion as *ex officio* Guardians were maintained in power that local government could be expected to work peaceably and well. But the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary may tell them that he has no alternative; that he is obliged to choose some Member who, like the right hon. and gallant Member for the Isle of Thanet, has committed himself as a champion of the Grand Jury system. But what an extraordinary comment it is upon your whole system of government that when you want a Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland you cannot go to Ireland, but are obliged to go either to Thanet, or, possibly, to Cambridge Borough, or Huntingdon, or anywhere else in the world except to Ireland itself! The only men eligible for these posts are men who have every quality but one, and that is that they cannot find a seat in their own country. This Bill points in the same direction as the declaration made by the Government last Wednesday; this appointment is another sign of the indefinite postponement of the reform of Local Government in Ireland, which was the Unionists' pledge at the last Election, and which the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington has said was the foundation of the Unionist Party. I am sorry not to see the noble Lord in his place now, and I would also liked to have seen the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) in his place, so that we might have heard from him whether he considers this appointment in harmony with the views which he expressed in his speech at Bristol. For my own part, I have never felt that that speech committed the right hon. Baronet in any degree to the cause of Home Rule; but it did perplex me how the right hon. Baronet could remain in a Government which, by this Bill and this appointment, are taking a very serious step away from the direction in which he professes his desire that we should go. I will not dwell further on the Bill, but will move the Motion which stands in my name. I believe the creation of this Office to be wholly unnecessary on the merits—it is not called for by any need of Irish administration; and, instead of being a step towards that reform of Dublin Castle which is admitted to be desirable by every part of the House—instead of being a step forward in the direction of reform, it is distinctly a step backwards. Instead of strengthening the confidence of the Irish people in the impartiality of your administration or in the excellence of your intentions and the sincerity of your pledges, it is a measure which destroys that confidence and plucks it up by the very root. I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time on this day six months.

Sir JOHN SIMON (Dewsbury) said, he thought it desirable, after the important speech which had just been delivered by his right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), that one of the rank and file of hon. Members above the Gangway should state his views on the question. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had referred the House to a series of Questions and Answers which were given some time in the month of May last; but the right hon. Gentleman had abstained from referring to what preceded those Questions and Answers. The appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) to the post which he now held took place in the most extraordinary way, without any previous notice, and without any intimation from the Government of any such intention. The course pursued was a most unusual one, and altogether opposed to that which was generally taken in regard to appointments of that kind. The question of the Constitutional power of the Government to make the appointment at all without statutory authority had been raised more than once, long before the Questions to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred. The matter was raised, no doubt, in the form of Questions, but still it was raised, and it was parried by evasive replies, and none of the Law Officers of the Crown had ventured to express a decided opinion as to the right of the Government to create the Office. It was unusual, at least in modern times, to create a new Office without the authority of Parliament. Yet that was what had been done in the present case. What was the case of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant? He was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman had left his place, but he would say what he intended to say, notwithstanding the right hon. Gentleman's voluntary absence. What was it that the right hon. Gentleman had done? He parried the question of the right to create the Office without consulting Parliament. In the first instance, he told them that there was to be no pay attached to the Office; and he now told them that this Bill created a new Office to which pay was to be attached. He (Sir John Simon) did not know whether that was a Parliamentary proceeding, but he did not hesitate to say, if the usages of the House would permit him, that it was nothing else than a fraud upon the House. His right hon. Friend (Mr. John Morley) had called it trifling with the House, but he took it to be something worse. It was a course of deception practised upon the House. The Government had made the appointment without the usual statutory authority; they combated the question when the appointment had been made; and they said, by way of excuse, they were not going to attach a salary to the Office. Then a few months afterwards they come down to the House with a Bill cut and dried—in form making a new appointment, but in reality confirming the old one. He maintained that that was something more than trifling with Parliament, and that the Government had pursued a deliberate course of deception. He ventured to think that there must be hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House who, in their hearts and consciences, protested against this proceeding. Indeed, he would go further, and would say that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary himself would scout such conduct in private life. Then, with regard to the particular person selected for the Office, his right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne had shown how invidious the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Member for the Isle of Thanet was. He had no personal acquaintance with the right hon. and gallant Member, but if he had he would be prepared to make the same statement that he made now—that a more ill-advised appointment could not possibly have been conceived. The right hon. and gallant Member was most obnoxious to the Irish people, who regarded him as as a political renegade, as an oppressive landlord, and as a man who had committed himself as an antagonist to their wishes, and to everything they most cherished. Yet that was the man who, as his right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne said, was to have his hands on the machinery of Dublin Castle. He (Sir John Simon) failed to see what object the Government had in pursuing the course they had adopted. They were told that the policy of Lord Salisbury was to rule Ireland firmly, but, at the same time, to treat her with justice and equity. Was this appointment a specimen of the equity with which the Irish people were to be treated? Was it calculated to bring about conciliation, or induce them to become loyal and contented? On every occasion when a chance was given, instead of consulting the wishes of the Irish people, instead of considering the direction in which their feelings went, they were treated with entire indifference. The Government said—"We will send whom we like to govern you, and appoint men who are obnoxious to you." And yet the Government complained that the Irish people were not loyal and contented. Such a course, he ventured to think, could only have one effect. He did not impute to the right hon. Gentleman and the Government that that was their intention; but, if it were their intention, they could certainly do nothing more than they were now doing to exasperate the Irish people, and to drive them into extremes. They had already greatly exasperated them by nearly a century of Coercion Bills since the Union, and they had driven them further and further away from this country; and on that side of the House they had begun to think it was high time that a different policy should be pursued. Long before the question of Home Rule was raised in 1886, he had voted for Mr. Butt's Motion in reference to Ireland. For many years hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House had been anxious to avoid coercion, and to try and govern Ireland by the ordinary law. The best way to do that was to consider the wishes of her people, and if they would not give them the Home Rule they desired, at least to treat them with consideration and show some desire to consult their wishes, and not to insult them and show their complete antagonism to them in every way. He heartily concurred in the

Motion of his right hon. Friend, and begged to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he wished, in the first instance, to reply to the observation of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) that the discussion upon the Bill had been exhausted on a previous occasion. The right hon. Gentleman knew very well that on that occasion the Budget stood as the second Order of the Day, and that important speeches were expected. Therefore, after discussing the present Bill for about 20 minutes he got upon his legs, and said that in view of the important matters that were about to be brought before the House it was advisable not to discuss the Bill any further, but to reserve the discussion for a future stage of the measure. He would not say that in taking this course he was anxious to consult the convenience of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, but he had considered more the convenience of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith), and, having consulted that convenience, the result was that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary now came down with a statement "that the Bill had already been exhaustively discussed." He thought the House must have noticed the unusual anxiety evinced by the right hon. Gentleman that night to vindicate the character of the Government. In fact, the right hon. Gentleman intimated that he would not have spoken at all if it had not been from a desire to vindicate the Government from the charge of breach of faith. The anxiety of the right hon. Gentleman was not at all astonishing, seeing that the political morality of the Government had got a little out of credit. The right hon. Gentleman, however, had taken a curious way of vindicating the superior morality of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman referred arbitrarily to a particular date, but he told the House nothing of what preceded or followed the Questions that were put upon that day. It would have been better if the right hon. Gentleman had made one or two references. He found that on the 19th of March last year the right hon. Gentleman said distinctly that no salary was attached to the Office of Under Secretary. On the 14th of April, in reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), he said—

> "I believe the grounds are that it is not an Office of profit under the Crown."—(3 *Hansard*, [313] 888.)

He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) could quite understand the dialectical distinction the right hon. Gentleman now made; but on the 15th of April the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, in reply to a Question put by the right hon. Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) as to the authority by which the Office of Parliamentary Under Secretary had been constituted, and whether documents could be produced showing the nature and duties of the Office, and also whether the Government had power to create Parliamentary Offices without limit, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury gave as the sole defence of the Government for establishing the Office that it was not a paid Office, and therefore implied that it was to remain an unpaid Office. The House was led to believe that the Government had had a right to create the Office, because there was no payment attached to it, and that certainly implied that there would be no right to attach a salary to it until authority was given by Parliament. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] Then, why did not hon. Gentlemen say that last year? They first created the Office on the ground that it was unpaid—they created an Office which would be unConstitutional if it were paid—and, after the Office had been created, they turned round and said they were going to transform it from an unpaid to a paid Office. Well, he contended that that was equivocation. [*Laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman opposite laughed at that. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would pardon him if he said that he did not consider him the highest moral authority, although, in another sense, an authority on the doctrine of equivocation.

MR. SPEAKER: I wish to point out to the hon. Member that his last expression exceeds the courtesies of debate, and should, therefore, be withdrawn.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that he would withdraw it. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary gave last year as a reason for the creation of the Office that he had too much to do. Well, the Parliamentary Under Secretary was now away from his work, and yet the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary did not seem to be a terribly over-burdened Minister in that House. He thought the right hon. Gentleman ought to be a little more consistent. When he was banqueted by his friend, the right hon. Gentleman spoke in a light and airy strain of the Parliamentary contests in which it was his daily lot to engage; but they did not seem to disturb the roseate calm of the right hon. Gentleman. It was his (Mr. T. P. O'Connor's) daily lot to engage in Parliamentary contests, but they never seriously disturbed his spirit, and he thought that nothing could be lighter or more easy. According to the right hon. Gentleman, however, his duties in that House were so onerous that he required the help of a Parliamentary Under Secretary. He was almost afraid to say anything with regard to the late Mr. Forster, because he knew the class of argument the right hon. Gentleman was likely to use against him. He thought, however, that that argument had become somewhat played out. At one period the late Mr. Forster, when Chief Secretary, made 13 journeys from England to Ireland within three months. He should like to know how many journeys the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary had made to Ireland, because he believed that the right hon. Gentleman was somewhat remarkable for the unfrequency of his visits to that country. The reason assigned for this Bill was the number of Questions put in the House of Commons to the Chief Secretary, and the business he had to transact. But the right hon. Gentleman, compared with other Chief Secretaries, had far less business to do. Whenever a Tory Member went down to the country he called attention to the altered state of the House of Commons. There was a time, he told the people, when the House was disturbed by disorder, and by constant Irish debates; but, under the happier *régime*, they were now enabled to get through the Business of Parliament, obstruction and disorder having ceased, and the Irish Business having been relegated to an Under Secretary. The Government were themselves responsible for the statement that Irish Business gave less trouble now than it did before. He concurred with his right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne that it was a matter of regret that they should have to allude at all to the personal part of the question. In regard to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel King-Harman), he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had no feeling of personal hostility towards him. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman and many others were paying the penalty of their sins in the past. He hoped to see the right hon. and gallant Gentleman back again in his place in that House, and he hoped that when all the present troubles were over he would be able to take that share in the government of Ireland to which his position entitled him. He, therefore, disclaimed being animated by any feeling of personal hostility. But the Government who appointed the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to a political position might fairly be asked to look at his political record. He had no wish to refer to the past relations of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman with the Nationalist Party. He would deal with that subject in a very summary manner, and he would only call attention to the fact that the first political address of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to a constituency in Ireland was written, revised, and composed almost entirely by Mr. Patrick Egan, the late Secretary of the National League. He did not think that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was any the worse for that, but he thought that fact ought to be known when Members of the Government were always condemning Irish Members for their criminality in associating with him in America. What would they say of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Under Secretary for associating with Mr. Patrick Egan, O'Donovan Rossa, and other patriots of that kind? As a matter of fact, the present Home Rule movement owed a great deal to the Under Secretary—quite as much as to any other man living. It also owed something to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews), who at one time went down to Dungarvan to raise the glorious flag of Irish Nationality. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the awakening influence he had exercised on that occasion. The Home Rule movement owed a great deal to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Under Secretary, but the fact that he was an Orangeman did not endear him to the Irish people. He was now in Office, and that, of course, made all the difference. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) would only say one word as to the relations of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman with his own tenantry. The reductions made on his estate had been among the largest in Ireland, having ranged from 35 to as much as 60 per cent, and the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was engaged in a constant war with his tenants. We sent to India officials who held the scales of justice evenly, and were absolutely impartial as between the warring races there; and his ideal of a Unionist Government was one which dealt with the Irish people in exactly the same way. He did not think a Government like that would, in the least degree, wean the Irish people from their Nationalist aspirations; but it would do much to restore law and order, and to put down angry passions. But what did Her Majesty's Government do? They appointed one of their most prominent and most obnoxious champions, and they took him from one class to help them to make war on another class. If they had taken a person from amongst those who formed the majority of the people, it might, perhaps, have been from their point of view wrong; but it would, at least, have been the lesser evil. They would not then have exasperated the majority, as they had now done, by selecting the right hon. and gallant Gentleman from the ranks of the minority. He could not imagine how an arrangement could be regarded as satisfactory when the Chief Secretary for Ireland, on the one hand, was a Scotchman, and his Parliamentary Under Secretary, on the other, a Representative of the landlords. Not only would it be impossible for the Under Secretary to get a seat in three-fifths of Ireland, but he could not get the representation of a constituency throughout the whole of the country. Let the right hon. and gallant Gentleman go down to Boyle, and he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) ventured to say that he could not get elected as a Chairman of the Board of Guardians of the Union. ["Hear, hear!"] An hon. Gentleman cheered that observation; but he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) repeated that that was the case; and yet the Bill made the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the head of all the Boards of Guardians, for he was to be at the head of the Local Government Board. The whole statement of the case seemed like an extract from Gilbert's representations of topsy-turvyism. As Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland, he would be largely responsible for the maintenance of law and order in Ireland. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was not going to refer to some of the passages in the past of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman; everyone was liable to err, and he maintained that too much importance ought not to be attached to matters of that kind. But he had been present at a meeting in Dungannon, at which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was present, and was a member, and when the party of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman drove the Nationalists out of the square in the town where they had appointed to hold their meeting, and took possession of the platform on which they were going to speak. It was the right hon. and gallant Gentleman who on that occasion deprived them of their Constitutional right of addressing the people of Dungannon, and he could tell the House that there was scarcely a man in the crowd who accompanied him who was not armed. He would not call that the best way of giving an example of the preservation of law and order in Ireland. But, further, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman made speeches which were a direct incitement to the use of arms. What did the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary think of that? Then, sentences of imprisonment were inflicted in Ireland for the most trivial offences against public order—if offences they could be called. If a policeman gave a howl for the Chief Secretary for Ireland it was thought nothing of; but if a man gave a howl for a Nationalist Member he received a sentence of three months' imprisonment, and while that was being done the Government placed over the heads of the Irish people a man who had incited to armed violence against his political opponents. He maintained that that was a most evil example to set the people of Ireland, and that the Government ought to have adopted a different course. For these reasons, Irish Members would feel it their duty to fight out this matter with the Government to the end.

Colonel SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) said, he should not like that debate to terminate without expressing, for his own part, and on the part of the Party with which he acted, the views they held with regard to the appointment of his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel King-Harman). He (Colonel Saunderson) had one complaint to make with regard to the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. T. P. O'Connor). The speech of the hon. Member was characterized by humour, as was invariably the case; and he had raised one objection to the appointment of his hon. and gallant Friend—namely, that he was not in perfect sympathy with all classes of the Irish people. But he (Colonel Saunderson) asked, where a man could be found who would be in sympathy with all classes of the Irish people? He supposed, then, that they would have to get a man who had belonged to all Parties. Perhaps, if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) were sent over to Ireland, he might more completely fulfil all the conditions he referred to. But there was one very remarkable objection taken by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, who said that they were treating the Irish people in the wrong way, and that they ought to govern Ireland as they governed India; in fact, that they ought to treat Irishmen as if they were Hindoos.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he had stated nothing of the kind. What he had said was, that in the appointment of officials, the Government ought to proceed in the same way as they had in the case of India—that was to say, send out those who were absolutely impartial as between the warring classes there.

Colonel SAUNDERSON: They had it now from the hon. Gentleman that they were to deal with Irishmen as they dealt with the inhabitants of Hindostan. The hon. Gentleman then went on to point out, as a blot in the history of the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland, that he could not get elected as a Poor Law Guardian for the town in which he resided. But the hon. Gentleman might just as well blame him (Colonel Saunderson), because he was not elected for the County of Cavan, in which he lived. He denied that any man who was not a Home Ruler could be elected Chairman of any Board of Guardians in Ireland, in any town in which the National League was supreme; and he maintained that the statement of the hon. Gentleman, that it was impossible for the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to be elected Chairman of the Board of Guardians in the town of Boyle, was one of the very strongest arguments which could be urged against granting local self-government to Ireland. He could give many quotations to show, year after year, that the elections of Boards of Guardians were carried out strictly on the grounds laid down by the National League, and upon no other. Men had been boycotted, because they had voted for Guardians who were not supported by that organization. The hon. Gentleman asked how they could have confidence in a man who had been so objected to. There was no man that he (Colonel Saunderson) knew in Ireland who had spent more money on his estate than his right hon. and gallant Friend, and no man that he was acquainted with in Ireland had borrowed larger sums of money and made use of that money to give labour and employment to the people amongst whom he resided. He thought the House was the authority to decide whether an Under Secretary for Ireland should be appointed. The mode of procedure on the part of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite and the Gentlemen below the Gangway was to make a personal attack on the character of his right hon. and gallant Friend. They said his record would not bear inspection. He (Colonel Saunderson) was willing to admit that there was one flaw in his record. His right hon. and gallant Friend was once a Home Ruler; but in the course of years he had ceased to belong to that Party, and no one could deny that Home Rule in former times was a very different thing from what it is now. It was because his right hon. and gallant Friend had ceased to be a Home Ruler and had become a Unionist that he was called a traitor. But what did they call those who, during their whole lives, had been Unionists, and who, in advancing years, had become Home Rulers? He could not frame a Parliamentary phrase to answer that question, and he would leave it to hon. Gentlemen opposite. For his part, he looked upon it as a good sign when a man advanced in years took up a loyal and just policy. If his right hon. and gallant Friend had, on the contrary, abandoned the Unionist principles and become a Home Ruler later in life, it would have been said that, instead of learning wisdom, he had entered upon his second childhood. He thought it a great proof of his right hon. and gallant Friend having with advancing years also advanced in wisdom, that he had departed from the mistaken policy of his earlier days and adopted the policy which he held now, and which was adopted by men of sound common sense and patriotic principle. With regard to the other attacks made on his right hon. and gallant Friend of a direct personal nature, he should say nothing. He thought, as a rule, that that House was generally intolerant of personal attacks which had no connection with the political questions on which they might be made, and he thought his right hon. and gallant Friend might pass by those insults without notice. In his (Colonel Saunderson's) opinion, insults were governed by the law which affected falling bodies—that was to say, that the amount of injury which they inflicted depended upon the height from which they fell, and, therefore, upon that ground he did not think that his right hon. and gallant Friend would be injured. With regard to the statement made by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. T. W. Russell), that the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was very unpopular, even in Ulster, he might remark that nothing had astonished him more in all his life than to hear from the hon. Member for South Tyrone, that the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would be looked upon as a menace and insult to the farmers in the North of Ireland. Would the hon. Member get up now—[Mr. T. W. Russell: Yes.]—and deliberately state that the Ulster Unionists were outraged by this appointment? He (Colonel Saunderson) absolutely denied it, and he thought he had just as good right to speak in the name of the Ulster Unionist Party as the hon. Member for South Tyrone. He was sure that his hon. Friend spoke in all sincerity; but he was, unfortunately, a Gentleman of very vivid imagination, and he had no doubt that was the reason why he was so successful as a speaker. He was quite sure that his hon. Friend believed in his heart that this would be an unpopular appointment; but the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had, at least in Ulster, met with almost universal acceptance, and he most distinctly stated that on behalf of those whom he represented in that Province. He believed that his right hon. and gallant Friend had shown himself thoroughly diligent in the discharge of the duties of his Office, that he had carried out his work to the satisfaction of the House, and that there would be unqualified satisfaction at the manner in which he discharged it in future. With regard to the payment of the Office, he would only observe that the labourer was worthy of his hire. He had understood when the Bill was brought in, that, although the Government did not propose then that it would be a paid Office, it would be so in future. That he believed to be the intention of the Government, and he considered that they had fulfilled their pledges in asking for the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) said, he believed that the Government had made this appointment because the Chief Secretary for Ireland wished to avoid meeting Irish Members face to face in that House on the subject of Questions. There was nothing which showed whether or not a man in Office knew anything of Ireland more than the way in which he answered Questions in that House—not only those Questions which appeared on the Paper, but others by which they were supplemented. He thought the House would bear him up when he said that was one of the most difficult and trying Offices which had been performed by previous Chief Secretaries. He could quite fancy that when Lord Salisbury asked the Chief Secretary to undertake that work, the right hon Gentleman might have expressed his unwillingness to undertake the whole of it, and that he was then informed that he would be provided with a Parliamentary Under Secretary to relieve him of a portion of his duties. The appointment could not be justified on the ground of the immense amount of work which the Chief Secretary had to discharge. He recollected that the right hon. Gentleman had told the House last year that he had been engaged on two very important Bills; but it had been declared over and over again that this Session was to be devoted to English legislation, and that there would be no legislation for Ireland. If, therefore, there was a reason last year for having an Under Secretary, the necessity no longer existed. The Chief Secretary wanted to combine two things absolutely incompatible; he wanted to have comfort and rest and indolence on the one side, and the hard Parliamentary work of a Cabinet Minister on the other. He could quite understand Lord Salisbury wishing to see the Chief Secretary assisted in his work; but he did not think the House should facilitate the work of the Department in that manner, seeing that all former Chief Secretaries had done their own work. There was no need of assistance in the present case, and, therefore, it was that the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) had not for a moment alleged that it was necessary to make this appointment; he simply went on the personal question, and tried to show that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet Division of the County of Kent was suited for the post. He (Mr. M'Donald) was not present at the last discussion; but he had read the speech of the Chief Secretary in *The Standard,* and he found that the right hon. Gentleman gave as his reason for the appointment, that the Local Government Board in Ireland wanted looking after, and seemed to think that the Under Secretary would be able to do the work which he was unable to do, owing to his appointment as Chief Secretary. Did anyone believe that that was the motive of this appointment? Did anyone believe that the Chief Secretary was so very anxious about Local Government in Ireland? The right hon. Gentleman had shown his anxiety for it by procuring the rejection of the Bill for County Government, which was brought forward by the hon. Member for North Kildare (Mr. Carew). Those were nothing else than flimsy pretexts, and they did not represent the grounds on which the appointment was made, and hon. Members on those Benches wanted to know what those grounds were. As to the personal qualifications of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman he (Mr. M'Donald) quite agreed with the remark made by his hon. Friend the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) that a private passage in the life of the Under Secretary ought not to be alleged against him, and he did not want to allege it. Whenever he heard such an allegation, the words always rose to his lips, "He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone." But looking at the public acts of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, he defied anyone to disprove that he was a convicted rack-renter, and that he was regarded by the great mass of the people of Ireland as a renegade. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman was once in favour of Home Rule in Ireland, but now that he was a Member of the Government and wished to have his official position recognised as such, he was working against the class for which he once acted. He believed that the people of Ireland scorned such a character as that, and he maintained that the Government had no right to govern Ireland in absolute defiance of the wishes of the people. They knew it had been the fashion to insult the people of Ireland, they knew that they had been taunted with their brogue, and that it was said that a single Member on the Front Bench opposite was worth the whole of the 86 Irish Representatives, but he mistook the character of the English nation if they allowed that state of things to go on, which, to a people like the Irish, must be extremely distasteful. If they were fighting only for the interests of their Party and the cause of Home Rule in future, he was not so sure that they would have any great reason to object to this appointment, for he was convinced that the Under Secretary would lead the Government into serious blunders and mistakes which would far more than counterbalance any temporary advantage which the Chief Secretary might get from the appointment. He (Mr. M'Donald) was surprised at the use which the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh made of the argument of his hon. Friend (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) when he said that he had suggested that Irishmen should be treated like Hindoos. He objected to the burlesquing of his hon. Friend's argument. His hon. Friend had simply said that there were opposing races and creeds in India, some being Hindoos and some Mussulmen, and that the Government sent out to India officials who would hold the scales of justice evenly between those opposing classes, and that the same thing ought to be done with regard to Ireland. As he had said, if they thought only of the permanent interests of the Home Rule Party, they might welcome this appointment; but when they thought of the good of the Irish people, and the general principles on which the country ought to be governed, they said it was no less than a shame to appoint a man who was a declared partizan, and who was regarded as hostile to their interests by the great mass of the Irish people—a man who was once in favour of the principles of the majority of his countrymen, but was now against them. Further, when the right hon. and gallant Gentleman tried to answer Questions in that House, he spoke in such low tones that it was extremely difficult for Members on those Benches to hear what he said. It was very necessary that Questions put in that House should be answered in such a manner that they could be distinctly heard. Circumstances had made it necessary that he should use his hearing a good deal, and he could state most positively that when the right hon. and gallant Gentleman got up to answer his Questions it was with the greatest difficulty that he could catch his replies, owing to the low tone of voice which he adopted, and for that reason, if there were no others, he should object to his appointment.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, after the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson), the House would, perhaps, allow him to state what he felt with regard to the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman as Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland, and notwithstanding the remark of the hon. and gallant Member, he should do that in no imaginative way whatever. He would not deny that his hon. and gallant Friend had as good right as anyone in that House to represent the views of the people in the North of Ireland; but he would tell him that he did not exactly represent the tenant farmers in Ulster. He had no doubt that the appointment was approved by the landlords and by a large number of the Orange leaders, and by many of the Orange rank and file, and for those the hon. and gallant Gentleman was entitled to speak; but he (Mr. T. W. Russell) claimed to have a tolerable knowledge of the Ulster tenant farmers, both Liberals and Orangemen, and he adhered most emphatically to the statement he had made on the first night of the debate—namely, that these men looked on this appointment as practically a declaration of war against the tenantry of Ireland. What was the actual state of affairs? They found that his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was a great Irish landowner, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was a great Scotch landowner, and now they found in the Parliamentary Under Secretary another great landowner. That being the case, the tenant farmers of Ireland would have been more than human if they could look on those in Dublin Castle and expect to be fairly dealt with. He looked upon the appointment absolutely and entirely from a tenant farmer's point of view. He was not going back on the record of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, either in regard to politics or in regard to his private life; and he would declare that he had no other feeling towards the right hon. and gallant Gentleman except that of personal friendship—he viewed his appointment solely in the light of the effect it would have upon tenant farmers, and in that respect he felt that it was not good for Ireland. His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Armagh was more entitled to speak for the people of the towns in the district which he ably represented than he was for the tenant farmers of Ulster. He (Mr. T. W. Russell) did not know that he had any right to make an appeal to those Liberal Unionists who sat around him, because they did not look for advice to the Irish Unionist Members who opposed this Bill; but if he might make such an appeal, it would be that they should leave the entire responsibility for this appointment to Her Majesty's Government. He thought the matter had now been sufficiently debated, and that they ought to go to a Division; but before doing so, he wished to state his belief that the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would prove a disastrous one in every way, and as such he (Mr. T. W. Russell) should not lose a single opportunity of recording his vote against it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he rose to conclude the debate so far as the Government were concerned. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. T. W. Russell) had said that his objection to the Bill consisted in the fact that the Government of Ireland was handed over to three great landlords, the Lord Lieutenant, his (Mr. Balfour's) right hon. and gallant Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary, and himself. No doubt it was the misfortune and not the fault of all three of them to be owners of land. No doubt they would rather be owners of something else if they could. But he would ask the House, ought that fact to be visited upon them too severely? Was it not an offence that brought its own penalty, and did they not suffer sufficiently from being landlords without having visited on their own persons every description of political unfairness and injustice?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, he certainly did not impute injustice to the right hon. Gentleman. What he said, was, that the tenants of Ireland would be more than human if they could regard Dublin Castle without some suspicion.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he wanted to ask the House this question. If an Under Secretary was to be appointed to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, ought he to be an Irishman, or ought he not? [An Irish Member: No, no!] He ought not to be an Irishman? Well, he certainly thought he ought, and he wanted to know whether human ingenuity could find anywhere an Irishman who was not the object of darkest suspicion to a very large number of his countrymen. It was suggested that a Member of that House should be chosen who was not a strong Party man, and who was unconnected with organizations in Ireland on one side or the other. But where was such a man to be found? The hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, said the Irish Under Secretary ought to be selected as the Governors of India were chosen—foreigners who stood outside the different Parties in the country. But that was just what it was impossible to do with regard to Ireland. The men sent out to govern India were not Hindoos or Mussulmen.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: No; they are often Irishmen. [" Hear, hear! "]

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he endorsed those cheers; no doubt they were often Irishmen, but never Hindoos or Mussulmen. If they were to carry out the principles the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool advocated for Ireland, Irishmen must be for ever excluded from the government of Ireland. If they were to have an Under Secretary, the alternatives were, either that Under Secretary was not to be an Irishman, or, if he was to be an Irishman, he was to be selected on the same principles and to be open to just the same objections as had been brought against the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet Division of Kent. But he passed from the speech of his hon. Friend who had just sat down, and from the speech of the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, to the only other speech in this debate delivered against the Bill which he thought required any notice from the Government, and that was the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley). He confessed he listened to the opening part of that speech with considerable pain. He had been divided from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne by very sharp differences of opinion through the whole of their common political lives. He had, nevertheless, up till that night, felt that he had in the right hon. Gentleman an opponent who, however severe he might be in his criticisms, however harsh his language might have been in the heat of debate, would not willingly and deliberately pervert, after repeated and clear explanations, any action or word of a political opponent in order to hold him up to public opprobrium. He had not hitherto classed him with some of those controversialists who were to be found among those with whom he acted, and he had never supposed the right hon. Gentleman would sink to the arts of which some among his followers were not ashamed. [" Oh, oh! " *and Cheers.*] That illusion he was sorry to say, and he could assure the House that he felt it deeply, had now for ever been dispelled. He came down to the House that day and gave, in as conciliatory a spirit as he could, what he then thought, and still thought, were conclusive evidence of the undoubted intentions held by his right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury and by every one of his Colleagues, intentions to which they—all being honourable men—were prepared to give testimony, and he had showed that not only were those their intentions, but that there was clear Parliamentary proof that those intentions had been made known to the House. Those who were present and heard his few opening remarks would admit that he made that statement—a statement that he, foolishly it might be, but fondly believed the right hon. Gentleman would accept—in the most conciliatory manner possible. He said nothing that should have aroused irritation or would justify an embittered reply. But the right hon. Gentleman, apparently unwilling to waste the prepared sarcasms with which he had come down to the House, brushed that all on one side, and, in a manner that reflected very little credit on his candour, deliberately repeated an accusation that had been a thousand times refuted in that House. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] However, he would now pass from the personal part of this controversy, which was very painful to him. ["Hear, hear!" *from the Nationalist Members.*] Yes; much as it might astonish Members from Ireland, he could assure the House that it was with a great deal of pain that he thus spoke of a person for whom he had hitherto entertained so great a respect as the right hon. Gentleman. He could not complain of the controversial part of the speech, except that it put him in a difficult position, seeing that the right hon. Gentleman had brought forward arguments which rendered it necessary for him, in replying to them, to be more egotistical than he should desire. He was far from comparing himself with any of the eminent men who had been his Predecessors. He did not put himself upon an equality with them; but he thought that everyone of them since 1881, with the exception of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, who, for reasons well known to the House, had a very quiet and easy time of it, would have done his work better and been a more efficient administrator, if he had had the advantage of some such assistance as that of an Under Secretary. The work, however, that fell to his (Mr. Balfour's) lot was, in some important respects, different to that which fell to the lot of his Predecessors. Under the present arrangement every Irish legislative measure, large or small, was in the hands of the Chief Secretary. But that was not the system adopted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. The Land Bill of 1881 was not in the charge of Mr. Forster. He was not even the second in charge of it, though possibly he was consulted about it. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was himself in charge of the Bill, and his right-hand man was the Irish Law Officer of the time. Then, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) was Chief Secretary, the Crimes Bill was introduced and passed during the Session of 1882. But that Bill was not in his charge, but in the charge of the then Home Secretary the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt). That might have been a good or bad arrangement; but it, at any rate, relieved the Chief Secretary of a good deal of work. Even during the easy administration of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne the two great Irish measures introduced were not in his hands. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian took charge of the Home Rule Bill and the Land Purchase Bill. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) did not complain of that arrangement. Having regard to the importance of those measures, it might have been right that they should be introduced by the Prime Minister himself. But that was not the present arrangement. All the Irish measures, whether big or small, brought forward by the Government since he (Mr. Balfour) became Chief Secretary were prepared, brought in, and worked through the House by himself. He thought that was the best arrangement; but, however that might be, it distinctly marked off his position from that of some of his Predecessors. There was also this difference between his position and that of two or three of his Predecessors—that they were not in the Cabinet. Mr. Forster was, and so was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. But the result of Mr. Forster having no assistance was that he suffered in health, and, besides, found himself unable to attend to anything whatever except Irish Business. That was not a proper position for a Member of the Cabinet to be placed in. A Member of the Cabinet was supposed to be able to pay attention to other matters which were outside the purview of his special office. Was it desirable that the Chief Secretary should be the one Member of the Cabinet who could not attend to other Business besides that of his own Department? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, when Home Secretary, took charge of the Crimes Bill, though it was outside his Department, and he was enabled to do so because he had the assistance of an Under Secretary, and, he (Mr. Balfour) believed, an Under Secretary at the time in the House of Commons. At all events, it was not uncommon for a Home Secretary to have an Under Secretary in the House; and if the House were to treat the Secretary for Ireland as it treated every other important Minister in the Cabinet, it was bound to give him an Under Secretary, who might relieve him of some of the less important part of his work. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. John Morley) spoke of the Bill as having been brought in for the purpose of finding something for the Under Secretary to do. Did the right hon. Gentleman suppose there was no work for such an official, or did he forget the enormous amount of detail that had to be got through in connection with the Local Government Board and other matters relating to Irish administration? The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) had attacked the Bill probably with more bitterness than anyone else; but he admitted that his objection was not an objection to the appointment of an Under Secretary, but a personal objection. He was glad to find, however, that the personal element which was so painfully prominent in the earlier stage of the Bill had somewhat sunk out of sight; and he especially congratulated the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool in having abstained from attacking a man who was not present to defend himself. Everyone knew what was the real objection to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman on the part of the Irish Members opposite—namely, that some 20 years ago he had changed his opinion with regard to Home Rule, that change having been conscientiously made, and at a time when Home Rule bore a different complexion from that which it bore at the present day, and when it was advocated by a Party having very different Leaders. Nobody pretended that he was not a man of ability, industry, and capacity, or that he was incapable of carrying on Parliamentary work efficiently; but hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway could not forget that he was once a Home Ruler. They had never forgiven him for being what, in their language, they described as a renegade and a traitor. After all, in their own opinion, it could not be a criminal offence to change one's opinion on Home Rule. It must be remembered that they were acquainted with statesmen and politicians of high honour who had very recently seen sufficient reason for changing their own opinions on this subject; and if that were so—he did not say it to embitter debate—surely they ought to forgive a change of opinion on the part of his right hon. and gallant Friend, which, as everyone who knew him must admit, was absolutely conscientious. He would not detain the House any longer; but he hoped they would consider the question as sufficiently debated, and allow the House to come at once to a final decision.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.) said, he was surprised that no comment had as yet been made on the position given to this Bill on the Order Book. Two Parliamentary nights ago they were engaged in discussing the Budget Bill in Committee, and on that occasion the Government made a piteous appeal to proceed to a later hour on the ground of the immense damage that would be done to the public interest if the taxes with which the Bill dealt were allowed to hang in mid air and not brought into operation. Acting on that intimation, after a little remonstrance, a Morning Sitting on Friday was agreed to, which entailed the sacrifice of half the time the House would otherwise have given to the consideration of a great educational question. But, when they opened the Order Book on Saturday morning, hon. Members found to their surprise the Budget Bill placed in the second rank in order that this Bill might take precedence of it. He thought there were only two explanations of this—the first, that the protestations on Thursday were insincere; and the second, that the Government wished to place this Bill in front of a Bill of the high importance of the Budget Bill in order to compress within a narrower limit than would otherwise be possible the power of debating this Bill. That was a manœuvre that might or might not succeed, but his experience was that even though a few days or hours were gained by a manœuvre of this kind, the result was never, in the long run, very satisfactory. He would rather have expected that the Government would have endeavoured to hide away this measure in the darkest corner of the Notice Paper than to give it a prominent position, for he should be much surprised if the great majority of hon. Members on the Conservative side were not heartily sick of it; and he would go further, and, although this involved a great stretch of imagination, express the conviction that even the Allies of the Government on the Liberal side of the House, who were less elastic in their opinions, and much less open to the influence of argument or circumstance, were somewhat lukewarm in its support. The Government must, he thought, have put the question seriously to themselves whether, after all, the game was worth the candle—whether from the creation of the Office any good that might come would atone for the waste of time and irritation that the Bill produced. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had alluded to the misunderstanding on the point whether this was to be a paid Office or not. With regard to that he would not say there had been deliberate equivocation, but an impression was created in the minds of hon. Members on his side of the House, and no steps were taken to remove it. On the 14th of April in last Session they were told by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that a salary was not attached to the Office—[Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Was not.]—Quite so; but why did not the right hon. Gentleman say it was the intention of the Government to attach a salary to the Office? Then, on the 15th of April, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) was even more emphatic, and said—

> "It is right to state distinctly that no salary or profit is attached to the Office."—(3 *Hansard*, [313] 1,003.)

Then his hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) the other day asked the Government when they changed their mind, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary said, they never changed their mind. All he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) could say was that in that case their language was most unfortunate. The impression created on any man's mind in looking into this series of quotations would be, that it would take a very clever man to find out under which thimble the pea happened to be at a particular moment. He agreed that it would be not only unreasonable, but also improper and unconstitutional that any such arrangement should continue as that a public Parliamentary official should discharge functions without receiving a salary, because in that case he would be withdrawn from direct Parliamentary responsibility, which was the keystone of representative government. He was, therefore, glad that the Government had introduced this Bill to regularize the situation, but would not it have been much better if the Government had cancelled the appointment and dropped the proposal altogether? As to the personal aspect of the case, as had been pointed out by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), the Irish Executive had already too much the appearance of being dominated by landlord influence, and it was deplorable that any steps should have been taken to aggravate it. In many cases it was as mischievous to seem to do a thing as to do it. It was most unfortunate that the Government should do anything to strengthen the impression of Irishmen that the administration of their country was dominated by landlords—an impression they could not help entertaining when they saw it contained not only three landlords, but three active, militant, and aggressive landlords. With regard to the political career of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) it had been admitted by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) that he was unpopular in his own district and would not be elected to the Board of Guardians in the neighbouring town. The explanation which the hon. and gallant Member gave, was that no one could be expected to be elected to Boards of Guardians in opposition to the National League. Why, he thought that the National League was extinct, that it was in a moribund state, with its back broken by the Chief Secretary! But whatever force might be attached to these personal considerations, how much greater did it become when it was found that this Office was demanded by no public interest. He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) would commend that consideration to the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) and his followers, who had been going about the Public Service seeking what Offices they might devour and what Establishments they might reduce. It was not always easy to abolish an existing Office; but it was comparatively easy to refuse to support a Government which you ordinarily followed when it proposed to create an Office which was superfluous. The case for this new Office was that the Chief Secretary was overworked, and they had to go back to Mr. Forster to find an analogous case—a case, that is, in which the Chief Secretary was the Cabinet Minister responsible for the Government of Ireland. But the case of Mr. Forster was not entirely parallel, because the business Mr. Forster had to do was much more difficult. The condition of Ireland was then very critical; murder and outrage stalked abroad, and secret societies were spreading everywhere; so that it was not merely with public meetings which were a little too demonstrative Mr. Forster had to deal; and it was not necessary for him, in order to put men in prison, to give the dignity of crime to acts which elsewhere would be held to be innocent and even praiseworthy. Mr. Forster had plenty of natural crime to deal with, and did not require to invent artificial crime. Yet, although he had constantly to be going to and fro between London and Dublin, he conducted the Parliamentary Business with the help of his Law Officer. His Colleagues assisted him, no doubt, with the heavier Bills. But what was the case at present? Besides the Chief Secretary, the Lord Chancellor of Ireland is a Member of the Cabinet—an arrangement, by the way, open to great objection, for the less the Head of the Judiciary had to do with Executive work, the better. And yet another Cabinet Minister, the Lord Privy Seal, answers for the Irish Government in the House of Lords. So that in this economical Government it took five men to do the work formerly overtaken by two. In the discussions last year he ventured to raise a protest on this subject, and was immediately overwhelmed by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, who, in a tone of indignation and dignified rebuke, practically told him that he knew nothing about it; he said that "the circumstances and conditions were absolutely abnormal;" and the right hon. Gentleman added that—

> "Some assistance must be given to the Chief Secretary to enable him to give due consideration to the preparation and submission to Parliament of measures which the Government deem to be of the utmost importance to the peace, prosperity, and happiness of Ireland."

But where were those measures now? The Coercion Bill of last year—which was deemed necessary to the peace, prosperity, and happiness of Ireland—and the Land Bill were, no doubt, large measures. Reverting to Mr. Forster's time, it must be remarked that if he thought it his duty to carry a stringent measure of coercion, he did not stop there; he took a broad view of the Irish Question; he was a man of warm, sympathetic feelings, and he always applied a remedy as well as imposed a restraint. But the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had no remedial measures, and the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had told them that remedial measures should be put off until the Irish people should acquire such a frame of mind as the right hon. Gentleman thought proper.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that he had already stated to the House that he would introduce certain Bills dealing with Public Works in Ireland before Whitsuntide.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, it was quite possible some Bill of that kind might be brought in towards the end of the Session; but if so, it was very unlikely that it would pass.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that there were two very large and important Irish Bills on the Table that night—one relating to the Land Commission and the other to the Supreme Court of Judicature.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, that he had been speaking of the past and the present, and not of the future. So far as the Session had gone, the only Irish legislative difficulty had been the measure now before them, and as no one that he ever heard of desired this measure except the right hon. Gentleman, the difficulty was of his own creation. He had, of course, other Parliamentary difficulties to contend with, arising from his administration in Ireland; but he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) would make bold to say that half of them would have been avoided had his administration been marked by greater care. He was quite ready to admit that if the effect of this Bill would be to disengage the Chief Secretary from his Parliamentary duties, and to enable him to give his personal attention to the details of the administration of the law, on the spot, in Ireland—and especially of the Coercion Act—it would be some—though he did not say it would be a complete—justification for this proposed new Office. It was most essential that, in such a state of things as existed in Ireland, everyone, down to the humblest official, should feel the hand of the Government directly guiding and regulating. It was only too apparent that that was not the condition of things which now existed in Ireland. But this plea could not be urged by the Government in the face of our experience of the last 12 months. The right hon. Gentleman had had this auxiliary assistance for a year. Had he availed himself of it, to go over and direct affairs? No; he had remained in the House, exhibiting to their most genuine admiration his great dialectical skill and employing the subtlety of his mind in discovering excuses for the blunders of his subordinates. The abnormal circumstances which existed last year, and which might have been an excuse for the creation of this Office, had passed away, and now there was no Parliamentary, legislative, or administrative necessity for the formation of such a post. He hoped that the Government would find some decent pretext—he was sure it would be a welcome pretext—for dropping this Bill. It created an Office which was entirely superfluous, and for which no reason could be urged. The proposal was extravagant and wasteful, and if any further condemnation was necessary, they had it in the fact that the present holder, from whom it could not be dissociated, was the object of such distrust and dislike to the people of Ireland as could not fail to be a source of irritation and mischief.

Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, he wished, in the remarks he was about to make with regard to the question before the House, to dissociate himself from all personal and political considerations. He should give his vote on this Motion on the grounds on which he should have to defend it before his constituents. In his opinion this Office of Parliamentary Under Secretary was absolutely unnecessary, and that being so, he regarded it as both inexpedient and unwise. He did not think it was so much the duty of anyone opposing the measure to state the ground on which he founded his opposition, as it was the duty of the Government to justify the creation of the Office. As one who had always opposed the Office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and who had placed on the Paper Motions for its abolition, he could not now assist in propping up a system to which he objected. If the Lord Lieutenant was not equal to the work which he had to perform, then it was for him to pay for the assistance he required by a reduction of his salary; if, on the other hand, he did perform his duties, the Chief Secretary should be able to do his work without further assistance. Another objection he had was that the Bill had been put forward by the Government in the first rank for discussion, and he wished to know what was the use of curtailing discussion on other Bills if this was always to be in the way? He believed that the Bill would be the greatest engine of obstruction throughout the Session, and on that ground he should, for one, be very glad to get rid of it.

Mr. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, he protested altogether against the notion that the Bill had been adequately discussed. The object of the measure was the creation of a new Office, and it was, in his opinion, not the kind of Bill that the Government ought to have brought in that Session in connection with the Government of Ireland. They were told that a Bill of the deepest interest to the Irish people, and one touching upon a Constitutional question first and foremost, must be considered to have been adequately discussed in a couple of hours. The right hon. Gentleman at a previous stage had induced the House to be satisfied with a small discussion, on the understanding that another opportunity would be afforded for full consideration of the Bill; and he had that night began his speech by expressing a hope that the debate would close immediately. He (Mr. Gill) did not wonder that he was anxious for that, because the measure was one of which the Government had every reason to be ashamed; but he thought that the development which the House had just witnessed in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) was one that it had been worth while to wait for. They had a Liberal Unionist denouncing in strong terms the action of the Government, and preparing to vote against the Bill, and that was the first time such a thing had been witnessed since the Liberal Unionist Party had been formed. When a Member in such a position as the right hon. Gentleman got up and made such a confession, he (Mr. Gill) thought it was a proof that the Bill was one which no section of the House ought to support. He should not feel that he had done his duty, unless he entered his emphatic protest against the Bill, and the measures by which it had been sought to have it scrambled through the House.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 226; Noes 177: Majority 49.—(Div. List, No. 84.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.—[BILL 202.]

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 27th April.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause (Person appealing may appear by solicitor,)—(*Mr. Bryn Roberts,*)—again read.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Clause be read a second time."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 149; Noes 195: Majority 46.—(Div. List, No. 85.)

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, he trusted that hon. Members would give him their attention for a few moments, while he introduced a series of new clauses which were of a highly technical character. The first clause he had put upon the Paper was possibly the most important, and he did not hesitate to say that if the Committee would accept the first clause, they would do more to promote that which they all professed to have at heart, a cheap and simple transference of land, than had been done by Parliament for a good many years. As there was occasion to point out last week, there was a wide difference between the laws affecting real and personal property in regard to Government duties. In the particular instance before them, the law operated hardly and harshly, not so much upon real property as upon the purchaser of real property. Suppose anyone died leaving an enormous quantity of personal estate, millions of stock, and hundreds and thousands of railway shares, his executors, after proving the will, could go into the market, sell the stock off, sell the shares, sell the bonds, and the purchaser in each case got an absolute title, free from all claims on the part of the Government, while the executors or the trustees who had sold the stocks and received the money could bolt the next day and the Government could not follow them. By reason of an old distinction inherited from the feudal times, it was not so with real property; when a man purchased real property he had to take care that the Succession Duty had been paid. That was no great hardship, if the purchaser was buying shortly after the demise of the testator; but, unfortunately, another old rule came in—namely, *nullum tempus occurrit regi.* No doubt, there was in most cases the 60 years' limit; but with regard to the claim for Succession Duty there was no limit at all. The claim of the Government went on for ever, and cases were cited two years ago in the House by Mr. Gregory, the Gentleman who took charge of these clauses, in which, after the lapse of 30, 40, and even more years, the unhappy owner of land had been come down upon for the payment of Legacy or Succession Duty with compound interest from the time it was payable. He (Mr. Sydney Gedge) did not hesitate to say that it was quite impossible for anyone to buy an acre of land or a freehold cottage and be sure he was free from the claim of the Government to Succession Duty unless his solicitor investigated the title up to 1853. No one who had bought land since the Act of 1853 was passed could be sure, at the present moment, but that at some day or the other the Inland Revenue Authorities would not come down upon him for Succession Duty which was payable some 30 years ago, with compound interest at 4 per cent, and it would be the duty of the authorities to do that if they found that the duty was owing. He proposed, in the first place, to get rid of that by introducing a Statute of Limitations. The clause, as it stood, set that limit at six years; but he proposed to meet objections which might be raised by altering the limit to 12 years, so that they might have the same rule with regard to Succession Duty as they had in regard to the ordinary charges on land. In March, 1886, Mr. Gregory moved an Amendment to the Motion that the Speaker should leave the Chair, to the effect that there should be a limitation in point of time to the liability to duty. The hon. Gentleman was supported by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds), and by the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South-East Warwick (Mr. Cobb), and he was supported, and strongly supported, by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) who at that time was not Attorney General, and was, therefore, free to act in accordance with his convictions with regard to real property and its burdens. He (Mr. Sydney Gedge) was sure his hon. and learned Friend would, if he could, meet him to-night, and he hoped he would obtain a promise from the hon. and learned Gentleman, or from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the matter should receive immediate and favourable attention. The right hon. Gentlemen the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), in 1886, asked Mr. Gregory to put his ideas into shape, and not to press his Resolution as an Amendment to the Motion that Mr. Speaker should leave the Chair. Accordingly, the Amendment was withdrawn, and, just two months later, in Committee upon the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill then before the House, although there was no Succession Duty in that Bill at all, and the proposal of Mr. Gregory was, therefore, not germane to the question before the House, Mr. Gregory moved the identical clause which he (Mr. Sydney Gedge) had now the honour of submitting to the Committee. This clause had been drafted by one of the conveyancing counsel of the Court of Chancery. All hon. Members had expressed a desire to see a cheapening of land transfer, and he thought it was the duty of every Member who had pledged himself to his constituents upon this subject to give effect to his convictions, and to go, in case of need, into the Lobby with him. What had the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) said? The right hon. Gentleman was a solicitor of very large experience, and knew the evil effects, especially to the poor purchaser, of the present state of the law, and he said,—"We are not prepared to accept the Amendment, because it is not relevant to the Bill," and he asked Mr. Gregory to move some clause giving effect to his wishes in connection with an omnibus Bill to be brought in later on. The Amendment was not germane to the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill in 1886, because the Bill did not deal with Succession Duties, but it was germane to this Bill, because it did deal with Succession Duties. In this Bill, they were increasing the burden of the Succession Duty, they were making it heavier than before, and, therefore, these clauses were germane. The Government of the day (1886) being beaten on the Irish Bill, the promised omnibus Bill was not brought in, and, therefore, these clauses were not brought forward. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) said that if this matter should pass into other hands than Mr. Gregory's—because Mr. Gregory had announced his intention of not standing for Parliament again—he hoped the object that Gentleman had in view would be carried out, and he (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) would do all in his power to bring about that result. He (Mr. Sydney Gedge) was sorry the right hon. Gentleman was not present that day to do all in his power to carry the object that these clauses had, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would return in time to take part in the debate. Now, it was right he should explain shortly the effect of the clauses. The 1st clause,—

> "Purchasers and mortgagees exempted from liability to Succession Duty after a specified period"—

was divided into three sections. The first stated that the claim to Succession Duty—

> "Shall not, as against a purchaser for valuable consideration, or a mortgagee, remain charged with or liable to payment of any sum for Succession Duty after the expiration of 12 years from the date of the death, upon the happening of which the duty may (whether before or after the passing of this Act) have become payable."

The clause was made retrospective; but in order that the Authorities of the Inland Revenue might have ample time to look into all existing cases where duties were payable, it was provided—

> "Or if such period of 12 years expires within two years from the date of the passing of this Act, then after the expiration of two years from the last mentioned date."

The Committee would see, by the second section of the clause, how much care was taken to prevent the Government or the State from losing the Succession Duty, for it was provided that—

> "The duty (if any) unpaid at the expiration of such period of 12 years or two years, as the case may be, shall be payable and paid by the successor personally, and shall become charged substitutively upon any other estate or interest liable to the same duty and remaining vested in the successor, and in the case of a mortgagee upon the equity of redemption."

Therefore, it was not absolutely a bar against the claim of the Crown to Succession Duty; but it was simply a fixing of a time beyond which an innocent purchaser or mortgagee should no longer be liable. He appealed to the Committee whether that was not a fair and just proposition? Could they stand up and reject it, bearing in mind that the object that all had was as far as possible to assimilate the law and taxation upon real and personal property. Then the third sub-section said—

> "This section is not to lessen or affect any liability of any successor to payment of duty, whether out of money received on any sale or mortgage, or otherwise, but a purchaser or mortgagee shall not, for the purpose of obtaining the exemption conferred by this section, be bound to see that the duty is discharged out of the money or other consideration paid or given as the consideration for the sale or mortgage."

Then the second clause which he had the honour to propose gave great assistance indeed to the Authorities of the Inland Revenue in obtaining the payment of this Succession Duty. He could imagine that the answer which would be given by his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) to his contention that the claim of the Crown might fairly be, as he suggested, no worse off than the claim of a private subject, would be that the private subject was awake and would be able to ascertain through the relatives or friends when a certain sum of money was payable to him in the case of a death, but there was no way by which the Crown could tell that somebody had died upon whose death Succession Duty was to be paid. Supposing the testator left £5,000 to his daughter, which at her death was to go to A.B., A.B. knew all about it from the first, and when the daughter died, he claimed the money. The State had not the same opportunity of obtaining information as to its rights, but when it did know them its authorities kept a good look out and enforced them. The State did know all about the matter with regard to Probate, but they had no information in regard to the Succession Duty unless it was furnished to them. Now, in the second clause—

> "Power to deposit with Inland Revenue copies of documents not admitted to probate, and thereupon liability for duty after specified period to cease,"—

it was provided that—

> "Any person may cause an attested copy, which shall be exempted from stamp duty, of any document which creates a liability for payment of any duty, other than a testamentary document admitted to probate, to be deposited with the Commissioners of Inland Revenue at their principal office in London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, as the case may require, and such copy shall be received at that office."

The other day, when he was speaking on the subject of the Succession Duties, and having this clause in mind, he suggested that it would be an admirable thing if, as regards all settlements and wills, copies were sent to Somerset House. This clause, though it was not imperative, enabled trustees to do this, and it would have the same effect practically as if it were imperative. The result would be that the numerous evasions of the Succession Duty of which he spoke last week would not occur again, because the authorities at Somerset House would have the same means of ascertaining what money was payable by way of Succession Duty as they had with regard to the money payable by way of Probate Duty. In order to encourage trustees to send in these copies, it was proposed by this clause that—

> "After a receipt has been given by an officer of Inland Revenue for a copy deposited as authorized by this section, of a document, no person shall, in the character of trustee, executor, or administrator, be liable for payment of any duty under such document after the expiration of six years next following the date of the deposit, or the date of the death by which the duty becomes payable, whichever date last happens."

A trustee would, for his own protection, do all in his power to give information to the authorites as to the person on whose death duties would be payable, and, having done so, he was to be exonerated at the end of six years after that person had died from all claim. He thought his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General would see that that clause gave ample security to the authorities; it certainly gave them far better security than they had at present. He believed that for every £1 they might lose under this arrangement they would gain £20 by avoiding the evasions which at present took place, because there was now no means of bringing to the knowledge of the authorities when Death Duties became payable. It was proposed also that—

> "After a receipt has been given by an officer of Inland Revenue for a copy, deposited as authorized by this section, of any document, no person shall be liable for payment of any duty thereunder after the expiration of twelve years next following the date of the deposit, or the date of the death by which the duty becomes payable, whichever date last happens."

The 3rd clause carried on the same idea; it related to wills. The 2nd clause they would see related to documents which were not wills, not testamentary documents. The 3rd clause provided, among other things, that—

> "No person shall, under a testamentary document admitted to probate, or under letters of administration, be liable for payment of any duty after the expiration of twelve years from the date of the duty first becoming payable."

Then came a clause which was further designed to assist the Inland Revenue authorities; it enabled an officer of the Inland Revenue to apply to any trustee of any document which had been deposited, for information as to whether any of the persons were dead upon whose decease duties were payable, and if the trustee did not give the information within two calandar months, then the burden of proof was to be thrown upon him that the person or persons were still living, otherwise the duty was payable. They could scarcely invent any machinery which would be better calculated to insure the State against loss, but that was not all that this clause did for the benefit of the authorities. The 5th clause—

> "Statutory advertisements for creditors made applicable to claims for duty in like manner as to other debts of a deceased person—"

provided that—

> "A claim against the estate of a testator or intestate for payment of any duty accrued due from such testator or intestate in his lifetime, or otherwise than under a testamentary disposition made by him, or otherwise than under his intestacy, as the case may be, shall be deemed a claim within the meaning of the twenty-ninth section of the Act twenty-second and twenty-third years of Her Majesty, chapter twenty-eight, and accordingly an executor or administrator shall not be liable to the Crown for payment of any such duty further or otherwise than he would be liable in case the same were a debt due to any other creditor."

And the 6th and last clause—

> "Advertisements for information may be issued by Inland Revenue,"

provided that Inland Revenue authorities themselves might, if they thought fit, advertise at the expense of the estate for the information that they had been unable to acquire. He put it to his hon. Friends, whether they could really show any good cause for resisting these clauses? There might be some verbal alterations which it was desirable to make; but the effect of those clauses was an effect which they all professed to be anxious to secure, and which he did not think there was a single person who had not pledged himself to his constituents to endeavour, if he could, to secure. In the first place, these clauses enabled the transfer of real estate to be made without the present hardship entailed upon purchasers of being obliged to investigate the title to as far back as 1853. In the next place, they enabled trustees and executors, who had done their duty in the way appointed, to escape personal liability after a certain time; and, in the third place, they secured to the authorities that information with regard to the settlement of personal property which they had not at present, and without which they were every year losing large sums of money. He begged to move the first clause which stood on the Paper.

New Clause—

(Purchasers and mortgagees exempted from liability to Succession Duty after a specified period.)

(i.) "Notwithstanding the forty-second section of 'The Succession Duty Act, 1853,' or any other provision contained in that Act, real property, or any estate or interest therein, shall not, as against a purchaser for valuable consideration, or a mortgagee, remain charged with or liable to payment of any sum for Succession Duty after the expiration of 12 years from the date of the death, upon the happening of which the duty may (whether before or after the passing of this Act) have become payable; or if such period of 12 years expires within two years from the date of the passing of this Act, then after the expiration of two years from the last-mentioned date.

(ii.) "The duty (if any) unpaid at the expiration of such period of 12 years or two years, as the case may be, shall be payable and paid by the successor personally, and shall become charged substitutively upon any other estate or interest liable to the same duty and remaining vested in the successor, and in case of a mortgage upon the equity of redemption.

(iii.) "This section is not to lessen or affect any liability of any successor to payment of duty, whether out of money received on any sale or mortgage, or otherwise, but a purchaser or mortgagee shall not, for the purpose of obtaining the exemption conferred by this section, be bound to see that the duty is discharged out of the money or other consideration paid or given as the consideration for the sale or mortgage,"—(*Mr. Sydney Gedge,*)

—*brought up,* and read a first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Sydney Gedge) would not think it was out of any disrespect to him, if he did not follow him through all the details of his argument as regards the subsidiary clauses. He did not deny that the clauses were framed with care, though he thought it was probable they would require further consideration when they came to be regarded from a detailed point of view. He assured his hon. Friend that he had no intention of going back from anything he had said on the last occasion when he addressed the House on this subject. Further consideration, however, had led him to the conclusion that, although his hon. Friend was perfectly right and justified in bringing the subject forward, it was impossible for the Government to assent to these clauses being inserted in the present Bill; but he was sure he could say, on behalf of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the matter would receive full consideration. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockport would remember that in "another place" a Bill had been introduced with regard to land transfer. He would also remember that that Bill, and other proposals of the same kind, proposed to deal with the charges on land. It did seem to him (Sir Richard Webster) that the matter was one which required very careful consideration; he was not at all sure that the mere limit of 12 years, or any actual number of years, would be a sufficient safeguard. He admitted, to a certain extent, that the limit would be sufficient to insure a proper amount of duty being paid to the Revenue. His hon. Friend had referred, with force and fairness, to the question of the investigation of title. He (Sir Richard Webster) admitted that it might be well worthy of consideration whether or not some steps should be taken to relieve parties other than those beneficially interested from responsibility in the matter. The hon. Gentleman said that this was the proper place for introducing these clauses. In one sense it was, because the Bill did deal with the Succession Duties; but the hon. Gentleman would pardon him (Sir Richard Webster) if he pointed out that the Bill only dealt with the quantity of Succession Duty; it did not deal with the incidence of the duty—it did not say how far it was to be charged on land, how far it was to affect succeeding interests, and, in fact, did not deal with any of the difficulties which his hon. Friend had justly pointed out surrounded this subject. Therefore, while he (Sir Richard

Webster) did not suggest that they had no wish to consider the question fairly, it was impossible for him, and he thought it was impossible for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to accept these clauses at the present stage, nor could they give them the amount of discussion they were entitled to when they were brought up, as they had been, as new clauses to this Bill. He was sure his hon. Friend would not think he made any complaint against him for having brought up these clauses as new clauses. If it were necessary to go into greater detail, he thought he could make good some minor objections to the framing of the clause; but probably it would be mere waste of time to do so. He would only say, in conclusion, that he recognized there was a grievance requiring to be dealt with; whether it was to be met in this particular way was a matter in which he must exercise his own judgment. The Government had every intention to look into the matter, and to deal with it; and, therefore, he asked the hon. Member, unless he thought he had not been sufficiently fairly met, not to press these clauses to a Division.

MR. GEDGE (Stockport) said, his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General had met him very kindly and fairly; but, after all, he had only promised, on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to give the matter full consideration. Of course, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government gave full consideration to anything a Member brought forward; but he wanted something more than full consideration—he wanted favourable consideration. He would like to know whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer agreed with him in the object he had in view? [Mr. GOSCHEN: Hear, hear!] He was glad to receive that approving cheer from the right hon. Gentleman; and if he felt sure that the Government would endeavour to carry out the object of these clauses when the Land Transfer Bill was brought in, and would not put the matter off again, he would not think of dividing the House.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he had the greatest pleasure in giving his hon. Friend not only the assurance that full consideration, but that most favourable consideration would be given to this subject. Indeed, he should be glad to be a competitor with the hon. Gentleman not only in this matter, but in every matter which tended to cheapen the transfer of land to the utmost, and to cut down the charges.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, the following Amendments made:—In Schedule 1, page 16, leave out—

"Mortgage of any stock or marketable security—

	£	s.	d.
For every £5,000, and, also, for any fractional part of £5,000, of the amount secured.. ..	0	10	0;"

After line 27, insert—"Equitable mortgage.—Agreement or memorandum under hand only relating to the deposit of any title deeds or instruments, constituting or being evidence of the title to any property whatever (other than stock or marketable security), or creating a charge on such property—

	£	s.	d.
For every £100, and any fractional part of £100, of the amount secured..	0	1	0;"

Schedule 2, leave out page 17 and down to line 21 in page 18, inclusive (29 and 30 Vic. c. 64, s. 13); page 18, after line 21, insert—

34 and 35 Vic. c. 4.

An Act to amend "The Stamp Act, 1870," in relation to Foreign securities, mortgages of stock, and proxy papers.

In part, namely, section five.

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

LAND LAW) (IRELAND) LAND COMMISSION) BILL.—[BILL 199.]

(*Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Colonel King-Harman.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.), in rising to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, it was perfectly monstrous that the country should be paying something like

£100,000 per annum in order that Irish landlords should be compelled to do what English and Scotch landlords did from choice; and, therefore, in any real effort to further economy and to reduce that expenditure he should be very glad to join. But while this Bill went a little way in the direction of economy, it contained proposals which amounted to a reversal in some particulars—and important particulars—of the Land Act of 1881; and it was because it contained those proposals that he now made the Motion which stood on the Paper in his name. The first part of the Bill dealt with the County Courts; and it proposed to set up these in lieu of the Sub-Commission Courts. At the present time the County Court Judges, with the aid of a Court Valuer, had the power of dealing with such cases as might come before them. This Bill proposed to take away the option or choice from the tenant as to which Court he would go into, and to compel him to go into the County Court whether he liked it or no. In the past, he and his solicitor had been able to decide which Court they would go into; but that would no longer be so if this Bill became law; and he said deliberately that such a reversal of one of the most important parts of the Act of 1881 was certain to produce the very worst feeling all throughout Ireland. It was very well known to everyone who had had anything to do with the Land Act of 1881 that the framers of that Act originally intended that the County Courts should be the Courts for dealing with those cases; but a little consideration convinced the framers of the Act that it was impossible for those Courts to do the work, and the Courts of the Sub-Commissioners were brought into play. What were the facts regarding the County Courts at this moment? He did not see how they were to do land work. In the first place, many of the County Court Judges were very old men. He knew that several of them were upwards of 80 years of age, and that the ordinary civil bill, criminal, and licensing business which came before them was as much as they could well get through, and how the Government could ask them to take up this new business passed his comprehension. In Kerry the County Court Judge was practically occupied six months in the year, and he took two months' holiday, which nobody would say was too much. He would leave the House to say how much time the Judge would have to dispose of the land business of the county. He contended that this part of the Bill would destroy the option of the tenant, and thus strike a blow at the Act of 1881. The County Courts were, at the present time, sufficiently occupied with civil and criminal business to tax the powers of the Judges; and to add the land business to what they already did would be to produce the block in those Courts which now existed in the Sub-Commissioners' Courts. In the Sub-Commissioners' Court the legal Commissioner did not interfere unless a point of law was raised, or unless the two lay Commissioners differed as to value. It was only when one of those two things happened that the legal Commissioner gave his verdict. All this, however, was precisely reversed by the Bill, and the two Court valuers who were to sit with the County Court Judge were not to have any power save that of reporting to the County Court Judge, who would have the sole power of giving the decision. It turned the whole thing upside down, and reversed the order of procedure. There was a third objection to the first part of the Bill. He had never attacked, and did not intend to attack that night, either the administration of the law or those who had to administer it. It was, however, one thing for him to have confidence in the County Court Judges as land Judges, and quite another thing to induce the people to have confidence in them. The mere fact that the tenants of Ireland had not chosen to go into the County Courts when they had the option was proof that they preferred the Sub-Commissioners' Courts, and that they had more confidence in them. On those three grounds he objected to the first part of the Bill, as he considered it contained bad proposals. As regarded the second part of the Bill, dealing with the question of the Appeal Court, he looked upon it as of the utmost importance. It was already a monstrous grievance and great hardship for the Irish landlord and the Irish tenant alike that so much time should elapse before the appeals from Sub-Commissioners could be dealt with. He believed that there were now before the Appeal Court decisions which were given as far back as 1885, and the appeals with regard to them had not yet been heard. What did the Bill propose to do? At the present time three members of the Land Commission must hear the appeals; but the Bill proposed that in future two should hear them. He did not see how that would relieve the block. He ventured to make a proposal to the Government on that point. If the Government admitted—which they could not but admit—the gravity of the situation, why should not they constitute a fresh Court of Appeal? Why should not Mr. Justice O'Hagan and Mr. Wrench sit in one Court, and Mr. Justice Monroe and Mr. Litton sit in the other? If the Government really meant to expedite the work by removing the block and do away with the present grievance, they had the machinery at their hands, without appointing a single new man, to furnish two Courts of Appeal. The most important part of the Bill, apart from the County Courts clauses, was that which abolished the Purchase Commission. He (Mr. T. W. Russell) looked upon that Commission as one of the few things in Ireland which had really worked well, and now the Government proposed to abolish it. In the year 1885 the House placed £5,000,000 at the disposal of the Irish tenants for the purchase of the fee-simple of their holdings. Since that time loans had been issued to the amount of £2,481,470; loans had been sanctioned to the amount of £1,475,801; and there were applications under investigation amounting to £509,417, making a total of close upon £4,500,000. These loans were spread over every Province of the country. To show how the Commissioners had worked, he might say that the total amount of interest and instalments which accrued to the 1st of November last was £50,910, and of this there was now unpaid £1,534, of which less than £60 represented instalments due on the 1st of May last. There had never been an Act of Parliament for Ireland passed in recent times which had worked so well as the Act which dealt with this point, and now the Government were going to abolish the Commission appointed to administer it. The work was to be handed over to Mr. Litton and Mr. Wrench, who were in arrear with the appeals to a tremendous extent, and they were expected to undertake the double duty. He urged the Government to pause before they did anything of the sort, and suggested that if they were bent upon abolishing the Commission the work should be given over to the Landed Estates Court, which had two Judges, and also a vast number of clerks and highly-paid officials doing practically nothing at all. He believed there was hardly an official who went over to Ireland who was not struck with it. At the head of this Court was Mr. Justice Monroe, who had the confidence of most people interested in this question. In five years that bloated establishment, the Landed Estates Court, had managed to deal with 1,057 abstracts of title, 2,084 conveyances, and £6,000,000 of purchase money had passed through its hands. Surely any mercantile establishment would be able to do that work. The Government would promote economy if instead of abolishing the Purchase Commission and handing the work over to Messrs. Wrench and Litton, they amalgamated the Purchase Commission and the Landed Estates Court, at the head of which Judge Monroe would be. The Court would certainly have the confidence of the people. It seemed to him that the Bill, looked at as a whole, had every appearance of not having been carefully thought out, and he was curious to know who had recommended it; and whether a single Irish Member, representing either the landlords or tenants, had been consulted with regard to it. He hoped that the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) would get up and say whether the Land Commission had been consulted. He did not believe that they had. Then where did the Government get the Bill? This was one of the most important questions that could come before the House of Commons, and the Government, instead of pressing the Bill forward, should appoint some additional temporary Sub-Commissioners, in order that the block in the Land Court might be relieved at once. They might then put the Land Commission into the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill for another year, and that would give them time to face one of the gravest issues in Irish politics. The Government would have met with little or no opposition if they had looked to economy and amalgamation instead of bringing in a Bill which reversed the

Act of 1881, did not expedite the hearing of appeals at all, and abolished the only institution which had been an unqualified success in Ireland. He begged to move the Motion which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. COMMINS (Roscommon, S.) said, he agreed with the observations of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). He believed that the Bill was entirely unnecessary, and that the wisest course would have been to have put a clause in the Expiring Laws Continuance Act, continuing the Land Commission for another year, and to have appointed several additional Sub-Commissioners, with a view of removing the block which was admitted to exist both in the Appeal Court and the Sub-Commission Courts. Why had the Government not adopted that course? No explanation had as yet been offered why they had avoided so very obvious a course and had resorted to such a clumsy contrivance which this Bill presented. The first and second clauses of the Bill were about as objectionable attempts at legislation as he had ever known. Hitherto those who applied to have fair rents fixed had been able to choose a tribunal in which they had confidence. It was proposed by the first clause to take away this choice from the persons interested, and thereby to destroy with one blow all confidence in the administration of the Act of 1881. If people were forced into a tribunal in which they had no confidence, they would lose confidence in the administration of the law. The confidence in the administration of other Acts besides the Land Act could hardly afford such a rude shock as that now proposed to be given. He was sorry to say that the confidence in the administration of law in Ireland generally was very weak indeed. It was said every day that the people had no respect for the law. He quite agreed they had not. It would be extraordinary if they had. This Bill was a specimen of the way the law treated them. The choice which the people had hitherto exercised had been found to work well. They were to be deprived of that choice, and their cases were to be allotted between the Courts, just as the Lord Lieutenant might think fit. His Excellency might send the cases of particular individuals who might be obnoxious to the County Court Judges before County Court Judges. He might pack the tribunals in so far as he could send certain cases to certain Judges who would give such decisions as he desired. The decisions might be regulated beforehand. He did not say that such a thing was in contemplation, but he maintained that it was a matter of the greatest consequence to the Government of Ireland that they should completely preclude the supposition that they intended any such thing. They found these Tory Amendments in italics, though it was difficult to imagine why they were put in that way. The Lord Lieutenant was to have power, practically, to pay as he thought fit the County Court Judge in proportion to the work he sent him. How would that proposal work? If the County Court Judge was one the Lord Lieutenant could rely upon to give decisions, satisfactory to him and unsatisfactory to the tenant farmers, the Lord Lieutenant would send him a large number of cases. If, on the contrary, he could not rely on him to give satisfactory decisions, the state of things would be reversed. But the County Court Judge was the Chairman of Quarter Sessions—the Chairman of the Magistrates of the County—and, of course, could be relied upon to give such decisions as would please his *confrères* on the Bench, and, therefore, as a general rule, he would not only have as many cases as he thought fit, but he would have a very high allowance added to his salary. At present, as hon. Members were aware, these salaries were rather small. They were aware that the County Court Judges in England got from £1,500 to £2,000 a-year, and that in Ireland these gentlemen did not receive so much by at least £1,000 a-year. In spite of this fact, the County Court Judges were not without dignity. He had never known a County Court Judge in England tolerating any one calling him "My Lord," but that mode of address is not only tolerated by the Irish County Court Judges, but even encouraged. What did it matter to them that there was a difference of nearly £1,000 a-year between "His Lordship" and the plain "Your Honour" of England. These Irish County Court Judges, who were so underpaid, would have now a prospect of a very considerable addition being made to their salaries. Public opinion in England with regard to these gentlemen was very likely to be led astray, because Irish County Court Judges would be looked upon in the same light as English County Court Judges, whereas their functions were very different. In England there was no County Court Judge who was Chairman of Quarter Sessions, and there was not one who occupied the position that the County Court Judges occupied in Ireland. It must be remembered that the County Court Judges in Ireland had to hear appeals coming under the Crimes Act of last year, and yet the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) practically took the power of making a considerable and almost a surreptitious addition to their salaries. That was a thing which would lead to the suspicion of corruption. He did not say that anything corrupt was contemplated, but clearly the people of Ireland would be inclined to think that these extra salaries were not being paid by the right hon. Gentleman to persons who had to hear appeals from his Crimes Act Courts without a corrupt motive. To the minds of the Irish people, that was the plain and obvious use to which these new powers would be put, and it was for the Government to say whether they would leave themselves open to the imputation that they were corrupting these Judges. The Bill was a bad one from beginning to end. It was brought forward under the plea of removing the strain upon the Land Commission Courts, but it simply provided a tribunal in which the tenants would have no confidence whatever. No doubt the landlords would have confidence in it, but certainly the tenants would not. Now, to come to the question of appeals, if the measure was bad so far as it affected the trial of land cases in the first instance, it was still worse in regard to the arrangement it made for the trial of appeals. At present there was an appeal to three Commissioners—Mr. Justice O'Hagan being practically Chairman of the Court. Well, what was it proposed to substitute for that simple tribunal, the only objection to which, as the hon. Member for South Tyrone had pointed out, was slow in operation, and could not overtake its work? It was proposed that the Lord Lieutenant should have power to appoint as a tribunal to hear appeals two of the Commissioners; that was the idea of the Government, instead of meeting the difficulty in a practical way and forming a second Court of Appeal, or by adding new strength to the existing Court. There were 14 or 15 Judges idle who could be sent to the assistance of Mr. Justice O'Hagan and a second Court of two or three Commissioners. Such a plan, however, never seemed to occur to the Government. As the hon. Member for South Tyrone had pointed out, the proposal they made, if carried out, would not have the effect of expediting the appeals by a single hour. The effect certainly would be to get rid of Mr. Justice O'Hagan, and the reason was that, obviously, his connection with appeals in cases affecting reductions of rent last year was not satisfactory. The object of the decision of the Government was evidently to enable the Lord Lieutenant to appoint as a Court of Appeal Mr. Litton and a gentleman with a very appropriate name, that is Mr. Wrench, and leave Mr. Justice O'Hagan out in the cold. But, however much the Government might succeed in their proposal, it would be found that they were not expediting the hearing of appeals in any shape or way. It was said that there might be special cases to hear. Hon. Members in this House probably had some knowledge of special cases. They knew what appeals were on special cases from the County Court or from a Magistrates' Court. They knew that an appeal on a special case, no matter from what Court it came, was illusory, and rarely served the ends of justice. How was a special case got up? Why, the Judge on the Bench made out a statement of what he considered to be the case before him. He stated the facts as he thought fit—as they appeared to his mind—which might be altogether different from the real facts of the case, and altogether different from the way in which they would appear to a jury. The County Court Judge in his statement could state, if he liked, the appellant out of Court; and then, for fear he should miss the first shot, this Bill would absolutely give him power, which did not exist in any provision dealing with appeals that he (Mr. Commins) had ever seen before, because it was provided the County Court Judge could send up any amendment of the cases he had stated that he thought desirable. That would be a temptation to a Judge to state appellants out of Court in an off-hand way, knowing that they would have an opportunity of amending the statement afterwards if necessary. Again, having sent up a special case, if a Judge found that it had not sufficiently stated a suitor out of Court, and had not properly fortified the decision he had given in the first instance, there was a direct temptation to him to amend the case in order more effectually to state the appellant out of Court. In short, the County Court Judge would always have it in his power to render an appeal nugatory and illusory. This provision alone was sufficient to destroy the confidence of the Irish tenantry in the County Court Judge and to condemn the Bill. The Bill provided a kind of salve for the wounded vanity of Mr. Justice O'Hagan, who was to be shelved if the County Court Judge was to be empowered to state a case before a superior Court, and Mr. Justice O'Hagan was to be consoled by being allowed to sit on these appeals in the superior Court. This seemed of a piece with the rest of the provisions in the Bill. Mr. O'Hagan was the Head Commissioner of the Court as at present constituted, and had the place of honour; but his influence was to be destroyed, because he was to be turned over in a superior Court, where, instead of being one of three and the presiding authority, he would be one of four in a Divisional Court, which he would enter as a junior, and would be without influence at all, although his colleagues would know less about the matters with which they would have to deal under this measure than he would. His three colleagues would take precedence over him, and would be able to over-rule his opinion. Therefore, it might be said that Mr. Justice O'Hagan was got rid of in both Courts—he was got rid of in one, and might be overruled in the other. This Bill was bad altogether. It was a measure calculated to be turned to every bad purpose. It was full of suspicious objects, and it would seem as though it were intended to neutralize whatever good there was in the Act of 1881. It would destroy whatever confidence remained in that Act, and would do an immense amount of mischief, and, therefore, he agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone, who moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said, he could not agree with the suggestion of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) and the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Roscommon (Mr. Commins), that the necessities of the present situation in Ireland as to the Land Court could be met sufficiently by merely increasing the number of Sub-Commissioners. He believed that if the Government took that course, they would be taking a course that would be lame and impotent. They had attempted, so far as he could gather, to deal with the matter in a more permanent way—in a manner which would give more permanence and uniformity to the Land Commission, and the decision of the Commissioners would meet with a very large amount of support. He, however, had no difficulty in understanding that no Bill dealing with the reconstitution of the Land Court or the powers of the Land Commission coming from that the Ministerial side of the House could be expected to satisfy hon. Members opposite. No doubt the Bill had entirely failed to satisfy the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Roscommon, but he (Mr. Macartney) would impress upon Her Majesty's Government that that was no reason why they should hesitate to deal with this question because there was a body of opinion in Ireland amongst all classes which were worth consulting on these matters, and which would entirely endorse the view of the Government. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had dealt with one or two objections to the Bill, and his observations had considerable force. He (Mr. Macartney) agreed with the hon. Member especially on one point, and as he (Mr. T. W. Russell) had made a suggestion to the Government with regard to the Bill, he (Mr. Macartney), if it was entertained, would venture to make another which he hoped the Government would equally consider. The hon. Member's first objection to the Bill was that the County Court Judges were at the present moment overworked. That might be so with regard to some of them, but it certainly was not the case with others. Even in the case of those who had sufficient work already to occupy their judicial capacity, they had the fact that under this Bill Sub-Commissioners already in existence, or some of them, would be there to assist the County Court Judges in dealing with any accumulation that might arise owing to the altered jurisdiction of the Court. The second objection of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, he thought, was one of great force, and was one which the Government, he trusted, would consider favourably — and the suggestion he had to make was with regard to this point. His suggestion would not, perhaps, altogether take away the objections of hon. Members opposite to the Bill, but, at any rate, it would deal effectually with the objections which were entertained amongst the large class of Irish tenant farmers who were desirous of seeing some settlement effected in this matter. The contention of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone was, that the Bill upset the authority of the old Land Commission Court with regard to the power of the legal Commissioner in relation to the two lay Commissioners, and that it practically turned the Court topsy-turvy. He (Mr. Macartney) agreed with the hon. Gentleman that if the Bill were left as it had been drafted, and if the County Court Judge were left the sole authority for deciding upon questions of rent in Ireland, having a certain amount of regard to the advice of the two Assistant Commissioners who really acted as valuers, it would not be a tribunal that would sufficiently command the confidence of the people of Ireland, and that, therefore, he (Mr. Macartney) would be unable to give his support to it. But he would venture to suggest that the Government might meet the objection pointed out by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone by providing that in future the County Court Judge, when he sat as a Land Court for the purpose of hearing cases under this Act, the Court should be constituted exactly in the same way as the Special Commission Court was constituted at the present moment. Let the County Court Judge take the place of the legal Commissioner, but let him be assisted in Court by two Assistant Commissioners who would have the same power and authority with which the lay Commissioners were endowed at the present moment. He believed that if the Bill were altered to that extent, it would meet the views and reasonable desires, not of hon. Gentlemen opposite and those influenced, but, at all events, of a large proportion of the tenant farmers of Ireland. The third objection of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone touched to a certain extent the credit of the County Court Judges, though the hon. Member had pursued that objection very moderately. He (Mr. Macartney) did not dispute that one or two County Court Judges were looked upon in Ireland as being, so to speak, landlords' men, and, on the other hand, there were some who were regarded with great suspicion by the landlords themselves. [*Cries of* "Name, name!"] If hon. Members would communicate with him, he should be happy to give them the names of the gentlemen he had in his mind. He did not like to give names openly in the House in such cases as this, as he thought that was a practice which ought to be put a stop to. The objection of his hon. Friend to the County Court Judges would probably be a great deal modified if the Court was reconstituted in the way he (Mr. Macartney) proposed. There was, no doubt, great objection to be taken with the Sub-Commission Court on this ground, that they might be in the same district of the country, the same Sub-Commission Court succeeding another and dealing on a totally different basis with rents. Nothing could be more unsatisfactory than such a state of things as that. It prevented, in the first place, settlements out of Court between landlords and tenants; and, in the next place, it created great dissatisfaction amongst the litigants when the decisions of the Court were not sufficiently sympathetic in character. He (Mr. Macartney) had endeavoured to acquaint himself with the feelings of those he represented on this question, and he believed their great desire was that there should be some permanence and uniformity impressed on the Land Commission and its operations in the country. He believed that a *bonâ fide* attempt was made in the Bill to affect these conditions; but while he was prepared to support the second reading, he should certainly reserve to himself the full right in Committee of moving an

Amendment in the direction he had indicated with regard to the constitution of the County Court Judges' Courts. Now, the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone had spoken with regard to the clauses dealing with the Purchase Commission, and he (Mr. Macartney) certainly re-echoed everything the hon. Member had said. If he supposed for a moment that this Bill would put an end to the operations of the Purchase Commission, he should be against it; but what he gathered was that it only proposed to transfer the powers of those Commissioners. He did not think the proposed change was such as would induce him to oppose the Bill. He concurred with everything that had been said as to the desirability of giving greater power to the Landed Estates Court. He believed that the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone had suggested a solution of the difficulty with regard to appeals which might be adopted with a certain amount of benefit. The hon. Gentleman had put his objections to this part of the Bill very tersely and forcibly before the House, and the hon. Gentleman who followed had seemed to find his strongest objection to the Bill in the fact that the County Court Judges in Ireland had given way to too much vanity in encouraging persons to address them as "My Lord;" but that was not an argument which would weigh with him (Mr. Macartney) with sufficient strength to induce him to go into the Lobby against the Bill. He should support the Bill, because he believed that the Government had endeavoured to deal with this difficult and complicated subject in a straightforward manner. He did not agree with hon. Gentleman who suggested that the question should be dealt by the appointment of a large number of extra Sub-Commissioners, as he did not think the matter should be left till next year, when it might be more inconvenient, if not altogether impossible for the Administration to take it up.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said he was not surprised that the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) did not intend to oppose the Bill; but the hon. Gentleman's attitude only emphasized the fact mentioned by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), that whereas all hon. Members, even of different opinions in the House, who in the slightest way pretended to represent the tenants' interests, were on the one side opposed to the Bill, there was yet an Irish Representative—one of the Irish landlords' Representatives—who would support it.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I am very sorry to have to interrupt the hon. Gentleman; but I must point out that I was not returned by landlords.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Will the hon. Gentleman have the hardihood to say in this House that he represents the views of the tenant farmers of Ireland?

Mr. MACARTNEY: Yes; 4,500 of them.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON said, he would give the hon. Gentleman the greatest possible credit for the hardihood of that statement. If the hon. Gentleman was satisfied with the Bill as it stood, he probably was of opinion that the voice of the 86 Representatives from Ireland on the Opposition side of the House did not count for anything at all—that, probably, seemed to the hon. Member the strongest argument in favour of the passing of the Bill. He (Mr. Edward Harrington) recognized in the proposals of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) a means of improving the Bill, if they had to face it as a necessity; but surely the spirit of the Government in the construction of this Bill must have been a very bad one when they made up their minds to give to the County Court Judges of Ireland, who were landlords, and had entertained and exhibited the bitterest feelings against the protective combinations of the tenants, the power of fixing fair rents, and the power practically of overruling the opinion of the existing Courts. If they turned the County Court into a Sub-Commission and placed the County Court Judge in the position of the Legal President of the present Sub-Commission Court, it would be an improvement on the Bill, but it would be no improvement on the existing state of things, and such a proposal would be no answer to the objections the Irish Members raised against the Bill. The County Court, as a tribunal for the fixing of fair rents, had been tried and found wanting in Ireland. In only a few paltry cases had the County Court been entrusted with the fixing of fair rents, and he would presently tell them why. In certain districts in Ireland the block was so great in the ordinary Land Courts that some tenants who only paid small rents thought that they might run the risk of taking their cases to the County Court, and they had accordingly done so. The County Court Judges, in these cases, where the rent was a matter of paltry consideration and no big landlord had to be dealt with, had cut the rents down to the level at which the Sub-Commission were cutting them down on all sides. But that course had not been followed by Mr. Henn, whose name had been rather prominently before the public in connection with the case of Mr. Wilfrid Blunt—Mr. Henn being a person who ought to be considered physically incapacitated for dealing with these matters at all, seeing that he was over 80 years of age. Three adventurous spirits had gone into Mr. Henn's Court to obtain the fixing of a fair rent, and with what result? Why, two of them had had their rents left as they were, whilst the third had had his raised. If it were left to the discretion of the tenants either to go to these County Court Judges or to the Land Commission Court, the tenants would shun these County Courts as they would shun fire. Naturally, the County Court Judges who would have most time on their hands would be men like Mr. Henn, and these would be the men who would have the largest number of cases to dispose of, and would be more largely employed by the Government than anyone else, for two reasons. In the first place, because men of the disposition of Mr. Henn had taken care to raise the sentences of persons convicted under the Crimes Act who had appealed against their convictions, and were literally hunting appellants out of Court; and, in the next place, because the experience the tenantry had of the action of these gentlemen in land cases was in the highest degree unsatisfactory. The history of Mr. Henn in regard to the Land Act was that he had raised the rents of a hardy farmer who had gone before him. The Land Commission, rigged as it was proposed it should be by this Bill, would say—"Oh, here is a great chance to dispose of a large number of these rent applications; we will send them down to the County Court Judge, Mr. Henn, for he is the man who can dispose of them according to our desires." The hon. Member for South Antrim might say that the Bill was satisfactory to him, but he (Mr. Edward Harrington) might make bold to say that that was not as ufficient recommendation for the Bill to the Irish Party sitting on that (the Opposition) side of the House. He (Mr. Edward Harrington) would venture to give the House a sample of the knowledge and special fitness possessed by these County Court Judges for the duties they would have to discharge under this Bill, if it were passed in its present shape. Much had been heard recently about the burnings and levellings of houses at Glenbeigh; and would it be believed that County Court Judge Curran, who was one of these dignitaries addressed as "My Lord," had actually stated that the tenants of that district of Glenbeigh had nothing to complain of, for nowhere in that country did he see more comfortable and tidy farms, and more compact and well-built houses? Happily, in respect to this matter, he (Mr. Edward Harrington) spoke in the hearing of many hon. Members who had seen the Glenbeigh district, and of many who knew that the cabins of the peasantry, which had been necessarily built of some strength, to resist the storms prevalent there, had been built by the peasantry themselves, and that the productive part of the soil had mostly been dragged into existence on barren spots by the energy and perseverance of the tenantry. When they found tenants paying £54 a-year rent for land in respect of which, only a few years ago, no more than £2 was paid, and when they heard Judges expressing such opinions with regard to land of this kind as they had heard from Judge Curran, all he could say was that such gentlemen had too superficial a knowledge of the Land Question, or were utterly incapable of forming any opinion with regard to it. What experience of a judicial character outside, perhaps, a Dublin Police Court had such men as Judge Curran to give them the right to fix fair rents? None whatever, and the men who would go out to bring in reports to them would have no voice whatever in the decisions. The Irish Members might be beaten on this measure, and, if so, he should very much regret, for the peace of Ireland, that the Government had made this proposal. He should very much regret it if it was intended to persevere with the Bill; but yet he hoped, if they did persevere, that they would modify it in the direction indicated by the hon. Member for South Tyrone and the hon. Member who had just spoken—modify that special and odious clause in it which would give the County Court Judge an absolute and uncontrolled right of deciding what rent the tenant farmer had to pay. There was another part of the Bill to which he should like to call attention, and that was that part which sounded the death-knell of the Land Purchase Commission. It was not often that they (the Nationalist Members) found themselves in a position in this House to speak with anything like laudation, or even in a tolerant sense, of any judicial institutions in Ireland. They were in the habit of giving credit where they could conscientiously do so; however, he must say that though they frequently grumbled at judicial institutions, it was because they found them essentially wrong, partizans being appointed to preside in them, and not because they had any chronic disposition to grumble. The men who had been appointed to administer the Purchase Act could not be said to be partizans on the side of the Nationalist Members; on the contrary, if ever they had anything to do with these gentlemen at all, they were men who were opposed to them in politics, and yet they (the Nationalist Members) freely acknowledged that with the process which had been brought to bear upon them, Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Lynch had tried to exercise a useful discretion in the administration of the Purchase Act. What was the lesson the Government now sought to teach the people of Ireland? Why, it was this, that the moment the Government discerned that the people displayed confidence in a Court they proposed to abolish it. It must be remembered that this question of purchase was a vital one for the people. The spirit of the Purchase Act of 1885 was this, not that they should send two Commissioners to value a farm and say what was the fair purchase rent for the tenant to pay the landlord and report that; but what was done was to allow the landlord to keep a screw on the tenant, and hand to the Sheriff executing the eviction decree a document of agreement for the purchase of the land. The Government stepped in and did not ask the Purchase Commissioners to say—"What is the value of this land?" but what the debtors' security was. In appraising the land, the house that the tenant had built, the fences he had raised, and the fruitful industry he had bestowed upon the land was scored against him, because all that could be converted into money, and would represent his loathing and unwillingness to leave. He (Mr. Edward Harrington) only digressed into these matters to show that there was a great necessity that they should have upon this Purchase Commission men who were not suspected of being mere partizans, and if they took Mr. Justice O'Hagan away from the Commission what did they leave? They left two men, and those alone, who had given a fatal interpretation to a recent Act of Parliament, which interpretation, he ventured to say, was the cause of most of the trouble existing in Ireland at the present time. They knew that Mr. Justice O'Hagan did not agree with those two Judges, and that his interpretation of the Act was favourable to the tenants, and they now took away that Judge in whom the tenants had some confidence—although not a strong, overweening confidence—and placed him in another Court to be overshadowed by other Judges, giving two landlord partizans the working of a very essential part of the Act of 1881—namely, the Purchase Clauses. There were many points which suggested themselves against this measure. He (Mr. Edward Harrington) had made out a list of County Court Judges in Ireland. He had made it out from directories, in order to find out whether they were Justices of the Peace, where their residences were, and what were the clubs they belonged to, as he had imagined that this would give him a very instructive guide as to the politics and prejudices of these gentlemen. He confessed, however, that the result of his search was not evidence which he could put forward in the House formally in debate, but it was strong enough to excite the prejudices of the people of Ireland against these Judges in the performance of the functions it was proposed to require them to discharge. There was evidence already of prejudice on the part of the people, in that they had abstained from going into the County Courts with land cases just as they would have abstained from plunging into fire. But the Government now sought to force the people into these Courts, regardless of the fact that the County Court Judges had endeavoured to strengthen the prejudice excited against themselves as they had in the process of law aped at Quarter Sessions the Judges of Assizes in making declarations against the political organizations and combinations of the tenants in reference to the payment of rent. It was only necessary to search the files of a few prominent English newspapers to which scraps of Irish news were sent, which it was thought by those who catered for those journals would be acceptable to the palate of the English people, to find that these gentlemen from time to time made official pronouncements and declarations against the National League.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): The Pope agreed with them.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON said, there were a great many phenomenal circunstances taking place just now. It was surprising indeed to find the Pope in agreement with the Conservative Party; but it capped the climax of all phenomena when they found the hon. Member opposite in agreement with the Pope. There was plenty of evidence to show that the County Court Judges had thought it to be their duty to utter tirades against the National League. The hon. Gentleman opposite had not been strictly correct in his interruption, although he had no doubt that the hon. Member was a sedulous student of the utterances of the Pope. It was to be hoped that the Pope was an equally sedulous student of the utterances of the hon. Member. But, as a matter of fact, the County Court Judges had condemned the National League when it was recognized as a legal organization, and there was this one fact he wished to call attention to—namely, that it could be ascertained and would be ascertained—because they were not going to run away with this Bill in a hurry—to what extent these County Court Judges were offshoots of the landlord Party and owed their position to such influence as was brought to bear upon the Government by haunting the Lobbies of this House and constantly importuning Members of the House and of the Party in power. He thought that the position of remonstrance that the Irish Members occupied in connection with this question was one consistent with their duty to Ireland. It was one consistent with the attitude they had assumed all along. It was the fashion to call them agitators; but the Government themselves took every trouble to add to the volume of agitation in Ireland. They took hold of that in which the people had confidence in order to demolish it, whilst, at the same time, they put in its place that in which the people had no confidence whatever—something which they were utterly prejudiced against. But the Irish Members were strong enough to meet the Government on these points, and if the Government disputed the wishes of those who represented the tenant farmers and sought to force the tenants to go before a Court in which they had no confidence, the Nationalist Party would take care of the tenants, in spite of them, if the tenants would rely upon themselves and their combinations. The tenantry would never be left without someone to lead them.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.) said, he did not like the debate to conclude without giving expression to a word or two. He was sure that the tenant farmers of Ireland would prefer that the Land Act should be altogether repealed rather than that they should have to depend upon the County Court Judges. Let them just take the case of Judge Henn. He was a very old man, and those who knew him where perfectly well aware that he was entirely unfitted by age to fulfil the functions of a Judge in the Land Court effectually. In addition, it so happened that he was a landlord, and was one of the most perfect types of the placeman who was governed by Castle rule. He (Mr. Harris) had often been appealed to by tenants previous to the passing of the Act of 1881, asking whether it would be advisable for them to go into a Court in order to try and get compensation for improvements, and to obtain the advantages which the Land Act of 1870 was supposed to confer upon the tenants of Ireland, and he had no doubt that that Act of 1870 would have done a great deal of good in its time had it not been for the fact that the County Court Judges had put themselves into direct opposition to it. Mr. Judge Henn, in a special manner, had ignored the rights of the tenants altogether. Judge Henn was, as he (Mr. Harris) had pointed out, a landlord, and in fulfilling his duties to the county he went from one landlord's house to another. He was of themselves, and the tenants would not all think of going into his Court, nor would they think of taking advantage of the Act of 1881 at all, if they were compelled to come under the jurisdiction of that gentleman. He (Mr. Harris) believed this Bill to be part and parcel of a system for the oppression and extermination of the tenant farmers of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) appointed the District Magistrates, and put immense powers into their hands under the Coercion Act, and, as they had heard to-night, he put these officials under a right hon. and gallant Gentleman as Parliamentary Under Secretary, who was an Orangeman, and, therefore, in enmity with people, so that it would seem altogether as if the right hon. Gentleman intended to give unity and adhesion to the landlords in making war upon the tenants of Ireland, and as though he did not wish to give any fair play at all to the tenants. It seemed as though his desire was to put down the tenantry and prevent them from obtaining the advantages of the Act of 1881. The right hon. Gentleman had made the most strenuous endeavours possible to crush down the friends of the tenant farmers, so that he (Mr. Harris) did not at all wonder at the new phase of the operation visible in this Bill. It was not to be hoped that the County Court Judges would assist the Irish people to any appreciable extent, or that they would afford any benefit whatever to the tenant farmers. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had any desire to facilitate the action and to save time, instead of introducing these County Court Judges, he would not, as the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) had said, have appointed two Sub-Commissioners to act under the presidency of the County Court Judge, but simply have referred these land cases to a special jury of five persons taken from the ordinary jury panel, and left them to adjudicate as between the landlords and tenants. The expense of that system would have been very little. The adoption of this principle would, he insisted, be found to facilitate business in such a way that the present Bill would have been of some use to the Irish tenants, instead of being a nullity, as he was afraid it would be. He (Mr. Harris) was glad to hear the hon. Member for South Tyrone making such a cogent and liberal appeal as that which he had to-night addressed to the Government; and he had hoped that, with regard to the hon. Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) and other hon. Members opposite, that gradually some right feeling would have come over them, and would have guided them in dealing with this matter—would have induced them to act together with hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House—so as to have induced them to act upon principles outside ordinary religious difficulties. If the Government was able to sustain itself by appealing to the Orangemen on one side in memory of King William, and then to the Pope on the other side——

Mr. SPEAKER: The opinions of the Pope to which the hon. Member is referring have nothing whatever to do with the subject before the House.

Mr. HARRIS: That is just what I think. With reference to the ability of the County Court Judges to decide such cases as these, he had some knowledge of what the County Court Judges in Ireland were. Lawyers were a very ignorant set of men—[*Laughter*]—well, outside their profession, lawyers were the most ignorant men he had ever met with; and perhaps it was that, in order to be a good lawyer, it was necessary that gentlemen should give all their attention to the law. In the Land Courts there were other questions besides questions of law to be considered; questions such as the location and quality of a farm had to be taken into account; and the very worst body of men for the consideration of those questions which could be selected were, to his mind, lawyers. On the other hand, the presence of a lawyer amongst a jury of five such as he suggested, would be of great value in directing the verdict, so far as questions of law were concerned. The legal knowledge of the County Court Judges would be of service in assisting and directing the juries. He could safely say that there was the strongest desire amongst the peasants in the district in which he lived to settle down and attend to their domestic affairs. They desired to live in peace and comfort with the world and with their neighbours; but the introduction of change after change in such matters as the Land Law had the effect of unsettling and preventing them from becoming peaceful and quiet. He trusted that the Unionist Party would bear in mind the evils likely to arise under this Bill. There was one thing, at all events, they might be fully satisfied on, and that was that the Irish people would accept this Bill in conjunction with other measures of a coercive character. Hon. Members opposite thought that such measures as this were calculated to satisfy the Irish people, and make them turn round to the side of law and order; but such ideas were absurd. Finally, he appealed to the Government to pause ere they plunged such a county as Galway, which had shown signs of becoming again peaceful and orderly, but which, instead of being one of the quietest, was one of the most disorderly counties in consequence of the action of the judicial authorities, into a condition of fresh disturbance.

Mr. LEA (Londonderry, S.) said, he did not wish to repeat the arguments of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) in opposing the Bill to-night; but he desired to point out that there were one or two questions which the hon. Member had put to the House, to which he trusted an answer would be given. The first question was that the Government would say where the Bill had come from. He was not at all sure that the Government would answer this question; but he could not help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), who usually thought things out for himself, could not have done so on this occasion, or he would not have brought in such a Bill as this. He (Mr. Lea) desired to know whether the Government had in any way consulted or considered the Land Commission in connection with it, because surely the Commission which had been charged with so important a work, and had carried it out with considerable success, ought, at all events, to have been consulted when there was a block in the Land Court which it was sought to remove. It seemed to him that from every quarter of the House this measure met with opposition. The hon. Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) stated that he was going to vote for the second reading, but, at the same time, pointed out that the Bill required amendment in several very important particulars. It was on condition that it would be so amended that hon. Members had promised to vote for it. The hon. Member had asked whether the Special Commissioners were to be associated with the County Court Judge in an equal manner as they were at present associated with the Legal Sub-Commissioner, and it was important that this question should be answered, as there was nothing whatever in the Bill to guide the House on the point; and if such information were not given, he took it that the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Antrim would join hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House in opposing the Bill. One of the reasons given for the Bill when it was first introduced was that the Government found great difficulty in obtaining legal Sub-Commissioners. He (Mr. Lea) had asked men well acquainted with the Bar of Ireland if that statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was really a fact, and he was bound to say that the opinion they had given did not support the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. This was undoubtedly one of the most uncertain of the Government offices in Ireland; but the desire to get public appointments that might lead to other things in the future would weigh with many of the members of the Bar; and, after all, the fact that a man had held the post of Sub-Commissioner for six or twelve months would give him a status afterwards which would induce some clients to offer him business. There were in every county of Ireland large numbers of leaseholders waiting for judicial decisions. They had been depressed by many years of bad seasons, and they looked last year for relief from the Government Bill, and yet none of these leaseholders had been able to get their rents fixed. It was regarded as a mockery that a Bill should be passed one year, and that even after a delay of 12 months people should be in no better position than they were when the Act was first passed. Then the proposal the Government now made, and which would apply to these leaseholders, was a different one to that under which relief had been given to tenants by the Act of 1881. The Government proposed to force the leaseholders who got the privilege of going into Court last year into the Courts of the County Court Judges, when for nearly the last 12 months they had the power of going into those Courts, but had positively refused to avail themselves of it. It seemed to him that the Government in so doing were not carrying out the spirit of the legislation of last year, and he believed that there was the strongest feeling against their proposal in Ireland. Since he had spoken the other day he had been informed that of the 60 valuers who had been appointed two or three years ago, but very few of them had been called upon to do any work—only one out of every four or five having been called upon to give evidence at all. Men were taken from Westmeath to Antrim, and from Antrim to Derry, and from Derry to Cavan, to value farms. In consequence of this considerable prejudice was felt against the Court valuers, and there was great objection to their reappointment. Then he should like to ask to whom the Government proposed to give this addition of £300 a-year in the shape of salary? Was it to be given to County Court Judges, who were already overworked, or to those who had very little to do, and would obtain work to keep them employed under the Act? If that was the line the Government were going to take, he would point out that they would be acting unjustly to the County Court Judges, who were overworked with ordinary Civil Bill business. It seemed to him that the Government were running their heads most unnecessarily against a brick wall in bringing forward a Bill like this. The tenant farmers had shown that they had confidence in the Land Courts by coming into them, and also that they had confidence in the Appeal Court by raising appeals before it, and he could not help thinking that it would be unwise to upset the existing arrangement in the manner proposed.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, he thought that the main object of the measure, which was framed for the purpose of more rapidly clearing off the arrears in the Land Court, was a most reasonable and proper one. The block in the Land Court was a most serious one, and, at the present rate at which the cases were disposed of, it would take three years to clear it away. He thought, however, that the Government proposal would not only entail an enormous addition to the present heavy cost of the Land Court, already amounting to about £120,000 a-year, but the Bill would increase by £20,000 more. It would also fail to give satisfaction to the Irish tenants, who had no faith in the decisions of the County Court Judges, it being proposed to give them the power to override the opinion of valuers who were to sit as assessors. He therefore begged to press upon the Government the desirability of adopting the proposal which he had made last year—namely, that in the case of all holdings under £50 per annum, which constituted four-fifths of the holdings in Ireland, the Commissioners should have power to provisionally fix the rent at the same proportion to Griffith's valuation as the decisions of the Commissioners during the previous six months bore to their valuations, and that if within two months no appeal was lodged against it by either party, the decision so fixing the rent should become final. His belief was that if that proposal were adopted, there would not be one appeal out of every 10 cases, with the result that the arrears of the Land Court would be got rid of in a cheap and speedy manner. That proposal had met with what practically amounted to general approval last year, and the only objection that the Attorney General for Ireland offered to its adoption was that it did not come within the scope of the Bill, and that it was too late to be incorporated in it, as it was at that time before the House. He intended to bring forward his proposal again at the Committee stage of the Bill, and he trusted that between the present time and then the Government would consider whether they could not adopt it in preference to their own scheme, as he believed it would be gladly accepted by all the Irish Members, and give the relief that was so much wanted. He was bound to say that he hardly looked forward with any particular pleasure to the abandonment of the Bill or to the appointment of fresh Sub-Commissioners.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.) said, that he must confess that he had listened to the debate that had taken place on this Bill with great pleasure. The desire of the Government to deal with the subject of the arrears in the Land Court had been generally appreciated and approved of, and the difficulties which existed had been discussed without any spirit of partizanship being introduced. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had again advocated the adoption of the plan which he proposed last year, and which had been brought forward from more quarters than one. He was quite alive to the evils that resulted from the litigation with regard to the land in Ireland, and he would gladly consider any scheme by which the rents might be fixed automatically with power to either party who considered themselves to be aggrieved to appeal. The right hon. Gentleman opposite thought that his proposal had obtained a great body of support in Ireland, and in that case he should certainly most gladly consider the desirability of adopting some such scheme as he had suggested. His own proposal, of course, had been based upon the theory that each case where the rent was to be altered required due consideration on its particular merits. It was only because he was afraid of effecting too violent a change that he had abstained from proposing some elaborate scheme under which the rent might be fixed automatically, such as that proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. He might point out the extreme difficulty which would attend any attempt to deal with this question, because, whatever scheme might be proposed by the Government, it would be always open to debate, and to the objection that some more complete and perfect plan might be framed. Hon. Members who brought forward such schemes had not the responsibility thrown upon them of passing them. A larger scheme, which might be more perfect, would be far more difficult to pass. This Bill had many parents, and since it was laid upon the Table he had gladly and cordially consented to consider favourably any Amendments not proposed in a Party sense. With regard to Clause 1, which had created more controversy on both sides of the House than any other, the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) proposed to make a complete amalgamation of the Landed Estates Court and the Land Commission Court.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL explained, that what he had said was that the only Commission Court which had worked satisfactorily within his memory was the Land Purchase Court, and it would be much better to join it with the Landed Estates Court than with the Land Commission.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, that the Bill was not intended to destroy the Land Purchase Court, which was left so long as it had work to do. It did not prejudice the question whether any money should be added or not to that already given under Lord Ashbourne's Act; but while it did not prejudice the question against adding a further grant, neither should it prejudice the question in its favour. All that it was necessary for him to say on behalf of the Government was that they felt—and he felt himself, perhaps, more than anybody—that a Government which should break into the existing system of land purchase in Ireland would take upon itself a very heavy responsibility—a responsibility so grave that any Government might hesitate to take it upon its shoulders. Supposing further grants were made under Lord Ashbourne's Act, their administration would fall to the amalgamated Land Commission, including the two distinguished gentlemen, Mr. Lynch and Mr. M'Carthy, who were now occupied in working the Land Purchase Scheme, and who had deserved so well of the State. They would still be in office to carry out the existing loans, and also to administer the new loans, if new loans should be added. With regard to arrears, the hon. Member for Tyrone had pointed out very truly that not only were there very large arrears in the Sub-Commissioners' Court, but also in the Land Commission Court proper. He did not think his hon. Friend was right in saying that the proposals in the Bill laid before the House were in no respect calculated to deal with the arrears. These proposals might not be wholly adequate, but he thought they would do something to carry out his hon. Friend's object. If the Land Commission was enabled to economize its work so as to save time, it would enable them to deal better with the arrears. His hon. Friend had suggested that Judge Monroe should be added to the Commission to assist in carrying out the scheme, and if his hon. Friend would put down an Amendment on the Paper to that effect, he should be glad to consider it. But he would remind his hon. Friend that Mr. Justice Monroe was a Judge of the High Court, and might object to the proposal of the hon. Member. Then he came to what he thought was the main objection which had been taken by hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House representing the tenants of Ireland, and that was to the proposal to make the County Court Judge the absolute arbiter of rent, having as advisers, but not as partners, the two lay Commissioners who are to be added to them. Well, of course, the Government were most anxious that any modifications they might make in the Act of 1881 should have the confidence of the tenants of Ireland. They would be fools if they were not. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had carefully considered the suggestions which had been made on that point from hon. Gentlemen representing all parts of Ireland, and the solution which commended itself to his mind was to associate the lay Commissioners with the County Court Judges on absolutely equal terms. If that change were made in the Bill, it would not be fair to the County Court Judges to compel them to take the new work; they ought to have the option of refusing. His idea was that every County Court Judge who should consent to carry out the work on equal terms with the lay Commissioners should be paid for doing it some such sum as he had stated before—namely, £300 a-year, in addition to the ordinary salary he received at present. If the County Court Judge said, "These are not the terms upon which you engaged me," no pressure would be put upon him. If what he proposed were done, the County Court Judge would have nothing to complain of, and there would be a great accession of strength to the Courts engaged in the work of dealing with the arrears. Another suggestion had been made to him which he proposed to embody in a clause—namely, that if both landlord and tenant agreed, it should be in their power to have a fair rent fixed by the lay Commissioners going over the land, without the trouble or cost of appearing in any Court whatever. In other words, instead of a Court dealing with rents, there would be two gentlemen arbitrating between landlord and tenant, and possessing the confidence of both. He hoped he had shown the House that he had approached this matter in no hard and fast spirit of controversy; but that he had tried to meet the views held in the various quarters of the House, and he trusted that if the Bill were amended as he proposed it should be, it would deal with the vast mass of arrears now unhappily before the Head Commission Court and the Sub-Commission Courts, and would not frighten either party in the suits pending between landlord and tenant in Ireland at the present moment.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, he was obliged to confess that the changes now suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland completely altered the form and character of the Bill. As it was originally introduced, the Bill practically amounted to an upsetting of the whole machinery of the Act of 1881, but now, the first occasion on which the Chief Secretary had addressed the House upon the Bill, the right hon. Gentleman proposed a total change in the measure. He had no objection to either of the changes the right hon. Gentleman proposed to make, as they went to distinctly improve the Bill. But he hoped that if the measure was to be pressed, the Chief Secretary would go a step further in the direction he had indicated that night. Though the changes would improve the Bill, the Bill itself was not an improvement on the present state of the law in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman would do very much to remove the objections felt to the Bill, if he would agree to leave to the tenants the power they now possessed of removing their cases from the Civil Bill Court to the Land Commission if they felt inclined to do so. Mark what the Bill proposed to do. After the passing of this Bill, the parties would not be entitled, as a matter of course, to have any proceedings transferred from the Civil Bill Court to the Land Commission—that was to say, that once a tenant was got into the Civil Bill Court, when he was sent there without any option of his own, as it was proposed by the second sub-section of the Bill might be the case, once he was sent by the Lord Chancellor or the Land Commission to the County Court, a Court most agreeable to the landlords, the door was to be closed upon him, so that he could not get out again. But, on the other hand, the door of the Land Commission was left open to the landlord. If a tenant had his case removed, according to the disposition of the cases provided by Sub-section 2, into the County Court, he must stay there, no matter whether he liked the tribunal or not; no matter whether he had confidence in the tribunal or not; but, on the other hand, if a landlord went into the Land Court, and he thought that Court would not take as favourable a view of the case as the County Court, he was left by the Bill the option of having his case removed to the Land Commission Court. The right hon. Gentleman would go very far to remove the objections which were entertained to the Bill, or he would at least mitigate the objections to the measure, if he would agree to leave the tenant the option of having his case removed from the Civil Bill Court to the Land Commission Court whenever he felt he had no confidence in the County Court. That would be a very simple proposal, and he did not see how it could be objected to on any ground, because the first element of the intention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was to increase, if possible, the confidence of the tenants in the tribunal which he proposed to set up. Surely, when a tenant felt he had no confidence in a Court, he ought not to be locked up in that Court, but ought to have the right to remove his case if he thought proper. At present the tenant had such power, but this Bill proposed to take it away from him. He (Mr. Gill) was anxious to understand upon what principle the new Court of Appeal was to be arranged. He did not see that the proposal of the Bill would facilitate the hearing of appeals at all. All that he could see the clause relating to appeals did was to practically shelve Judge O'Hagan, by removing him from the tribunal of which he was now the president and the most powerful Member, into a Court where he would sit with three other Judges and be their junior. He (Mr. Gill) did not see that any definite result could be obtained by such a step. What the object of shelving Judge O'Hagan was, he was not qualified to say; but a pretty strong opinion existed in Ireland upon the point, and unless some more satisfactory explanation was given of these clauses than had been given to-night, the present impression would continue. They all knew that Judge O'Hagan, in regard to the schedule of rates of reductions which were adopted by the Land Commission recently in carrying out the Land Act of last year, differed from the two other Commissioners as to the amount of the reductions of rent, and differed in favour of the tenants. He, unquestionably, by his differing with that decision, and by the reasons which he gave for that difference, shook the confidence of the country in the Land Commission, and materially damaged the position of the Government in regard to the decision. Now, Judge O'Hagan, apparently as a punishment and as a precaution that he might not do the same thing again, was to be taken out of his position in the Land Commission, and to be deprived of his power of deciding cases in future. He was transferred to another Court where he would be almost a cipher, or where, at any rate, his position would not be so powerful as it was at the present time. The Land Commission would be left entirely in the hands of Mr. Wrench and Mr. Litton. The characters of both Mr. Wrench and Mr. Litton—especially of Mr. Wrench, who was the more powerful of the two—were well-known in Ireland, and the tenants of Ireland had no confidence in either of those gentlemen. They regarded them as enemies of their interests and as partizans of the landlords. In addition to all that, the House had passed a Bill to-night which would place in a position of power, as a permanent official, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet Division of Kent (Colonel King-Harman) who was, perhaps, the most notorious rack-renter in Ireland, and who would have a great deal to say, henceforth, in his new position in regard to the appointments that would be made by the Land Commission, and to the distribution of cases between the County Courts and the expiring Land Commission. The Bill, as originally proposed, and even as it now stood amended, by the suggestions of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, contemplated the complete extinction of the Land Commission Court as it had hitherto existed. There were phrases in the Bill which seemed to contemplate that the Sub-Commission Courts would cease to exist altogether, and that the entire business of the Land Act would be transacted by the County Courts. That, certainly, was the right hon. Gentleman's original view; but whether it was his view now, he could not say. At any rate, the power of rigging the County Courts would in the future be just as much in the hands of the Land Commission, from which the influence of Judge O'Hagan was to be removed, as that of rigging the Sub-Commission Courts was formerly, and was now. The provision in the Bill as to appeals, in respect to which he hoped the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) would offer to them some explanation in the direction of showing what use it was for the purpose of facilitating appeals, and also with a view of showing whether the comment he (Mr. Gill) had made on it was not justified—namely, that the only definite result obtained was the shelving of Judge O'Hagan. Those were the comments he felt called upon to make upon the Bill that night. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would see his way to retain the present provision of the Bill which gave the tenant the option of having his case removed from the Civil Bill Court to the Land Commission; because, if the right hon. Gentleman could not, the provision of the law would be the most one-sided that could possibly be framed, for it took away from the tenants the privilege which they now possessed and most rightly possessed, while it left the landlord still in possession of that privilege. He regarded the Bill as an unfortunate one, and he was against its principle altogether. There were many Amendments which might be made in the procedure of the Land Commission Courts, some of which had been alluded to that evening; but they did not at all touch the principle which had been aimed at by the Bill — namely, the forcible transfer of tenants' cases into tribunals the Judges in which were notorious partizans, whose characters and proceedings had been under the notice of the House during the past week. That principle of the Bill was an obnoxious and a wrong one, and, in his opinion, subversive of the best intentions of the Land Act of 1881. The crisis which the Bill was intended ostensibly to meet—namely, the glut in the Land Courts, could be met and met promptly and by a less expenditure of money than was now contemplated, by the appointment, temporarily, of a sufficient number of Sub-Commissioners, as was done in 1882, when a larger glut in the Land Courts prevailed. At that time 80 extra Sub-Commissioners were appointed, all of whom ceased to hold office as soon as the block was got rid of. The same thing might be done at the present time, and would be a much more prompt and efficient way of meeting the present crisis. He considered that that was the best course to adopt, and, therefore, he joined most heartily with his hon. Friends in thinking that every representative of the tenant farmers ought to oppose this Bill to the best of his power.

MR. PARNELL (Cork) said, that when this Bill had been introduced, he had ventured to remark that it was a measure of a reactionary character, intended to carry out—as far as the Government dared to make any measure carry out—a policy of a reactionary nature, and one which, so far from alleviating or smoothing the relations between landlord and tenant in Ireland, would tend to exasperate and make them still more difficult. The Government had pleaded then, as a ground for the Bill, that, in the interests of economy, it was necessary to utilize the surplus legal strength in Ireland, and they found in the Irish County Court Judges a large legal force which had never yet been availed of, and they desired to give these gentlemen technical assistance in the shape of Land Commissioners, to enable their knowledge of law to be brought into play for the decision of judicial rents; and it was difficult to find men with the requisite knowledge and capacity and position to fill the office of Sub-Commissioners under the Land Act of 1881, that was, to exercise the full functions discharged by the Assistant Commissioners with respect to the fixing of fair rents, and that, therefore, they would select and appoint persons not with the sufficient and adequate knowledge, but still with sufficient knowledge to report to the County Court Judges as to the technical questions connected with the valuation of land. That had been the only excuse given by the Government for not appointing additional Sub-Commissioners. Now, it appeared to him (Mr. Parnell) the Government, by the announcement made that night, that they would extend the functions of the Assistant Commissioners — whose functions would be under the Bill as it now stood, in the nature of those of assessors—to the functions of Assistant Commissioners under the Land Act of 1881, had completely cut the ground from under their feet as regarded their objection to increasing the number of Sub-Commissioners. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, in introducing this Bill, had distinctly stated as the foundation and reason for bringing the County Court Judges into the matter, that he could not get men easily or quickly of sufficient capacity and knowledge to fill the office of Sub-Commissioner.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Legal Sub-Commissioners.

Mr. PARNELL: If there was any difficulty in obtaining legal Sub-Commissioners, it must be more difficult to get men to fill the office of lay Sub-Commissioners. It was, he submitted, therefore infinitely more difficult to obtain men of sufficient trust, capacity, and knowledge to fill the various duties of lay Sub-Commissioners than those of legal Sub-Commissioners. With regard to the legal Commissioners, there was the whole Bar of Ireland to draw from. Questions of judgment did undoubtedly arise, but they were subordinate to the question of law. The number of barristers that would have to be appointed in order to provide a force adequate and sufficient to make up for the County Court Judges would only be something like 25 altogether. But surely the right hon. Gentleman did not pretend that it was impossible for him to select from the Bar of Ireland 25 barristers competent to discharge the duties of Sub-Commissioners? Then he had failed to make out a case for the Bill which asked the House to disturb the settlement of 1881, in order to admit the jurisdiction of a number of Judges in Ireland who were to be converted into legal Sub-Commissioners, and whose characteristics were to be of a reactionary nature. It was well known that the Irish tenants distrusted the County Court Judges, and that was evident from the fact that the tenants persistently avoided all reference of cases to them. That attempt to make County Court Judges arbiters in questions of fair rent was simply a corollary to the policy of the Government last Session when they had destroyed the Land Act which had passed through the House of Commons by Amendments introduced in the House of Lords. It was a matter that would be fraught with danger to the peace and tranquility of Ireland, and he contended that the reasons put forward by the right hon. Gentleman as excuses for the Bill were frivolous and unsound to the last degree. It was absurd to suppose that 25 barristers could not be found to discharge the duties of legal Sub-Commissioners. At any rate, if lay Sub-Commissioners could be obtained *a fortiori* legal Sub-Commissioners could. He would urge on the right hon. Gentleman to let things stand as they were, and follow the precedent of his Predecessors, and increase the number of Sub-Commissioners. The matter was not more pressing than it was in 1881 and the beginning of 1882, when Lord Spencer was Viceroy, and surely the work of the Land Commission was greatly in arrears. There were then something like 90,000 cases awaiting decision, and Lord Spencer appointed a considerable number of additional Sub-Commissioners, with the result that in the course of a year or two the arrears of work were wiped out. There was no such great amount of urgency now; because, in those days, the judicial rent dated from the fixing of the rent; but to-day the judicial rent dated from the date of the application by the tenant. Until the recent Act was passed, there was no power in the Court to allow a drawback in respect of rent paid after notice of application had been given, nor to extend the period for repayment, and therefore these were special reasons for urgency. But that was now all changed. The right hon. Gentleman might say that the County Court Judges were not using the equitable power which they possessed. But that showed how unsatisfactory a tribunal they were. He contended that the County Courts of Ireland were totally unfitted to decide upon the very delicate and important questions arising out of the fixing of judicial rents. Under the Bill the Lord

Lieutenant could, with the consent of the Treasury, order extra remuneration to any County Court Judge. That was a monstrous proposition. The County Court Judges of Ireland at present were paid at least one-third more than they ought to be paid, for they had literally no functions to perform. How many days did they sit on the average in the course of a year? Did they sit 20 days out of the 365?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): Yes.

MR. PARNELL: Did they sit 30?

MR. MADDEN: Certainly.

MR. PARNELL: Did they sit 40? Would it be right that an English County Court Judge had earned his salary, if he only sat on an average between 30 and 40 days throughout the year? [Mr. MADDEN dissented.] English Judges, whether Judges of the County Courts or of the Supreme Courts, were paid salaries which were known to be less than the amounts which they previously earned at the Bar; but none of the Irish County Court Judges earned at the Bar anything approaching the salaries they received as Judges. It was a monstrous thing that, at that time of day, the Government should attempt to raise the already bloated salaries of the County Court Judges of Ireland, which was one of the forms of bribery of the Bar of Ireland. He trusted that the House would reject the particular clause embracing that provision. What was the meaning of the clause relating to the subject of appeal? It would have been much better originally not to give a right of appeal from the decision of the Sub-Commissioners, because appeals had acted like a drag upon the working of the Act of 1881; it had almost overwhelmed it, and in many cases rendered it nugatory. If by this Bill they offered, as they were now proposing, further inducements to the landlords to swamp the Courts with appeals, they would simply stop the working of the Land Act of 1881 and of the Act of 1885. Were the Government acting in good faith in introducing the Bill and its predecessor and successor? They had understood from the Government that that Session was to be an English Session; that the British public were sated with Irish legislation, and that they wanted a little time to devote to the consideration of their own interests and grievances, and he (Mr. Parnell) and his Party had always been quite willing that their wish should be gratified. But the Government, by the introduction of the Bill, and the Parliamentary Under Secretary's Bill, were doing all they could to erect obstacles in their own path. The Bill was entirely unprovoked, and its introduction could only be viewed as an exhibition of sheer "cussedness." The Chief Secretary was so elated by his wonderful successes in Ireland that he thought right to emulate the typical Irishman of Donnybrook Fair, who went up and down with his coat tails streaming, saying—"Will nobody tread on the tails of my coat?" The measure before the House was not wanted, and the Government ought to withdraw it. There was urgency for an increase of Sub-Commissioners in Ireland, but there was no urgency for a Bill of that character. He recommended the Government to refrain from introducing provocative and exasperating measures, which indicated a reactionary tendency on the part of the Government, and which, if persevered in, would undoubtedly increase, instead of diminishing, the confusion in the relations between landlord and tenant in Ireland.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University) said, the discussion which had taken place on the Bill had been productive of very substantial results. The Bill had been introduced to the House of Commons by the Government, not as the best possible theoretical solution of the difficult questions with which it dealt, but as an honest attempt to deal with questions of paramount importance which it was absolutely necessary to deal with by legislation in the present Session. It was absolutely impossible to avoid dealing with the matter, because the question of the continuance or non-continuance of the Land Commission, which was about to expire, must be dealt with by legislation during the present Session. They had now arrived at a period in the history of this Commission at which some definite arrangement must be made. Then Parliament was face to face with certain difficulties in the administration of that Act, such as the vast amount of arrears, in the fixing of fair rents, and in appeals. If the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) had been present in the House when the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) delivered his very conciliatory speech with reference to the various suggestions which were made by various sections of the House of Commons, he would not have indulged in his comparison of the right hon. Gentleman to the traditional Irishman at Donnybrook Fair inviting someone to tread on the tail of his coat.

Mr. PARNELL said, his remarks did not apply to the appearance of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary on the second reading of the Bill, about which he made a most interesting speech, but to the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman in the House.

Mr. MADDEN said, that he assumed that the hon. Member (Mr. Parnell) in speaking on this Bill, referred to the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) with regard to the Bill which was under discussion. The Bill made provision for clearing off the arrears of work which already existed in the Courts. There were arrears which could only be wiped off if the Land Commission were strengthened. He claimed that this Bill was an honest and fair attempt to deal by legislation with several important subjects. The first was the block in the Land Courts. The Bill proposed an enormous improvement in the machinery which existed in the Civil Bill Courts in providing the Chairman with two lay assessors. But if this suggestion which had been pressed on the Government were adopted, it would place the County Court Judge in the same position as the ordinary legal Sub-Commissioner; and what object could there be in giving the tenant an option between two tribunals similarly constituted? Then, it was said, if you appointed lay Commissioners, why not appoint legal Sub-Commissioners; if you could get one you could get the other? That was not so. It was by no means so serious a matter for a lay Commissioner to accept temporary duties as it was for a practising barrister, who would have to abandon his professional connections while his employment lasted, and afterwards to begin life over again.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, that there had been no previous difficulty.

Mr. PARNELL said, he did not believe there were 30 barristers in Ireland who would not accept the post.

Mr. MADDEN said, then the hon. Member did not know much about the Irish Bar. No barrister in substantial practice would accept a temporary employment of this kind.

Mr. PARNELL: How many applied for the position of Sub-Commissioners?

Mr. MADDEN said, that there was a substantial difference between getting lay Sub-Commissioners and legal Sub-Commissioners. It was somewhat remarkable that while the hon. Member for Cork said the Judges had not enough to do, the hon. Member for South Tyrone said they had too much work already.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, he spoke of some; he did not say all.

Mr. MADDEN said, the position of the hon. Member for Cork was that they were all nearly idle. He had dissented from all the figures of the hon. Member, and he considered the highest figures mentioned by him to be an absurd under-estimate of the days occupied by sittings of the County Court Judges. In common fairness, if the County Court Judges were called upon to do extra work they should receive additional remuneration. He could quite understand that so long as the ordinary judicial work only was increased —work which they undertook to do— the Judges had no claim for additional remuneration; but when they were asked to do work of a totally different character—namely, to sit as Sub-Commissioners, that was, to occupy a position they never undertook to occupy, he submitted the case was very different. In conclusion, he would point out that this Bill prepared the Land Commission for any contingency that might happen. The money was very nearly exhausted. There might be an additional grant of money. There might be a large scheme of land purchase. If the money should be exhausted the duties of the purchase department would come to an end, and if there were a large scheme of land purchase then the energy of the entire body of the Commission would be required. The last clause of the Bill simply provided for the continuance of the Commission for seven years, and made it effective for whatever class of work was put upon it. It was from that point of view that the Government submitted that provision to the House. On the whole, he submitted that the discussion of the Bill had furnished important results, and would enable the House to produce even a more beneficial and useful measure than that now on the Table, and that it was an honest attempt to deal with arrears and the hearing of appeals.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, with the permission of the House he would say a few words explaining why he proposed to go to a Division, notwithstanding the conciliatory attitude of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He frankly admitted that the Government had made several concessions of great value during the debate. They had given way on the co-ordinate authority of the Assistant Commissioners with County Court Judges, they had made the question of the Purchase Clause perfectly clear, and they had expressed their willingness to strengthen the Court of Appeal. But what he considered the main principle of the Bill had been left intact, that was, the destruction of the option or choice of the tenant as to the Court where his case should be heard. That he held to be a reversal of the Act of 1881, and upon that he proposed to divide the House.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said, he would merely interpose a very few remarks before the House went to a Division. In connection with this Bill he had thought it his duty to ask the right hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland for some Returns giving information on that point as to which the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) and others had made objection. There were grave suspicions in the minds of the tenantry of Ireland as to the *bona fides* of the Government in the matter, and though the Solicitor General declared the Bill was an honest attempt to deal with the arrears of land business in Ireland, he (Mr. Flynn) and others contended that it was nothing of the kind. The Returns he asked for were to show the number of cases of application for the fixing of fair rents brought before the Land Commission, as distinguished from those brought before Civil Bill Courts. He found it impossible to get this information, and perfectly understood why the Government declined to give it. However, he had gone through the Returns for the last four months of 1887, and found figures which he thought the House should have in its possession before going to a Division. The number of cases for having fair rents fixed brought before the Sub-Commissioners during the months, September, October, November, and December, last year, amounted to 3,097, and the fixed rental amounted to £60,000. In the same months last year, the number of such cases before the Civil Bill Courts was 62, with a rental of £1,203. Those facts spoke for themselves more powerfully than hours of declamation and rhetoric. They put the case in a nutshell, and were a strong illustration of the contention of Irish Members, that the Government gave the Irish people nothing that they asked for, and insisted upon forcing upon them everything they did not ask for.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 228; Noes 139: Majority 89.—(Div. List, No. 86.)

Main Question, put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed for Monday next."

Mr. PARNELL asked that the Government would give due Notice of the intention to take the Committee stage, and whether Monday was set down merely *pro formâ* with the purpose of then fixing a definite day. If it was not the intention to take the Bill on Monday, would the Government give due Notice of when it was intended to take it, so that Irish Members might be in their places? Many Irish Members had business and professional engagements to fulfil, and had to sacrifice their own interests and those of their clients to attend the House on the bare possibility of Bills coming on. Could the Government give some substantial promise as to when the Bill would come on? The same remark applied to the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill read earlier in the evening. Would the Government also arrange to make those the first business?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, he would set the Bills down for the same day, and they should follow each other as first business. It would probably be more convenient to Irish Members than to attend if the Bills were divided and made First Orders on separate days. He would take care that due Notice should be given. The Bill would stand now for Monday, and Notice should be given on Thursday should there be any change in the intention to take the Committee stage on Monday.

Mr. PARNELL: And the other Bill?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: The same understanding applies to the other Bill set down for the same day.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *committed* for *Monday* next.

WAYS AND MEANS.

OBSERVATIONS.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he had been reminded that it would not be necessary to introduce a new Resolution on account of the alterations he proposed to make in the Wheel Tax, because the effect of the Amendment would be to lower the tax, and a Bill could be introduced containing the Amendment, but founded upon the same Resolution. He hoped to bring in the Bill in a very few days, and he believed it would meet the general convenience of the House if the discussion were taken upon the second reading of the Bill, which should be taken on the earliest possible day.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said, of course it was expected the discussion would have taken place that night. Did the right hon. Gentleman propose to make no statement on introducing the Bill? He further understood the right hon. Gentleman to say he would introduce the Bill in a few days; but earlier in the evening a promise was made that the Bill should be in the hands of Members in two days.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he thought the hon. Member asked that the matter should not be brought on later than 12 o'clock, and it had been found impossible to bring it on earlier. He understood that hon. Members generally were willing that the discussion should be taken on the second reading in preference to discussing a new Resolution. The House would be aware that the Resolution passed was an Instruction to bring in the Bill, so that there would not be a stage to discuss leave to introduce the Bill. He hoped the Bill would be in the hands of Members on Wednesday or Thursday, and that the Bill might be brought in on Monday. On that last point he must confer with his right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury.

Mr. CAUSTON: Will it be taken as first Order?

Mr. GOSCHEN: I cannot undertake to promise that.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): Will the Bill apply to Scotland?

Mr. GOSCHEN: I cannot say at the moment. I have not had the opportunity of consultation on that point.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): The Resolution applied to Great Britain. Would not the Bill have the same application?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, of course it would be open to the House to amend the Bill, making it apply to England only. But he hoped before Monday to make an announcement in reference to that.

MOTIONS.

—o—

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) CODE OF 1888.—RESOLUTION.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.), in moving the Resolution, said, he believed that if the alteration against which this Resolution was directed were carried out, it would result in the lowering of the standard of education at present in force in Scotland. The Article of the Code to which objection was taken read as follows:—

> "That the ordinary payments in respect of instruction for each child must not exceed ninepence a week upon the average number."

In the former Code, which would be superseded if the new one were sanctioned, the clause ran in precisely the same way, save that these words were added—and a great safeguard they were —"except with the consent of the Department"—that was to say, that with the consent of the Department, the limit of fees charged on an average in Scotch schools might exceed 9*d.* He did not propose to go into the question why this change was made. He would confine himself to the working of the Education Act in Scotland under the former Code, and the effect of the proposed change. There was a great difference—as he had no doubt hon. Members knew—between the educational legislation which affected England and that which affected Scotland. The importance which was attached to superior education in Scotland was part of the past history of that country. It had been recognized at all times, and it was especially recognized at the time when the Scotch Education Act of 1872 was passed. The title of that Act indicated very clearly that it was an Act dealing not with education of an elementary character alone, but providing that the education of Scotland in the future should be conducted on the same lines as in the past. It recognized the necessity for a higher education than was recognized by the English Act of 1870. Indeed, the English Act of 1870 was called "The Elementary Education Act," whereas there was no such word as "elementary" in the Scotch Act. Again, there was no limit as to the fees to be charged in Scotland, whereas such a limit was imposed by the English Act, as applied by the English Code. There was no definition of an "elementary school" in the Scotch Act, and there was a definition in the English Act. In fact, the intention of the Scotch Act was clearly to provide not only for elementary, but also for superior education. One reason why that was so was that the people of Scotland attached a high value to the character of education given in the past. They looked not at the amount of instruction imparted, but to the fact that by the education formerly given there was created a habit of thought and a mental training for the scholars which constituted a good preparation for life's work, and which had done much for the advancement not only of Scotland, but of the entire British Empire, both at home and in our Colonies and Dependencies. This attempt to continue the character of the education formerly given was very successful, and the system that was adopted under the Act of 1876 gave satisfaction to the parents who desired to have a higher education for their children than was given at purely elementary schools. The school boards which carried out the Act were satisfied, for it was felt that the cost incurred was repaid, and the parents were satisfied with the better and higher education their children received. A serious change in this state of things was threatened by the alteration of the wording of the Code, against which his Resolution was directed. That alteration would put an end to the discretion now exercised by the Department with regard to the average fees charged in Scottish schools; and, not only so, but it would interfere with the arrangements which had been made in many places, and which were based upon the former Code. On the faith of that discretion, many school boards entered into engagements with respect to the education of the children under their control, which it would be difficult, if not impossible, to carry out, if the alteration of the Code were maintained. It must be borne in mind that they did not do so merely of their own desire, and without being called upon to do so by the public opinion of Scotland. The improved elementary education that was given created and stimulated the demand for higher education. The problem to be solved was how to give effective instruction at a moderate cost alike to the parent, the ratepayer, and the taxpayer. He did not know that he could better illustrate what was the result of the working of the old system than by taking the example of one of the school boards that had been most successful in educational teaching of this character. The school board of Govan dealt with one of the very largest and most important parishes in Scotland. It was a typical parish, and contained a population of a very varied character. There was not only an industrial population, but also a large residential population, consisting of those having business in Glasgow. The Govan School Board had established two kinds of schools—namely, the ordinary elementary schools, with very moderate fees, and schools with higher fees. The higher fee schools had been extremely successful. The education they gave was of a very high character, and the only question to be considered was whether that education had resulted in extravagant cost to the ratepayer or taxpayer, or whether it had been borne, as it ought to have been borne, to a very large extent, by the parents of the children. As a matter of fact, owing to the Board being able to charge a higher fee, in consequence of the discretion given by the Code before the alteration was made, the cost of this higher education had been almost entirely paid by the parents.

If he might give the House a short series of statistics, it would appear very clearly that that was the case. In the seven higher fee schools the fees paid by parents amounted to £6,400, whilst the grant was £3,400, so that the fees exceeded the grant by £3,000. In the 12 ordinary schools, the grant amounted to £9,600, and the fees to £6,400, so that the grant exceeded the fees by £3,200. Therefore, whilst in the higher-fee schools the grant was £3,000 less than the fees, in the ordinary schools it was £3,200 more. Taking the rate per child, in the higher schools the Government grant was 18*s*. 4*d*. per head, whereas in the lower schools it was 18*s*., so that this higher education was given at a a difference of only 4*d*. extra to the State. Under these circumstances, he thought the House would consider that this education, which was of a character that was suited to the people and was desired by the people, was given at a very small cost alike to the ratepayer and the taxpayer, and that the discretion which allowed such instruction to be imparted ought not to be removed for a light cause. The people of Scotland felt that, as they paid the school board rates, they should have their children educated as they desired, and they would not be contented with an elementary education. What he asked was that the policy embodied in the Scotch Education Acts should not be reversed by this alteration of the Code; that the policy of the former Code should be maintained; that if it was necessary to introduce legislation in order to make the matter clear, this should be done. He trusted that the Government would be able to assure the people of Scotland that the education which had done so much for them in the past would in the future be conducted on the same satisfactory lines.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to withhold Her Assent from the alteration in Article 6 (d) of the Code of the Scotch Education Department proposed for this year, which (contrary to the provisions of Section 67 of 'The Education (Scotland) Act, 1872,') will have the effect of lowering the standard of education that now exists in the public schools of Scotland."—(*Mr. Sinclair.*)

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) said, he rose immediately after his hon. Friend, because he opposed the Motion, and he thought it right that the House should know that there were two sets of opinion on this subject in Scotland. The School Board of Govan, whose proceedings had been referred to by his hon. Friend, had, as a matter of fact, set up two different sets of schools in that district. He (Dr. Cameron) did not know that it was a right principle to subsidize the education of the more genteel schools—for that was what they were doing—which had been started in Govan. Such schools did not impart a better education at all than those of a less pretentious character. In the old days of the parish schools, before any of these subsidies were given, people had all they wanted in the way of education in Scotland. Grants were now given out of the rates, but the fees were not reduced; and it was a question whether the character of the education was improved. At that hour of the night, he did not think he need follow his hon. Friend into the details of his speech; but he hoped the Government would not imagine that the opinion of all the Representatives of Scotland ran in one direction, but would believe that a number of them disliked very much to turn their schools into genteel schools at the expense of the ratepayers.

Mr. CRAIG SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick) said, he could not agree with the last speaker that the Question was one between genteel schools and schools which were not genteel. The matter was a much more important and serious one, and involved a peculiar legal point. The point was, no doubt, a small one; but it involved a very large subject. It was really a collision between the Scotch and the English Acts. Under the English Act of 1870, the fees were fixed by the Department, and were limited to 9*d*. a-week. Under the Scotch Act, the fees were entirely a matter for the school boards, who were entitled to fix a reasonable fee, or, if they chose, to have none at all. Up to 1876, the grants were given on the same principle in England and Scotland; and in 1876 a measure was brought into Parliament by Lord Sandon which applied only to England, and which raised the grants from 15*s*. to 17*s*. 6*d*. It was desired—he believed very late at night—to extend this provision to Scotland also, and accordingly a clause was introduced into the tail end of Lord Sandon's Act, the effect of which was to apply it to Scotland as far as grants were concerned. He understood that the Auditor General refused to allow the Scotch grants to be given on the old principle because of that clause, and the Law Officers seemed to have expressed the opinion that his reading of the clause was right. It was not for him, as a layman, to criticize the opinion of the Law Officers, although he had formed a clear opinion of his own on the subject. Assuming, however, that the opinion of the Law Officers was right, although the Scotch Education Act allowed the school boards to fix the fees, those fees must remain at 9*d.*, and other provisions of the English Act must also be adopted. For instance, under the English Act, board schools were prohibited from teaching any Catechism. Nearly every one of the Scotch schools taught the Scotch Catechism, and there would be a great disturbance of the present system if this custom was to be changed. In the same way, a great disturbance would also be created if the Scotch school boards were prevented from charging what fees they liked. If the opinion of the Law Officers was right, the Department would, to a large extent, revolutionize the system of teaching in the Scotch schools, and would degrade those schools which were never intended to be elementary schools alone to the position of elementary schools. The expression "elementary education" was not to be found in the Scotch Act, and it certainly was never intended that the English Act should be made to apply to the Scotch system of education. He was quite certain that Parliament never meant, by means of a clause three or four lines in length, to revolutionize the whole Scotch system. As a matter of fact, Parliament could not change that system. The effect of the opinion expressed by the Law Officers would be that the fees, instead of being paid as they were now by the parents, would come upon the rates, because the Scotch people would not change their system of education. The question was how could the present difficulty be got rid of. He believed it could be removed in a very simple manner. It could be done by a declaratory Bill of a single clause, to rectify the oversight which had been committed in the drafting of the clause in the English Act; or the clause could be rescinded, and an Act passed explaining that, in future, the Scotch schools as well as the English were to have the benefit of the 17*s.* 6*d.* grant.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) said, this was too important a question for the Education Department to settle. As the last speaker had admitted, the matter could only be set right by the passing of a new Act, and, that being so, he would not detain the House except to make one observation. The wealthy people of Govan, who had been referred to by the Mover of the Resolution, seemed to have arranged to have the education of their children at a very cheap rate, and they were practically subsidized by the State in the manner described. For his own part, he (Mr. Barclay) believed that elementary education ought to be given free; but he thought that those who desired to have higher education for their children ought to pay for it themselves. Poor children who were qualified to go beyond the elementary stage had a chance of availing themselves of educational endowments and exhibitions. He certainly objected to the wealthy classes being paid either out of the rates or by the State for the education of their children.

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) said, the Govan School Board district was in the most wealthy portion of Glasgow, and the children who attended the so-called higher school belonged entirely to the wealthier class. Although the fees were high, the education given was not of a superior character. The working-class children were excluded from the school, and what was now desired was to have two or three separate schools under the same school board for elementary instruction, in order to correspond with various social grades. Surely, if there were to be board schools at all, they ought to be open to all classes of the community for elementary education. Of course, if people wanted secondary education, they might expect to have higher fees to pay. It was not, however, the school fees charged for secondary education which raised the limit in these schools above the 9*d.* a-week; but it was the exceptionally high fees charged for purely elementary instruction, as much as £1 10*s.* per quarter, or £6 per annum, being charged for Standard V. The old parish schools, which were the former providers of secondary education, never charged fees amounting to anything like an average of 9*d*. a-week, and there was not a single school in the country districts of Scotland where the average was so high. It was only in a few large towns that people wanted to have schools for the benefit of children of the wealthier class, where the school fees charged even for elementary subjects would be such as to exclude the children of the general public. At present the Code said that grants were not to be given, except where the average fees were not more than 9*d*. a-week, and he objected to the Resolution as one having the effect of bringing pressure to bear on the Government to alter that state of things.

Mr. C. S. PARKER (Perth) said, it had been his duty to make inquiry into this matter, and he knew a little of the schools to which his hon. Friend (Mr. Caldwell) referred. He did not think it was a fair way of putting it, to say the schools were genteel schools meant for the higher classes of society. True, some of them were in parts of the town where there were few children of the working class, but these were in no sense excluded; the only reason why fees were high for the elder children was because parents requested that the education might be higher than it otherwise would be, and pressed upon the school board the acceptance of higher fees to bear the expense of higher education. That was quite in accordance with tradition in Scotland, where many children of the middle class used to get higher education in ordinary schools. There was really no Act expressing the deliberate intention of Parliament that they should be confined by any such limit as an average fee of 9*d*. He had looked closely into the subject, and found how the limitation came about. In 1876 Lord Sandon was giving certain pecuniary advantages to English schools, and Mr. Duncan M'Laren asked for the same thing for Scotland. It was late in the night when he made the request, and an Amendment was hurriedly improvised; but the clause in its present form was introduced in the House of Lords, probably at the suggestion of the Scotch Education Department, by the then Lord President, the Duke of Richmond. He moved in general terms, "that the provisions of this Act with respect to the conditions to be fulfilled by schools in order to obtain an annual Parliamentary grant shall apply to Scotland." Thus the words were introduced which were now held to bring the schools under the English Act of 1870. That, however, escaped notice at the time, for, when the Bill came back to the Commons, Lord Sandon described the Amendments made by the Lords as merely formal and verbal, and they passed without discussion. Though, therefore, the words appeared in the Act, it was not the intention of Parliament to impose the 9*d*. limit on Scotland. The difficulty was now a legal one, and if it was rightly held by the Law Officers that the schools had been inadvertently placed under the English Act, the Education Department could not make the Code otherwise. But he urged that a very simple Bill of one clause would set things straight, and put Scotch schools back to where they were without the limitation. They would still be under the control of the Education Department, which was by no means very ready to permit fees in excess of the 9*d*. limit. They had allowed it in a few cases, and would, no doubt, continue to use the power with due reserve. Such being the case, he hoped that few Scotch Members would vote so as to become parties to placing on record a confirmation of a slip that placed Scotch schools under a limitation only intended for England.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, they might congratulate themselves on the impartiality with which the discussion had been conducted. Three Scotch speakers said one thing and three said the other, and, in this balance of opinion, the Government had to make up its mind. What had happened was in consequence of the insertion of a clause in the Act of 1876, and he hoped it might act as a warning to hon. Members not to seek to get their object carried out by far-reaching and ill-considered Amendments. Whether the object were good or not, at least it should induce more care in its attainment. His late friend, Mr. Duncan M'Laren, at the last moment, thinking he saw a pecuniary advantage for Scotland, with his usual determination took advantage of the Bill of 1876, and by his blandishments or threats, or a combination of both, pressed his Amendment on a too yielding Government. This procedure had gone on for a number of years without difficulty, until the Auditor General intervened, and it was made clear that the Education Department had not the power in their hands, and so were driven to the necessity of leaving out the words in the Code; for it would have been absolute hypocrisy to pretend to have the power to give consent when they actually had no such power, and would be altogether misleading. The only question was whether a change should be made in the law; and on that, he thought, everyone must agree, that the Government, having listened to six Scotch Members, three on one side and three on the other, could not be expected to do more than say that they would give the subject their most serious attention. For himself, he confessed he had listened to the arguments on either side with very great attention, but was quite unable, at the moment, to give a verdict as between hon. Gentlemen who spoke with equal ability and earnestness; and either side would allow that the other was animated with a sincere desire for the best interests of Scotch education. He would appeal to the hon. Member (Mr. Sinclair) not to press his Motion further. He repeated it was a matter that required serious consideration, and that consideration it should receive from Her Majesty's Government. No doubt, as his hon. Friend (Mr. Craig Sellar) said, if the state of matters that existed before the Auditor General intervened was to be restored, it could easily be done; there was no technical difficulty, and it would not involve much waste of public time to do it; but the question whether that should be done was the matter to consider.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he only rose to state what was the practice of the Department when he was connected with it. The Department then were advised that the 9*d.* limit did not apply to Scotland, and under that advice the limit had been extended in the way referred to, with the consent of the Scotch Department. However, he had only this to say, that he believed the schools that had been established above the 9*d.* limit, with the consent of the Scotch Department, had not been general schools, but admirable secondary schools, and he could not believe that the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate would consent that these schools should suffer from the lack of such a change as had been suggested. He only wished that there had been opportunity for establishing such schools in England. He hoped the First Lord of the Treasury would have learned from the debate what had been doing in this direction in Scotland, and recognize the advantages of such a system of secondary education in England.

Mr. SINCLAIR said, after what had fallen from the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, he did not think it would be right for him to press his Motion to a Division. He hoped the subject would have the careful attention of the Government. With regard to what the hon. Member (Mr. Caldwell) had said, as to the high fees in Govan, it was quite incorrect to say that the schools supplied only the superior and villa parts of the parish; only three out of seven schools charged the higher fees. He asked leave to withdraw the Resolution.

Mr. J. A. CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities) said, he was a little disappointed that the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had not given more encouragement in the desired direction. The matter had been brought to the attention of the Government by deputations to the Secretary for Scotland, representing the school boards of Scotland, whose opinion was practically unanimous. The only question was, whether there should not be some remedy to remove the legal difficulty created by a clause in an English Act, which was now applied in a way never intended by Parliament. He hoped there would be no difficulty in introducing a Bill that would put the matter right, and restore to Scotland the right of her school boards to have full control over the fees.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

REGISTRATION OF CLUBS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Caine, Bill for the Registration and Regulation of Clubs, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Caine, Mr. Byron Reed, Mr. Kelly, and Mr. Gent-Davis.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 232.]

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 1*st May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Public Libraries Act, 1855, Amendment* (82); Suffragans' Act Amendment* (83); Lloyd's Signal Stations * (84); Fishery Acts Amendment (Ireland) * (86).

Second Reading—Duration of Speeches in Parliament (79), *negatived;* Westminster Abbey (57); Customs (Isle of Man) * (60).

Select Committee—Land Transfer, Lord Thurlow and Lord Henniker *added.*

Committee—Report—Church Discipline (27).

Third Reading—Cathedral Churches * (46), and *passed.*

Provisional Order Bill — *First Reading* — Local Government (Ireland) (Dublin Markets) * (85).

ARMY (INDIA) — THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS.—QUESTION.

The Bishop of CARLISLE asked the Secretary of State for India a Question of which he had given him private Notice—namely, Whether his attention had been called to a paper which had been circulated abundantly in this country with regard to certain regulations purporting to come from the office of the Quartermaster General in India concerning a subject which one almost shuddered to mention in their Lordships' House—the provision of women for our soldiers in India. Was the noble Viscount able to make any statement on the subject?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Viscount Cross): My Lords, I have noticed that a very sensational paper has been extensively published containing facts which I cannot believe are true. The Bishop of Lichfield was good enough to call my attention to this matter some time ago, and I communicated with the Viceroy, who said he would make a most thorough investigation into the matter. I have received private information from the Viceroy that he has done this, but of course that private information is such that I cannot lay it before the House, because it has not come to me in an official form. No doubt it will come to me in this form, and I shall communicate the purport of it to your Lordships. What was stated by my direction in the other House was to the effect that we did not believe that the statements which appeared in that paper were true versions of the facts, but if any such practice were found to exist as detailed in the paper, we should take care to have the matter stopped.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL.—(No. 27.)

(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill."—(*The Archbishop of Canterbury.*)

Lord COLERIDGE said, that an Amendment stood in his name on the Paper to the effect that the House resolve itself into Committee that day six months, but as he understood that the Bill would be greatly altered by important Amendments which were to be proposed, he would not move his Amendment at that stage. He, however, reserved his right to do so when the Bill in its complete state was submitted to their Lordships.

Lord GRIMTHORPE said, that he had been struck by some remarks made the other day by the noble Marquess at the head of the Government, in which he had pointed out the inconvenience of Amendments of a complicated kind being proposed across the Table, and, therefore, he hoped that before their Lordships were asked to consider the provisions of this measure they would have the actual Bill as it was intended to be passed laid before them.

Motion *agreed to*; House in Committee accordingly; Bill *reported* without Amendment; Amendments made; Bill *re-committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Friday the* 11*th instant.*

DURATION OF SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT BILL.—(No. 79.)

(*The Lord Denman.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Lord DENMAN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he hoped that the Bill not being printed would not prevent their Lordships from giving it a second reading. Last year the noble Viscount the Secretary of State for India (Viscount Cross) said it was not necessary in their Lordships' House; but an experienced reporter wrote in the Christmas number, 1884, of *The English Illustrated Magazine*, a description of the debates. He (Lord Denman) thought it so likely to cause offence that he bought up all the copies he could secure at the Derby Station, and at the publishers; he cut out that which might have given his neighbour (the Earl of Wemyss) pain, and sent the article to his Lordship, leaving in only that their Lordships thought him a little "verbose;" but his Lordship wrote that he had seen an "unexpurgated" copy. Certainly, last Session the noble Earl spoke for an hour and 10 minutes; and the noble Earl, on his Bill as to the constitution of the House of Lords, spoke for an hour and 40 minutes. The Bill allowed 15 minutes before the notice of time should be given. Few Lords would wish to get up to stop a speaker; but the Bill could be altered in Committee, and any Bill initiated in either House of Parliament, if agreed to by the other, became law. There had been Notice of a Bill on the subject in the House of Commons, but he had not been able to see it, although a day was appointed for its second reading. He would delay the appointment of the Committee to such a time as might suit both sides of their Lordships' House. He was no Party man, though his Father, before he became a Judge, wrote—

> "I am very glad you still take *The Morning Chronicle*, having an unalterable attachment to old friends and old faces, which no new engagements ever efface."

The noble Lord concluded by moving that the Bill be now read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Denman.*)

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK) said, that he was sorry, in the absence of his noble Friend at the head of the Government, to have to ask to be allowed to interpose for a short time. This Bill was absolutely unnecessary in that House, as they could regulate their proceedings by their own Standing Orders without requiring an Act of Parliament for the purpose. He did not think that they should make any attempt to regulate the proceedings of the other House of Parliament, and therefore he moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now,") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months.")—(*The Lord President.*)

On Question, That ("now") shall stand part of the Motion?

Resolved in the *negative;* and Bill to be read 2ª on *this day six months.*

WESTMINSTER ABBEY BILL.—(No. 57.)

(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord President.*)

LORD LAMINGTON said, he must express his regret that, this being a Money Bill sent up to their Lordships' House from the House of Commons, they could not reject it. It was too much to ask the Church to incur an expense of £60,000, which would have to be met out of its funds for the purpose of restoring Westminster Abbey. This was a national monument, and the expense of its restoration ought to be met out of national funds.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be *printed* for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to the Members of the Committee, until further order. (No. 81.)

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT, 1855, AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Public Libraries Act 1855—Was *presented* by The Lord Monkswell; read 1ª. (No. 82.)

SUFFRAGANS' ACT AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Act of the twenty-sixth year of the reign of King Henry the Eighth, chapter fourteen, intituled "An Act for the nomination and consecration of suffragans within this realm"—Was *presented* by The Lord Bishop of Carlisle; read 1ª. (No. 83.)

LLOYDS SIGNAL STATIONS BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to confer powers on Lloyds to take lands for signal stations; and for other purposes—Was *presented* by The Earl of Onslow; read 1ª. (No. 84.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (DUBLIN MARKETS) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the providing of a market place for vegetables and fish by the Urban Sanitary Authority of the City of Dublin—Was *presented* by The Lord Privy Seal; read 1ª. (No. 85.)

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 1*st May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Ordered* — *First Reading*—Preferential Payment of Wages * [234].

First Reading—Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment * [233].

Provisional Order Bills—*Second Reading*—Local Government * [213]; Local Government (No. 2) * [214]; Local Government (Poor Law) * [215]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 3) * [217]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 5) * [219]; Pier and Harbour * [221]; Tramways (No. 1) * [222].

MOTION.

PREFERENTIAL PAYMENT OF WAGES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Randell, Bill to provide for the Preferential Payment of Wages in Bankruptcy and other cases, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Randell, Mr. Abraham, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. D. A. Thomas, and Mr. Thomas Ellis.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 234.]

QUESTIONS.

THE SALT TRADE — THE RIVER WEAVER NAVIGATION BILL.

Mr. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that the Trust of the River Weaver, the largest inland navigation in the Kingdom, is a self-elected body; that its income is derived almost entirely from the salt trade; that its surplus funds have for more than 160 years been used to relieve the county rate; that the salt trade has in this way, and during that time, been taxed to the extent of more than £2,000,000 sterling; that the salt trade is, and has long been, in a deplorably depressed condition; that the sources of salt production have of late years been rapidly developed, and bear no corresponding tax for the benefit of any Public Authority, whilst they have greatly diminished the demand for Cheshire salt; that the salt manufacturers of Cheshire have since 1866 been taxed, in common with other ratepayers of the county, under the Cattle Plague Act; that the cost to the county of this Act is, for instalment of loan and interest, £14,227 15*s*. per annum; that this loan will be paid off in 1896; that under a recent Act the Trustees of the River Weaver contribute £15,000 a-year to the County Fund; and that the constitution of the Weaver Trust has been repeatedly condemned by the Board of Trade, on the ground that it imposed a tax upon trade; and, whether he is prepared to recommend, for the management of the River Weaver, the constitution of a public Trust resembling the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, and that the payment from the Trust to the County Fund should cease at the date of the last payment on account of the Cattle Plague Loan in 1896, or at an earlier date?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): The history of the Weaver Trust is contained in a Report presented in 1872 by the Board of Trade on the Weaver Navigation Bill, then before Parliament. The Board of Trade have no power to alter the management of this or any other River in the Kingdom; and any proposal for a reconstitution of the Trust must come from those interested. Any such proposal would receive the best consideration of the Department.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — ALLOWANCES TO SURVEYORS.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether surveyors and assistant surveyors in the service of the Post Office in Ireland are allowed at the rate of 20*s*. and 15*s*. respectively per day for every day during which they are absent from their respective headquarters; whether, in addition, they are also allowed the cost of first-class locomotion from place to place; if it can be stated upon what grounds this per diem allowance has been fixed; whether surveyors and assistant surveyors are generally absent on an average of 10 months in the year from their headquarters; and, whether any check exists as to the number of occasions they shall visit, or the length of time they shall remain in any particular place, within their respective districts, if such be optional with themselves?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (A LORD of the TREASURY) (Wigton) (who replied) said: The allowances to surveyors and assistant surveyors when absent from their headquarters are as stated in the Question, having been so fixed in order to cover the cost of subsistence. These officers, when travelling by railway in the discharge of their official duties, travel first-class. From the very nature of their employment a certain discretion must be left to them as to occasion and duration of their visits to the offices under their control; but a close check is kept on their movements, and in their diaries, which are sent up for inspection at short intervals, they have to account for every moment of their time. I may add that upon the vigilance, and—if I may use such a word—the ubiquitousness, of the surveyors and their assistants, the well-working of the Post Office largely depends; and the policy of the Department has been to keep them at their headquarters, not, as the hon. Member would seem to suppose, as much, but as little, as possible.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS—LONDON CAB HORSES.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, as representing the Metropolitan Board of Works, If the attention of the Board has been directed to the evidence reported to have been given at Wandsworth Police Court, on the 25th ultimo, by Mr. Humphreys, described as one of the Inspectors under the Metropolitan Board, in a case in which the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals prosecuted, that it was not cruelty to work a horse with chronic navicular disease in a four-wheeled cab, and to his statement, when the learned magistrate took a contrary view and convicted the prisoner, that half the cab horses in London were in that condition, what duties Mr. Humphreys is employed by the Board to discharge; and, on what authority he made the allegation in question?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford), in reply, said, that Mr. Humphreys was one of the Veterinary Inspectors appointed by the Metropolitan Board under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, his duties being to report on all cases of diseased animals which were brought under his notice. All the Inspectors appointed under the Act were properly qualified veterinary surgeons, who also carried on business on their own account. Mr. Humphreys appeared at the Wandsworth Police Court as a witness on behalf of a cab-owner, whose horses were under his professional care, and gave evidence, not as representing the Board, but in his individual capacity as a veterinary surgeon. In justice to Mr. Humphreys, it must be stated that he denied having made the direct statement as reported.

TRUCK ACTS—BREACHES OF THE ACT IN BRISTOL.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether breaches of the Truck Acts in the Bristol district have been recently reported to the Local Inspector of Factories; and, whether any, and what, proceedings have been taken by the Inspector to enforce the law?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; the fact is as stated. The Local Inspector has been instructed to make a full investigation, and, if possible, to obtain statements, which could be verified on oath, in the cases which have been reported to him.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE JURY SYSTEM—WICKLOW ASSIZES.

MR. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the Catholic population of Wicklow County stands to the Protestant in the relation of four to one; whether it is true, as reported in the papers, that in the trial of prisoners on capital charges at the late Assizes in Wicklow the juries were exclusively Protestant, and can he say how this arose; whether it is the fact that Wicklow County is exceptionally free from crime; and, whether in future the practice of bringing criminals from other counties for trial in Wicklow will be discontinued?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The reply to the first and third paragraphs of the Question is in the affirmative. I am afraid I have nothing to add to my previous answer on the subject of paragraph 2. With regard to the last paragraph, the Attorney General for Ireland will, of course, continue to exercise the discretion vested in him by Statute.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether the result of these trials has not been that two men have gone to the scaffold protesting their innocence, and leaving written declarations of their innocence behind them, these men having been removed from the County Kerry to be tried by this jury so constituted in the County Wicklow?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not quite apprehend the object of the hon. Member's Question. Perhaps he will put it on the Notice Paper. I do not know whether the Question implies that the fact that these men did not confess their guilt had any connection whatever with the removal of their trial.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: May I be allowed to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has seen a report of the proceedings at the Coroner's inquest in this case, at which the High Sheriff, the Deputy Sheriff, and the Governor of the gaol gave testimony to these men's protestations of innocence?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; I have not read that.

WAR OFFICE—ARMY MEDICAL OFFICERS.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the intention of the War Office to utilise the services of Army Medical Officers on the retired list; whether such officers, when re-employed, will receive the same pay, allowances, and military status as other officers of their rank and standing; and, whether their additional service will count for increased pension when compulsorily retired by age, or what advantages will they derive?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Retired medical officers will be employed from time to time as their services become necessary. When so re-employed their remuneration is limited by the Royal Warrant to the sum of £150 a-year beyond their retired pay, and their service does not count towards increase of retired pay. I may add that this re-employment during peace is entirely at the option of the retired officers. If a retired officer be called out for service in a time of national emergency, the conditions of employment would be altogether different.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS—THE RETURN.

MR. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he can state what is the cause of the delay in laying the Return of Lunatic Asylums, ordered on the 19th of August last, upon the Table.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): This Return is now almost completed, and will, I hope, be in the hands of hon. Members in a few days. The Return is a heavy one, and such delay as there has been is inseparable from the labour involved.

ADMIRALTY—DEVONPORT DOCKYARD—FIRE DUTY MEN.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the number of men engaged on fire duty at the Devonport Dockyard is 24, although only 10 men are on duty at one and the same time; whether these men are on the same footing as regards accommodation, hours of duty, and pay, as the men employed on the same duty in other Dockyards; and, if not, why not; whether, although the sum of £170 was some time since granted for the purpose of improved sleeping accommodation for the men, no alteration has been made for several years past; whether the order for reducing the men's pay stated that the reduced pay was to commence "when the additional accommodation is complete;" whether their pay was, in fact, reduced by order of the Admiral Superintendent, from the date of the Order in February last; whether, under these circumstances, the men are entitled to their former rate of pay until the additional accommodation is ready for them; whether he is aware that the extra weekly duty, for which the men are now paid only 7*s*., amounts to 120 hours per week (57 by day and 63 by night), during which time they are confined within the gates, with no place except one sleeping room to cook and eat their meals in, with no opportunity of attending a place of worship or enjoying any recreation, and that they can only communicate during that time with their wives and families in the presence of the policeman on duty at the gates; and, whether, under all the above circumstances, he will consider the possibility of granting an increase of pay to these men?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): I do not propose answering in detail the eight Questions now put, as I answered nine similar Questions last week. I will confine myself to saying that the circumstances of the case have been thoroughly gone into; and that I am satisfied that the pay given is fair and equitable, and that all consideration is paid to the convenience of the men.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to state that I am not at all satisfied with the answer of the noble Lord. I shall take the liberty of repeating the Question; and if I do not get an answer to-day I shall repeat it every day till I do.

[No reply.]

MR. CONYBEARE gave Notice that he would repeat the Question on the following day and every day till he could get an answer.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

INDIA—THE INDIAN TELEGRAPH SERVICE.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, What has been the result of the special inducements to retire offered to the officers in the blocked years of the Indian Telegraph Service; whether such inducements have had the desired effect; and, if, not, what is the cause of failure; whether it is the fact that promotions in the Telegraph Service are now made only twice a-year; whether the effect of this arrangement is to inflict a loss of, perhaps, several months' pay and promotion in the case of those who are moved up into vacancies in the intervals between the biennial promotion days; and, whether such a Rule is in force in any other branch of the Public Service?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The first period at which retirement might have taken place was March 31. No intimation as to the result has yet been received. Permanent promotions are now only made twice a-year, but acting promotions are made as vacancies occur. The full pay of the higher rank is not attained until the permanent appointment is made. Meantime, an acting allowance is received. No such Rule is in force in other Departments of the Public Service.

INDIA—THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD—CLAIM OF SIR HORACE RUMBOLD, BRITISH MINISTER AT THE HAGUE.

MR. M'LAGAN (Linlithgow) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the claim for 11 lacks of rupees submitted to the Nizam's Government by Sir Horace Rumbold, British Minister at the Hague, and which has been settled by the payment to him of three lacks, is the same claim as that referred to in the following extract from the Hyderabad Report for 1294, Fasli (1884-5):—

> "The usurious interest charged by the houses of Rumbold, Palmer, and Co., and Poorunmull and others is well known, and there is little doubt that all such creditors of the State in the old days were paid over and over again. A claim was put forward some years ago by the heirs of Sir William Rumbold, and revived from time to time, but on its last appearance it was rejected under the advice of the Government of India;"

and, whether this claim was settled with the knowledge and under the advice of the Resident, whose guest Sir Horace Rumbold was last winter, when he went to Hyderabad, armed with letters from Lord Lytton and other influential persons, as stated in the Indian papers; if so, upon what grounds the Resident advised the admission of a claim which had been rejected a few years before "under the advice of the Government of India?"

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): I must refer the hon. Member to my answer to his Question on April 9, when I stated that the Secretary of State had no official information on this subject.

Both the Secretary of State and the Viceroy expressly refused to interfere in the matter of this claim.

IRELAND — MEETING OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE AT NEWTOWNARDS.

Colonel SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has seen a statement of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) at a meeting of the National League on the 24th ultimo, that on the occasion of a visit recently paid by him to the town of Newtownards for the purpose of addressing a meeting, threats were used by the agents of the landlord and the local police officer to deter people from allowing him to speak on their premises, and accusing the Lord Lieutenant of personally using the machinery and the police of the county to terrify his own tenants on that occasion; whether there are any grounds for this statement and accusation; whether the meeting in question was, in fact, held; and, whether he can give the House any particulars concerning it?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): My attention has been called to the newspaper reports of the statement and accusation attributed to the hon. Member for East Mayo. The local constabulary authorities report that there was no ground whatever for making either one or the other; there was no interference by any landlord or his agent in the matter, neither did the police attempt to prevent the meeting, nor, indeed, were they aware of the intention to hold it until the very last moment. It appears that the hon. Member referred to, accompanied by the hon. Member for South Down (Mr. M'Cartan) and another person, arrived at Newtownards at about 7 o'clock in the evening. The proprietress of the hotel refused to allow them to hold a meeting at her premises. They then proceeded to a draper's yard, and held what the police describe as a "hole and corner meeting." The meeting was very small, consisting of about 45 or 50 persons, and only about one-half of these had any connection with land, the remainder being townspeople.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked, whether any policeman had gone to the person who owned the hotel before the use of the premises for the holding of a meeting was refused; and, whether any policeman had attended in the hotel yard?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he had not mentioned the hotel yard. He had said the meeting was held in a draper's yard.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS said, he referred only to the hotel yard.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR replied that he did not know.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—THE "KILLEENA" — ISSUE OF LIME JUICE.

Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the Board of Trade have received information to the effect that no lime juice was served out to the crew of the British barque *Killeena* for 42 days, while on a passage from Buenos Ayres to Talcahuano, in the early part of last year; and, if so, why proceedings were not taken against the master?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): I have received information that no lime juice was served out on the voyage referred to. The Statute governing the serving out of lime juice applies to vessels navigating between the United Kingdom and any port out of the same. The *Killeena*, on the occasion referred to, was not engaged on such a voyage; therefore, no offence under statute was committed. I may add that no case of scurvy has been reported as having occurred during that voyage.

VENEZUELA—APPOINTMENT OF A NEW PRESIDENT.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government have received official notification of the confirmation by Congress of the appointment of General Crespo as President of the United States of Venezuela; and, whether overtures have been made by the new President to the Government with a view to the resumption of diplomatic relations, enabling negotiations to be re-opened with regard to the boundary dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Man-

chester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have not received any notification of the appointment of a new President of Venezuela, and no overtures have been made by him for the resumption of diplomatic relations.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—DELIVERY OF LETTERS AT PILL, N. SOMERSET.

Mr. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that at Pill, in North Somerset, certain persons living within 20 minutes' walk of the village post office are refused delivery of letters at their houses except on three days in each week; whether three mails reach Pill daily; and, whether, in view of the fact that many subjects of Her Majesty have their letters delivered to them as often as 13 times a-day, he will cause a delivery to be made at least once a-day to the persons mentioned above?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (A Lord of the Treasury) (Wigton) (who replied) said: My hon. Friend, no doubt, refers to a matter respecting which he has already been in communication with the Department—namely, the question of increasing the frequency of the delivery afforded at Chapel Pill Farm from three to six days a week. The service three days a-week was offered to the occupant of the farm, and accepted by him as being all that the circumstances would warrant; and I am afraid that a further outlay would not be justified at present.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—MAPS OF YORK, AND OTHER COUNTY DISTRICTS.

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he will present to Parliament maps of the counties of York, Lancaster, Stafford, Warwick, and Monmouth, showing the distribution of urban and rural districts respectively, and their populations within the boundaries of those counties as they will stand for the first election to the County Councils?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I think that if any such maps are presented they should be furnished for all the counties of England and Wales. The expense of supplying these maps would obviously be considerable; and I should hardly feel justified in incurring it, unless I felt that there was a general desire on the part of the Members to obtain these maps. If I have reason to believe that such a general desire is felt, I shall be willing to consider the question.

ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION—RESPONSIBILITY FOR NUMBERS OF FORCE.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Who is the head permanent official responsible for submitting to the Secretary of State for War the number of men of whom in his responsible opinion the British Army should in the coming financial year consist; whether such official did submit such a formal opinion before the present Estimates were finally prepared; and, whether such opinion can be made public; and, if not, whether a distinct and authoritative record of such opinion is annually preserved at the War Office, as also a formal record of the fact whether such opinion was overruled or approved by the Secretary of State, in such manner as to afford conclusive evidence of the official to whom responsibility would attach in case the actual number should prove inadequate to the requirements of the country?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): No change has been made in this matter by the recent re-organization. The establishment of the Army for each financial year is submitted by the Commander-in-Chief to the Secretary of State. It is customary for the Commander-in-Chief to submit personally in the autumn of each year his views as to the establishment for the coming year, and subsequently the details are worked out and presented to the Secretary of State. No permanent Civil official has any responsibility whatever in this submission. As soon as this establishment has been submitted to the Secretary of State, it is considered by him with such advice as he may think necessary, and generally in consultation with his military advisers. But I wish to say most emphatically that for the action taken upon the establishment so submitted by the Commander-in-Chief the Secretary of State is solely and absolutely responsible. The opinions which I have described were submitted to me in the usual way, and at the usual time this year; and I consequently accept full and entire responsibility for the Estimates presented to Parliament. Official Minutes prepared for the assistance of a Minister are confidential Papers, and have never yet been made public. I should certainly not desire to commence that practice, and mainly on the ground that to do so would immediately minimize the responsibility of the Secretary of State. The official Papers show clearly what establishments were proposed to the Secretary of State upon the preparation of the Estimates.

ROFTERS' HOLDINGS ACT, SECTION 13—"AVAILABLE LAND."

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, in view of the Report of the Crofters' Commission that the causes which have prevented applications for enlargement of holdings under the Crofters' Holdings Act being lodged in any number are to be found in the Act itself, and particularly in Section 13, which fixes the scope of the words "available land," the Government intends to amend the Act so as to remove the restrictions imposed by the said section?

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the case that not a single holding has been enlarged since the Crofters' Act came into operation; and, whether, considering that the Royal Commission reported that the most pressing and the most important grievance of the crofters was inadequate holdings, and that the Crofters' Commission now reports that the clauses regarding increase of holdings are unworkable under present circumstances, the Government intend to introduce a measure to remedy the worst grievance that the crofters suffer from.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The Government do not intend to bring in a measure to amend the Crofters' Act.

Dr. CLARK asked for an answer to the former part of his Question.

The LORD ADVOCATE: I answer in the affirmative.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS ACT—ADVANCES FOR EMIGRATION.

Mr. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If he will be good enough to inform the House what are the terms and conditions under which the Government propose to advance £10,000 for the emigration of crofters, both as regards the advances, the security, and the repayment; whether there are any Papers on the subject which he can include in the Return, recently ordered on the subject of colonization; whether any, and what, Report has been obtained upon the suitability of the land on which it is proposed to settle them; where the land is; and what part of the work and expense of the matter will be performed by the Canadian Government?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham) said, he understood that the Lord Advocate would answer this Question.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The Government are prepared to advance up to £10,000 at once on further sums being raised by private subscription. The amount thus obtained will be administered by a Board representing the Imperial Government, the Canadian Government, the subscribers, and the principal Canadian Land Companies. The Board will advance £120 to crofters' families emigrating, repayable in 12 years in eight equal annual instalments of £20 17*s.* 8*d.*, commencing in the fifth year, in full of principal and interest. The advance will be secured by a mortgage on the 160 acres to be granted to each family, and by a lien on their chattels. There are Papers which can be given, but it will not be convenient to give them in the Return already ordered. Suitable land will be selected by the Board. The Dominion Government will give free grants, and the settlers will have the advantage of the experience and co-operation of the Dominion Government land agents.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked, whether it was in contemplation to exempt emigrants going to other parts of our Colonies than Canada; and whether the crofters would be compelled to go against their will?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: As regards the latter part of the Question, it is unnecessary to answer the hon. Member. As regards the first part, I will be obliged by him giving Notice of it.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, they had been so compelled before.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.) asked, whether the powers described by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and the transaction on the part of the Government, would be exercised under any existing statute, or whether legislation would be necessary?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I do not think that any legislation will be necessary at present; but an Estimate, of course, will have to be laid before the House.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked, whether the benefits of the emigration scheme would be entirely confined to crofters?

Mr. J. H. A MACDONALD asked for Notice of the Question.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked, to what part of Canada it was intended that the emigration should take place?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD asked for Notice of this Question also.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN asked, in reference to the voting of money by this House, whether the Government could hold a lien over the chattels of the emigrants in Canada without further statutory powers?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, there would be legislation in Canada upon the subject.

Mr. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked, whether the Government expected that a sum of £120 would be sufficient to take the emigrants out, build a house, and——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. CONYBEARE asked, whether this was conditional on private subscriptions being raised?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I must ask hon. Members to be so good as to wait until the statement is made which will accompany the Vote on which the Government will ask for the power to make those advances. It is impossible for us to give any further information at present.

Susequently,

Mr. HUNTER asked, Whether the details of the scheme of emigration for crofters would be laid before the House in good time for consideration before the Vote on the subject was taken?

Mr. W. H. SMITH, in reply, said, there would be no objection to lay a statement on the Table, so that the House would have a full opportunity of discussing the subject before the Vote was taken?

FISHING GROUNDS OFF THE ESSEX COAST—REPORT OF THE INQUIRY.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he will now state what steps he proposes to take with reference to the rubbish thrown on to the fishing grounds off the Essex Coast?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol W.): The Report is now in the hands of the printers; and as soon as it is printed the subject will receive my careful consideration.

ADMIRALTY—THE SMACK "VESTA"—COMPENSATION.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked The First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the owners of the smack *Vesta*, of Burnham, run down by one of Her Majesty's ships off the Nore, will receive compensation?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The only collision known of in this locality was between the dredger *Alert* and one of Her Majesty's ships, and it occurred on the 27th ultimo. The case is under consideration.

PUBLIC HEALTH—SMALL POX AT SHEFFIELD.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether any Departmental or other Official Inquiry has been made into the epidemic of small pox in Sheffield; if so, what has been the nature of that inquiry, and, particularly, whether public notice has been given that anyone who had evidence to give would be heard; whether the Report of such inquiry has been received, or when it is likely to be completed; and, whether it will be laid upon the Table of the House?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): An exhaustive inquiry into the circumstances of the epidemic of small pox at Sheffield by one of the Board's Medical Inspectors is still in progress. The object of the inquiry has been to ascertain the conditions under which the epidemic arose and spread, and especially how far vaccination, and want of vaccination, have been concerned with the prevalence of the disease. No formal inquiry for the taking of evidence has been held; but at the Inspector's instance a systematic inquiry by the Local Authorities has been made from house to house, and the Inspector has been continuously in Sheffield obtaining information on the subject. A provisional Report has been submitted. The analysis of the voluminous Returns prepared locally is now being proceeded with; and as soon as this is completed the final Report will be at once prepared and laid on the Table of the House.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked, whether the epidemic had been so far suppressed that the town could be said to be clear of small pox?

Mr. RITCHIE said, that was so.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—COMPOUND HOUSEHOLDERS — LICENSING CLAUSES — COMPENSATION.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he can give to the House an approximate estimate of the number of electors under the County Government Bill whose rates will be paid by their landlords; and, whether, in view of the importance of carrying out the principle that direct taxation should accompany direct representation in the administration of the rates, he will consider the expediency of limiting the operation of the compounding Acts to those localities where they are already in force, and to rents which are payable weekly or monthly?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I presume that my hon. Friend refers to the occupiers who are usually known as compound householders. I have no information as to the number of such occupiers in England and Wales; and I cannot, therefore, give to the House any approximate estimate of the number of compound householders who will be entitled to vote in elections under the Local Government Bill. There is no intention on the part of the Government, in connection with the Bill, to propose any alteration in the existing compounding Acts.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — COUNTY POLICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in view of the proposed alterations in the control of the County Police Establishments, he will ask the County Chief Constables to report their opinions on the relative advantages of the following methods of administration—namely, whether such control would be best entrusted to the Magistrates as nominees of the Crown; or to a Joint Committee of Magistrates and Elected Councillors; or to a Council of popularly elected Members; or to the Home Office; having special regard to the efficiency of the force, to economy of management, and to the suppression of crime; and, whether he will print such reports as a Parliamentary Paper?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The course suggested by my hon. Friend is not one which the Government deem it necessary or desirable to adopt.

WAR OFFICE—BURSTING OF A WIRE GUN AT WOOLWICH.

Colonel DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the wire gun which burst at proof in Woolwich Arsenal last week was designed or manufactured in the Government Establishments?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): No, Sir. The wire gun in question was neither designed nor manufactured in a Government establishment. It was designed as an experiment by Mr. Longridge, the inventor, who submitted it for trial at the Royal Arsenal; and it was manufactured for him by a private firm.

WAR OFFICE—ADDITION TO THE ESTABLISHMENT.

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham) asked the Secretary of State for War, When his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief made his demand for 11,000 men to be added to the Army; and, what action was taken upon it by him?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): This matter was made perfectly plain in the evidence given by His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief before the Select Committee. No demand whatever for an addition of 11,000 men to the Army has ever been submitted to me.

VACCINATION OF INFANTS.

MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the inquests held on the 5th of April and the 23rd of April on two babies who died from being vaccinated when six days and five days old respectively; whether, in the first case, the child was born in the Greenwich Union Infirmary, and was vaccinated in five places against the wish of its mother; whether the Coroner said there had been great want of discretion on someone's part; whether the jury desired the Coroner to make representations to the authorities, with a view to the prevention of similar cases in future; whether, in the second case, the child was born at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, and whether it is accurate, as stated at the inquest, that it is the common practice there to vaccinate babies within five days of their birth; whether, in this case, the mother was not consulted as to the time of the operation; whether the Coroner was accurate in stating—

> "That by the sanction of the Local Government Board it is the constant practice in workhouse infirmaries to vaccinate infants three or four days old;"

and, whether he will do his utmost to put a stop to this practice, and will issue a recommendation to all Boards of Guardians that they should defer vaccination till a child is at least six months old?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): My attention has been drawn to the two inquests referred to by the hon. Member. As regards the case of the child born in the Greenwich Infirmary, the verdict of the jury at the Coroner's inquest was not that the child died from being vaccinated when six days old, as stated in the Question, but from being accidentally suffocated while at the mother's breast. The child was vaccinated in five places, and there was no statement at the inquest that the mother objected to this vaccination. The child left the infirmary 13 days after the vaccination; and, according to the statement of the medical officer of the Guardians, was perfectly healthy at the time of the vaccination and at the time of leaving the infirmary. A *post-mortem* examination, of which evidence was given at the inquest, showed, however, that the child had one lung in a state of collapse, probably from the time of birth, and had other congenital malformations; and the jury, having this evidence before them, added to their verdict a rider to the effect that the child was, in their opinion, in an exceptionally delicate state of health, and that its vaccination was much to be regretted. As I have already stated, however, the cause of death was accidental suffocation. As regards the case of the child born at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, it was vaccinated when five days old, as is the practice in that Hospital, unless the parent objects. In this case the mother was aware of the rule, and did not object. The child, when discharged from the Hospital, was certified by the physician to be in good health. The child died when just over a month old. The Coroner states that death was not due to the vaccination, but to injury to the vaccination sores, followed by inflammation, which was probably of an erysipelatous character. It is to be borne in mind that if children born in a workhouse are not vaccinated before their discharge, they commonly escape vaccination altogether; and the Local Government Board are advised that there is no medical reason against such early vaccination in the case of healthy children. The Vaccination Act of 1867 requires vaccination within three months after birth.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — THE LICENSING CLAUSES—REFUSAL OF A LICENCE BY THE CUMBERLAND MAGISTRATES.

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If his attention has been called to the judgment yesterday in the Court of Queen's Bench in respect of the appeal of a publican from the refusal of the Cumberland magistrates to renew his licence for reasons other than offences against the law; and, if in consequence, he intends to press the Compensation Clauses of the Local Government Bill?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): My attention has been called to the decision given by two of the Judges of the Queen's Bench Division. My hon. Friend is, of course, aware that the judgment was not given by a final Court of Appeal. I may say, however, that the proposals in connection with the Compensation Clauses of the Local Government Bill are based upon what we consider are the equitable claims of those who now possess licences; and we do not, therefore, propose to withdraw them from the consideration of the House in consequence of the decision referred to.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): On this question, might I ask the Solicitor General if he is prepared, in view of this decision, to make any modification of his statement of the law on the subject?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CLARKE) (Plymouth): No, Sir; I am not.

INLAND REVENUE—LICENSED VICTUALLERS — PAYMENT OF SUCCESSION OR LEGACY DUTY.

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If Succession or Legacy Duty has ever been paid by any person who has succeeded to the business of Licensed Victualler, carried on in premises not belonging to the deceased or his successor, when the licence has been renewed to the successor?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Where a person succeeds to the business of a Licensed Victualler, carried on in premises not belonging to the deceased or his successor—that is, on leasehold premises—Probate Duty, and either Legacy or Succession Duty, is paid on the entire value of the deceased's interest in the lease and business taken as a whole. It is always assumed that the licence has been, or will be, renewed to the successor, unless the contrary proves to be the case.

SOUTH AFRICA (BECHUANALAND)—METHUEN'S SETTLEMENT.

MR. MALLOCK (Devon, Torquay) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he is aware that Circulars have been issued by a Colonel Graham, inviting young men to go out to Methuen's Settlement, Bechuanaland; whether Methuen's Settlement is under Imperial protection; and, whether Colonel Graham's proposals have been made with the knowledge and sanction of the Government?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) (who replied) said: Her Majesty's Government are aware of the fact that such Circulars have been issued. The district in question is part of the British Possession of Bechuanaland. Colonel Graham's proposals were not made with the previous knowledge, and have not received the sanction, of Her Majesty's Government. All persons who have applied to the Colonial Office on the subject have received information to the following effect:—Nothing but a grant of the unoccupied land will be given by the Colonial Government; and the supply of the other things mentioned in the paragraph which has appeared in the Press—such as a house, 100 head of sheep, 25 head of cattle, two horses, arms, and all necessary agricultural implements—is promised to the emigrants by the promoters of the scheme, to whom you should apply for information, and not, as has been inferred, by Her Majesty's Government. The Secretary of State for the Colonies is not in a position to express any opinion as to the fertility of the land, or the prospects of those who may settle upon it.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE CART TAX.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, How the modification of the Cart Tax, which he has announced, will effect his previous Estimate of £63,500 as the produce of the impost in the Metropolis?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I anticipate that it will effect a reduction of £17,000 in my previous Estimate.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL, CLAUSE 21—BUILDING SOCIETIES.

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the provisions of Clause 21 (3) of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill are intended to apply to Building Societies, such Societies having been decided, by the Special Commissioners in 1877, to be exempt from payment of tax under Shedule D?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): A Building Society, if conducting its ordinary business, would not be brought within the operation of Clause 21 of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. There is no special exemption from Income Tax in favour of Building Societies generally. The decision of the Special Commissioners to which the hon. Member refers was pronounced upon a particular case, and was to the effect that the particular Society appealing to them had no funds chargeable with Income Tax.

ADMIRALTY—SUPERSESSION OF CAPTAIN LESTRANGE.

Mr. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether Captain Lestrange was recently superseded in H.M.S. *Surprise;* and, if so, can he state for what reason; whether he had previously been missing from his ship, and why was he so missing; and, is he the same officer who has since been appointed Commander of H.M.S. *Boadicea;* and, if so, for what reasons was he so appointed?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): Commander Lestrange was superseded in July last in consequence of medical certificates reporting him temporarily incapacitated from service by illness. While at Marseilles he left his ship for a few days to visit Paris, and did not return. On inquiry, it was ascertained from medical reports that he was seriously ill, suffering from cerebral congestion, which was attributed to sunstroke. The weight which is invariably attached to medical opinions in cases of this sort resulted in Commander Lestrange's supersession from his ship without trial by court-martial, which must otherwise have been ordered. He was reported in October last to be again fit for service. It is customary, when the Service admits of it, to allow captains to nominate their seconds in command, and the captain of the *Boadicea* applied for this officer.

THE SLAVE DEALERS IN THE SOUDAN AND ZANZIBAR.

Mr. HOWORTH (Salford, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he sees any objection to the publication of any information in the possession of the Government referring to the recent operations of slave dealers in the Soudan and Zanzibar, and particularly Papers relating to the mutilation of children and the mortality consequent upon the same?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government are not in possession of any recent information of slave trading in the Soudan or in Zanzibar, or of the mutilation of children. A certain increase of the Slave Trade is reported from the East Coast of Africa. The annual Blue Book on the Slave Trade will shortly be presented, and will contain all the official information that has reached us on the subject.

GOLD IN WALES.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he can state approximately the amount of money spent by the Woods, Forests, and Land Revenue Commissioners in the discovery and working of gold in Wales?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (A Lord of the Treasury) (Wigton) (who replied) said: I have inquired what information can be given by the Office of Woods on this point. Perhaps the hon. Member will repeat his Question in a few days.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — THE LICENSING CLAUSES—COMPENSATION.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been drawn to a statement that prices are now being offered for public-houses vastly above what they could have fetched in the market a short time since; and, whether he will make inquiry in several parts of the country as to the alleged rise in value of public-houses since the announcement of the Compensation Clauses of the Local Government Bill?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): My attention has not been drawn to the statement that prices are now being offered for public-houses vastly above what they would have fetched in the market a short time since. Indeed, I am told that it is not the case that it is so. I have no means of obtaining the information, however, as to the terms on which properties of this character change hands.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would take steps to prevent jobbery taking place in this matter similar to that which took place in regard to the Irish Church Act?

MR. RITCHIE: I do not propose to take any other steps than those I have already taken.

ITALY AND ABYSSINIA.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he has any objection to laying upon the Table of the House any Papers and Despatches relating to the Italian Expedition to Abyssinia, and especially the Despatches about Mr. Portal's Mission to the Abyssinian King, which are referred to in the Italian Green Book just issued.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): There will be no objection to presenting Papers on the subject, if my hon. Friend will move for them.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE LICENSING CLAUSES—COMPENSATION.

MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the two Resolutions passed by the Mile End Old Town Board of Guardians and Vestry, in the Tower Hamlets, protesting against the clauses of the Local Government Bill which provide for the payment of compensation to publicans whose houses may be closed; and, whether he will take these expressions of opinion into his consideration before the Licensing Clauses of the Local Government Bill are reached in Committee? He wished to be allowed to state that the reason he had put the Question was that these two Boards represented the constituency of the right hon. Gentleman.

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): They used to do so; they do not now. Any expressions of opinion in reference to the Local Government Bill which I receive are considered by me. The hon. Member probably will not contend that the feeling expressed on the part of a Board of Guardians of any particular parish has any special weight in connection with a question such as that of the compensation proposed in the Local Government Bill.

COMMON JURORS.

MR. G. W. ELLIOT (York, N.R., Richmond) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If, considering the inconvenience, labour, cost, and annoyance caused to common jurors owing to the distances they have to travel, the interference with their occupation, and otherwise, he will entertain the advisability of affording some substantial remuneration to common jurors; and if he can inform the House on what ground the distinction now exists as between common jurors and special jurors with regard to remuneration, especially as the special juror is in a better position to meet the difficulties of the position?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) (who replied) said: I am well aware that common jurors have to incur considerable expense in travelling, and in other ways. At the same time, it is a very difficult question whether it is or is not desirable to give them substantial remuneration. The distinction between common jurors and special jurors rests upon Statute Law. I am not prepared to say that I will introduce a measure dealing with this question; but I recognize that it will have to be considered in the event of any large alteration of the existing law.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked, Whether the allowances given to common jurors did not vary enormously in different parts of the country?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I am not aware that that is the case. My impression is that common jurors always receive about the same figure.

OFFICIAL OR PUBLIC TRUSTEE.

MR. WARMINGTON (Monmouth, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government is now prepared to assent to the nomination of a Select Committee to consider and report upon the subject of the appointment of an Official or Public Trustee; and, whether the Government will consent to the Second Reading *pro formâ* of the Bills introduced upon the same subject by the Members for the Central Division of the Borough of Sheffield and the Western Division of Monmouthshire.

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Government have it in contemplation to bring in a Bill on the subject of Official Trustees; and the best plan will be to consider, when that Bill is introduced, whether it should be referred to a Select Committee or not.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT, 1885—MARYLEBONE FREE LIBRARY ELECTION—THE POLICE.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, a Question of which he had given private Notice, Whether he was aware that the police, in Marylebone, had distributed voting papers from house to house for the election taking place that day, together with a paper printed in large type with the words "Vote, No, and distinctly defeat and settle the question." Was this part of the duties allotted the police by the Chief Commissioner?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, that he knew nothing of the facts put forward by the hon. Member. The hon. Member's Notice had only been placed in his hands as he entered the House. He, therefore, had had no time for inquiry. He had no knowledge of the imposition on the police of any such duty as the hon. Member had described.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

In reply to Mr. BURT (Morpeth),

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, I cannot tell to-day when the Employers' Liability Bill will be taken; I am afraid it cannot be this week. The House is aware that there are two Bills before it which must be passed before the Whitsuntide Recess. They are the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill and the Bill for the registration of electors under the Local Government scheme. The Government propose to ask the House to consider these Bills on Thursday, so as to make their success absolutely certain. I am sure the House will assist us in forwarding Public Business that cannot possibly wait. The Employers' Liability Bill will not be taken on Thursday; but I hope to be able to ask the House to take the second reading before Whitsuntide.

In reply to Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby),

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he hoped to be able to take the second reading of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill before the Whitsuntide Recess.

COAL MINES, &c., REGULATION ACT—THE RHONDDA VALLEY COLLIERIES — TIMBERING REGULATIONS.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention had been called to the dispute and consequent strike in connection with one of the large collieries in the Rhondda Valley, in consequence of the employers refusing to supply them with suitable timber without a reduction of wages to meet the expenses thereof; and, whether such conduct was in accordance with the provisions of the Coal Mines, &c., Regulation Act?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I cannot give any authoritative opinion on the effect of the statute; but as I read the Act, the owner is bound not to allow the timbering of working places to be done by the workmen unless timber is provided at the places named in the Act; but the Act leaves the owners and workmen free to settle by agreement between themselves on what terms, as to wages and otherwise, the timber shall be conveyed to those places.

CRIMINAL CASES (IRELAND) — INCREASE OF SENTENCES ON APPEAL —IMPRISONMENT OF MR. BLANE, M.P.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question with reference to an answer he gave on Friday. It refers to the sentence passed on Mr. Blane, M.P. The Chief Secretary said it was originally four months with hard labour, but was extended to six months without hard labour. I have been informed that there is some mistake in this matter, and that hard labour was not included in the first sentence of four months.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): As the hon. Baronet is, perhaps, aware, a Question was asked me yesterday on this subject by the right hon. Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre.)

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: No. I was not aware.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: And I then explained to the House that I was quoting from memory, and, as it turns out, accurately quoting, a Report which I happened to read that morning from the Sessional Crown Solicitor. I confess that even the further inquiry I have made on the subject has not entirely cleared up what ought to be a comparatively easy point to make clear; but what is undoubted is, that the case was argued before the County Court Judge by both sides as if the sentence had been a sentence of hard labour. There is doubt about that. Both the appellant's counsel and counsel for the prosecution assumed, on the hearing of the appeal, that the sentence of the Resident Magistrates was with hard labour.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: But was it so, without assuming?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That is just the question. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will put it down on the Paper? They ought to have known, I should think.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Cannot we have the sentence itself? It is, of course, recorded.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, there is no difficulty in the case, if the House will give me time to get the facts of the case. At present there seems to be some difficulty, which I cannot reconcile, between the facts I have stated to the House and other facts.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE, 1882—RULE 2 (ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE).

SCOTLAND — THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS — BREAKDOWN OF THE CROFTERS' ACT.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) rose in his place, and asked leave to move the adjournment of the House, for the purpose of calling attention to a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the imminent danger to law and order in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, in consequence of the complete breakdown of the Crofters' Act as a remedy for the Crofters' grievances, and the pressing necessity for remedial legislation.

The pleasure of the House not having been signified—

Mr. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen:—

Dr. CLARK said, he regretted that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate, owing to the manner in which he had answered the Questions put to him earlier in the evening, in reference to the Amendment of the Crofters' Act, had compelled him (Dr. Clark) to bring the matter before the House in the present manner. Hon. Members had now before them the Report of the Crofters' Commission, and it would be seen that one of the Schedules contained in that Report had not been filled up. There had not yet been one case of a single holding having been enlarged since the Crofters' Act came into operation. The right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) had asked the Lord Advocate to inquire of the Crofters' Commission, whether this most important alteration of the provisions of the Crofters' Act had not been carried into effect. The Report of the Crofters Commission was laid before Parliament last week, and it would appear that although there had been some 300 or 400 applications for enlargements of holdings, there had not been an increase in a single case. The Commissioners said that, under the provisions of the Act, it was quite impossible for them to increase the holdings. He (Dr. Clark) maintained that that was a very serious matter, because the clause in reference to the increase of holdings was one of the clauses which was limited in its operation to a period of five years. Two years had already elapsed, and there had not been a single case of an increase of holding. That was the primary grievance of the Crofters; but there was a second grievance—namely, that of rack-renting. He thought the evidence given before the Commission established beyond the possibility of doubt that there was rack-renting in Scotland as well as in Ireland; but under the provisions of the Scotch Crofters' Act, crofters, no matter how rack-rented, who held holdings of less than £20 or £30 a-year under leases, were excluded from the benefits of the Act, although the Irish Land Act gave to all Irish leaseholders the benefits of that Act, and even if they held 99 years' leases. It was obvious that small crofters living in the crofter parishes most required this protection. The leaseholders were of two classes—first, those who were compelled to accept leases under a threat of eviction; and, secondly, those who were glad to accept leases in order to be protected in their holdings; but the class which required most protection was left altogether unprotected. Upon a large estate in his own county, 116 crofters had had a reduction of rent made by the Commission amounting to more than 50 per cent, and about 70 per cent had been taken off their arrears, and yet he found, from the newspapers of Friday last, that by the decision which had just been given by the Commission in the case of a large estate where the reduction of rent averaged 77 per cent, and the reduction of arrears about 83 per cent, the very class of men who required this protection were actually left entirely unprotected. In some cases, the rent had been reduced 50, 60, and even 80 per cent; whereas their neighbours who held under leases, although their holdings were in the same locality, were compelled to pay rack-rents, and were unable to obtain the benefits of the Act. That, however, although a great grievance, was not of so much importance as the question of the increased holdings. He frankly admitted that in the case of nine-tenths of the crofters, if they were to get their present holdings free, and owned the freehold of them, their condition would not be much improved. The one difficulty and the real pressing question in the Highlands was the increase of holdings, and he would refer the House to the facts of the case as established by the Royal Commission. It must be remembered that that Commission was composed of six Gentlemen, four of whom were landlords, the fifth the son of a landlord, and the sixth, a Professor of Gaelic, so that a Commission so constituted could not be supposed to have any especial leaning towards the grievances of the Highland crofters. The Report of the Commission was a most satisfactory one in every respect, and if the Government would only carry out the recommendations which the Commissioners had made, the Crofters would be satisfied and law and order would be observed. The Commissioners said—

> "The principal matter of dissatisfaction urged upon our notice in almost every instance was the restriction of the area of the holding. The fact was notorious, and was a matter of common observation."

The Commissioners went on to give certain statistics, and he wished to call the attention, both of the late Secretary for Scotland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) and the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, to the condition of affairs as portrayed in the Report of the Commissioners. The Commissioners took four parishes which they said were fair samples of the rest in the Highlands. In the first place, they took a characteristic estate in Sutherland, the rental of which was £10,300 a-year. On that estate there were 10 shooting tenants who paid £3,800 a-year, and seven graziers who paid £5,810 a-year, or nearly £10,000 between them, leaving more than 300 crofters to pay £600 a-year, or about £2 each. Sir Arnold Kimball, the Chamberlain of the Duke of Sutherland, gave evidence before the Commissioners, from which it appeared that on the Duke of Sutherland's estates in Sutherland matters were even worse. On the whole of the estate there were 2,560 crofters; 592 paid a rent of £2 a-year and under; 254 paid £3 a-year; 399 £4 a-year; and 254 paid £5 a-year. Altogether, 2,300 out of the 2,560 paid a rental of £5 and under. In the year 1886 the Duke of Sutherland made a reduction of rent; but out of the 2,560 crofters on his estate there were only 4 who paid a rental of between £30 and £40 a-year. Therefore, so far as the County of Sutherland was concerned, the Crofters' Act was practically useless and would continue so, unless it was modified. There had been two or three disturbances in the Highlands, and he wished to say a word or two in regard to the condition of affairs in the disturbed districts, seeing that Her Majesty's Gunboats and Marines seemed to be the only remedy right hon. Gentlemen, who represented Scotland and were responsible for its government, could think of. It was not necessary to speak of emigration as a remedy, because the Government would not give the people the money that was necessary to emigrate with. There were already many men in prison, and several women, and unless something were done speedily they would have many more there. Nine-tenths of the people had been driven away from the more fertile portions of the country to the bleakest and most sterile land on the sea-shore, where, without adequate means, they were trying to make a living. The land was becoming poorer and poorer every year, and every year the people were becoming poorer and poorer also. There could be no wonder, therefore, that they had the pauperism which the Chief Secretary for Ireland spoke about the other day, when he informed the House that the poor rate in the Island of Lewis amounted to 11*s*. 6*d*. in the pound. The right hon. Gentleman added that if the crofters obtained what they desired, the poor rate, instead of being 11*s*. 6*d*., would be 26*s*. in the pound. The right hon. Gentleman forgot that the reason why the poor rates were high was because the crofters had been cleared off the land, and that large deer forests and grazing tracts had been made. Only let them go back to the land, with proper means of tilling it, and there would no longer be paupers, but they would be able to make a decent living, and the poor rate, instead of being 26*s*. in the pound, would not be 6*d*. There was another and a very important point. They had cleared the crofters off the land, and had converted the land itself into deer forests and grazing tracts. What was the condition of these grazing tracts? Why, that where 20 years ago the land would carry 6,000 or 8,000 sheep, it would not now carry 3,000. Why was that? It was because that which had been made valuable in the past by the labour of the crofters had now been replaced by heather, brackens, and rushes. They, therefore, had two conditions established—that the land had been converted into a waste, and that the people were in a state of misery and starvation. In the Island of Lewis there were 150 square miles of land, of which about one-fourth was occupied by crofters, and the average rent only amounted to about £3 a-year. One of the medical officers reported to the Crofters' Commission, that the people were in such a state of destitution that they could not obtain sufficient meal to enable them to make poultices when the Island was visited by a terrible epidemic of measles. The state of Lewis was dealt with by the Commission, who stated in their Report certain facts relating to the parish of Uig, where there certainly had been the great increase of population which the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary for Scotland complained of. The population in 1831 was 3,040, and in 1881 it had only increased to 3,480. The gross rental was £5,000 a-year, of which the shooting and fishing tenants paid £1,200, the deer forests £1,120, and six graziers £1,000, leaving the 420 crofters, who were on the Valuation Roll, to pay about £1,500 a-year. The Commissioners gave this parish as a typical case, and according to their Report, that was the condition of things all over the Islands and Highlands. In four parishes, there were 3,200 families, including about 16,000 individuals; the rental of the four parishes was £30,000, and the crofters, 2,090 in number, paid of that sum about £7,000 a-year. That, according to the Report of the Royal Commission, was the condition of things all over the Islands. The Commissioners also gave certain facts in reference to Tiree, where there had been disturbances. The gross rental, according to the Valuation Roll, was £5,359 a-year; the factor and his brother, together with a third person, paid 35½ per cent of the entire rental, a dozen other men paid about 52 per cent, and the rest was paid by 222 crofters. There were 324 cotters or crofters who had been driven away from their crofts, who paid no rent at all and had no land. That was the condition of things in Tiree. The two principles for which he (Dr. Clark) contended were to increase the holdings, and to give proper protection for those who were at present rack-rented. What then ought to be done? As it seemed to him, the only thing to be done was to carry out the Report of the Royal Commission, and to give the Commissioners the power which they recommended should be given to the Sheriff—namely, the power of compulsorily increasing the holdings. At present the Act was unworkable. The crofters had been reduced to such a state of poverty by rack-renting, and by the imposing of restrictions upon their holdings, that they had no money, and the first condition for increasing their holdings was to see that they had a sufficient amount of money to enable them to stock them. Practically, they had knocked the poor crofter down, and then kicked him for falling. The principle of the Act was to increase the holdings, but the 13th clause prevented it. They were keeping the word of promise to the ear, and breaking it to the hope. The clause was put into the Act for the purpose of increasing holdings, and now, after the Act had been in force for two years, the Commissioners reported that they had been unable to do that, and would not be able to do it on account of the limitations and restrictions the Act contained. Therefore, what Parliament had to do was to amend the Act, so as to take in all the crofters; and, in the second place, to make the clause regarding the increase of holdings a reality and not a sham. He begged to move the Adjournment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Dr. Clark.*)

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) said, he wished to say a word or two in support of the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark). The whole case, as he understood it, might be presented in a very few words indeed. He was afraid that his right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate must admit that he brought this matter upon himself. He might have prevented it from being moved, if he had given a less curt reply to the Questions which had been put to him by the hon. Member for Caithness and the hon. Member for Sutherland (Mr. A. Sutherland). What had been the history of this question during the last Session of Parliament? When the House met at the beginning of the year, an Amendment was moved to the Address with regard to the disturbances in Lewis. A discussion took place in the House upon that Amendment, and speeches were made both by the Lord Advocate and by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The Chief Secretary for Ireland said, and he thought his hon. Friend the Member for the Blackfriars division of Glasgow also said, that the powers of the Crofters' Commission as they at present existed were quite inadequate to deal with the great troubles that existed in Lewis. The difficulty in Lewis had reference to the grievance felt there in regard to the restricted area occupied by crofter holdings. The Chief Secretary for Ireland laid great stress on the question of over-population, and he said that the whole difficulty arose from the increase of population. The right hon. Gentleman did not, however, take into consideration that, so far as the population of Lewis was concerned, the crofters had not only increased, but they had had to live and subsist on a much smaller area of land than the population had to subsist on 30 or 40 years ago. The general conclusion come to by the House, after the discussion on the Amendment to the Address, was that, apart from the question of emigration and any powers that might be given to the Commission, such powers as that Body now possessed were quite inadequate to deal with the difficulty which had arisen in Lewis. Very naturally a question was asked as to what had become of the powers given to the Commissioners under the Crofters' Act for the extension of holdings. That subject was raised then, and also on a subsequent occasion. Eventually, a Question was put by his right hon. Friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), as to whether the Government would agree to consult the Crofter Commission, and get a Report from them in regard to the causes which had rendered the provision for the extension of holdings comparatively inoperative. The Government assented to that request, and called on the Crofters' Commission to make a Report. They had done so, and it was issued to the House on Friday last. It was, therefore, only to be expected that his hon. Friend the Member for Caithness and his hon. Friend the Member for Sutherland, representing as they did large Crofter constituencies, should put to-day the questions which appeared on the Paper in their names. He must say that those Questions had met with a very scant reply from the Lord Advocate, who said in very curt language, that the Government had no intention whatever of legislating on the crofter question during the present Session. That was all he said. He (Mr. Buchanan) did not wish to say a word that would wound the feelings of the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but he was bound to say, that on recent occasions Members from Scotland had had some cause to complain of the way in which the right hon. and learned Gentleman was in the habit of treating the Questions which his Colleagues in Scotland brought under his consideration in that House. He trusted that what had taken place that night would have some slight effect upon the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and that in future he would adopt something more of the *suaviter in modo* in the replies he gave to the Questions addressed to him. But, altogether apart from that, whatever the right hon. and learned Gentleman might say at the present moment, it was almost impossible that the Government could go on through the present Session without proposing some kind of extension of the powers of the Commission under the Act. The Crofters' Commission would very shortly have to be sent to Lewis, and it was admitted on both sides, that the powers they possessed were quite inadequate to deal with the state of things that existed there. Therefore, if they were sent there, it was quite impossible for them to give any satisfaction to the people who were now in a state of discontent. Was it impossible to give to the Crofters' Commission—an important public authority —some extended powers which would enable them to do away, to a certain extent, with some of the discontent? They had been told to-night that in a particular district where the greatest disturbance had arisen, and where the greatest distress prevailed—namely, the district of Park, within comparatively recent times, 30 or 40 years ago, there were crofter settlements all over the district, and when it was turned into a deer forest, the crofters were lifted out of their own district and put down on other parts of the island near the sea margin or elsewhere further north. Surely what had been done in recent times by private individuals in lifting crofter settlements from one part of the island and putting them down on another might be done by a public authority. Was it not possible for the Government to devise some means to give the Crofter Commission authority to do what had been done in the past by private individuals—namely, to lift up the crofter settlement from the wretched places in which they were now situated, and put them down on other parts of the Island of Lewis, where they might, under a system of fair rents be able to earn a decent livelihood and maintain themselves in something like comfort. He must earnestly impress upon the Government the extreme gravity and importance of the question. If the Government persisted in turning a deaf ear to all the representations that were made to them by those who represented the Highlands in connection with the specific defects of the Act, it would be a most short-sighted policy, and it would be impossible to look forward to another winter in the Highland districts without the risk of very serious disturbances arising. He would earnestly impress upon the Government the necessity of turning their serious attention to the matter in order to see whether, by some means or other, it was not possible to give to the Crofters' Commission extended powers for giving more land to the crofters.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Mr. Speaker, I think it will only be courteous that I should intervene at this early stage of the debate—a debate of which I do not complain, although I must inform the House that, having had no intimation whatever that any such debate was to take place, I am not in a position to give an elaborate answer to all that has been said. However, having discussed this matter very fully, and having stated my views upon it at an earlier part of the Session, and seeing no reason to depart from those views, I shall confine myself to making a few observations to show the position which the Government take up on this matter. As to the remark that I have brought this debate upon myself, I must say that I was not aware that I had been thought discourteous, and that it is extremely undesirable when one has a distinct answer to give to a Question to do otherwise than give it in distinct terms. I hope that giving a distinct negative to a Question will not be considered an act of discourtesy.

DR. CLARK said, the complaint was that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had answered several Questions together in the briefest manner, and not noticed the various points raised in them.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I quite understand that; but the Questions to which the hon. Gentleman refers consisted of references to certain facts which were perfectly well known—namely, statements made by a past Commissioner, and evidence given recently, and the pith and marrow of the Questions were, whether Her Majesty's Government proposed to take any action in the way of bringing in a measure to amend the Crofters' Act, this year. I answered that directly with no intention whatever of slurring over the Question. I assumed that the matters mentioned in the Questions were correct, because they were simply reproductions of what had already been placed before hon. Members of this House. If, however, I have appeared in any way to be discourteous, it was certainly not my intention, and I hope the hon. Member who has complained will kindly look at it, as he himself said towards the end of his speech, as showing that the exception proves the rule. Her Majesty's Government have had the matter now under their consideration time after time, and the views of hon. Members as regards the probability or hope of a particular measure doing any good in the Island of Lewis have also been considered. As an illustration of the suggestions that we have to consider seriously from time to time, I will take the suggestion made by the hon. and learned Member for the West Division of Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) in the latter part of his speech to-day, when he asked why, as in former days, private individuals had succeeded in removing people from certain places in which they were living, to other places where they now live, could not Her Majesty's Government do the same thing now, for the purpose of transferring some of the people of Lewis to places in the Island where they would be better off? Her Majesty's Government would be prepared to consider that question with the greatest possible earnestness, if the evidence before them and before the House did not prove as conclusively as any evidence could, that no such scheme, whether carried out by the Government or by private individuals, could possibly have the effect which my hon. and learned Friend expects to derive from it. How can it have such an effect, when we know perfectly well that the population of Lewis has increased so enormously during the last 50 years, and has quadrupled within the last century, and when the population is several times as large as it was when those who lived in Lewis, and loved Lewis, and the people there more than 100 years ago declared that the Island could not possibly support the people upon it? We have always maintained—and we have not been met by hon. Members opposite on the matter—that the conclusion which Sir John M'Neill gives in his Report 30 or 40 years ago, was a true conclusion—namely, that the crofters were not to be expected to make their livelihood and support themselves and their families out of the product of their labours as agricultural subjects. That statement has been persistently evaded by right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite in all the discussions which have taken place on this question; and what we complain of, and with reason, is this, that parts of the Report are brought up again and again, and quoted against our views, while no notice is taken of this statement, which is apparently set aside for the empirical and hopeless remedies which are frequently proposed in this House. A Motion has now been made for the purpose of inducing this House to enter upon an alteration of the legislation which was passed in 1886—only two years ago—on behalf of the crofters in the Islands and Highlands of Scotland. I leave my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. J. B. Balfour), who had charge of that Bill after the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) ceased to be connected with the Government of that year, to say whether the grounds upon which he then was satisfied that what was done in the Bill, was all that could and ought to be done, were sufficient and good grounds or not, and to say what are the grounds upon which he has changed his opinion, if he has done so. When he and those who acted with him have done so, it will be time for us to deal with the reasons they may give. If, on the other hand, they can give no such reasons—and I believe they cannot give any substantial or real reasons—then we shall not require to meet anybody on that matter. There is a much more important matter which was fully discussed in 1886, and which is really the crux of this question. It is quite true that there have been very few applications indeed for the enlargement of holdings upon the part of the crofters, and it is also true that of the small number of applications which have been made there have been many which have not been competent under the Act of Parliament, because those who made them were unable to get the required number of five to concur with them in the application. More than one application has been made to obtain land in an Island at a distance of seven miles by sea from the Island in which the crofter making the application lived. But the most remarkable fact of all—and specially remarkable in view of what has been said by the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark)—is that there has not been one single application for the purpose of taking land from a deer forest, although that is the easiest application to make, for it is an application which cannot possibly be refused on the ground of rental or on the ground of there being a tenant, but which can only be refused if the land would be taken under such circumstances as would destroy the deer forest as a letting property. We were told all along, and certainly in 1886, that it was most important that the deer forests should be included, because if only the crofters could get a considerable tract of the country, it would be most valuable to them, and add to their means of subsistence. Upon that statement it is a most remarkable commentary, which will require a great amount of ingenuity to explain, that there has not been a single application made by the crofters in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland for the purpose of taking land from a deer forest. We said in 1886, and we were laughed at by hon. Members below the Gangway opposite—no doubt in a good humoured way—that the land of the deer forests was unsuitable for the purpose, and would be of no benefit, and that land which could only support one sheep on four and a half acres was not the land out of which people without substantial means and unable to take large tracts could get any advantage to themselves. But only a few minutes ago the hon. Member for Caithness said, "Let the crofters of Lewis go back to the Park"—which is a deer forest—"and till it." Not one single application has been made for any such purpose. I am quite aware that the Park has been used as a means of agitation, but I am not aware that the crofters considered or suggested for one moment that by taking such parts of the Park as they could occupy profitably to themselves they would benefit themselves or their neighbours in any way whatever. My answer to my hon. Friend is this—let some crofters put an application before the Commission in Lewis for the purpose of getting part of the Park so as to cultivate it, and then it will be seen whether there is any ground for complaint at all. It is a most remarkable fact that while a great deal was said about including the deer forests so as to give the crofters an opportunity of taking slices out of them for the purposes of obtaining a livelihood, with the aid of their existing crofts, not one single application has been made for this purpose. But it is not there the difficulty lies. The difficulty is, as it was pointed out in 1886, that if people are to be supported out of land by the extension of holdings, giving them a larger quantity of land to cultivate and to carry pasture upon, then these people must be in a position to stock and to use the land. What occurred in 1886? I remember that on that occasion the right hon.

Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow referred in glowing terms to the great advantages which the Swiss peasantry had compared with the peasantry in the Island of Lewis. I took exception to what he then said, having myself had some experience of Switzerland as a young man. My opinion was that the Swiss peasantry had not so comfortable a life, that they made but little money, and that they did not even make a good subsistence. I then called attention to the question of additional land and to additional pasture, and what I then said I hold to now, knowing no reason to withdraw one word. I therefore cannot do better than read it. I said—

> "This Bill suggested nothing whatever to make it sure that when they had given this additional pasture land, those who took it would be able to make a beneficial use of it, and give a reasonable return to the person to whom it belonged."—(3 *Hansard*, [303] 144.)

I gave my hon. Friends below the Gangway and the crofters the credit then for believing that they had no desire to take any land for which they were not to give a reasonable return to the proprietor. I also said—

> "In short, it made landlords take land from tenants with capital to give it to tenants who had no capital—land which was absolutely worthless to any man who did not possess capital."—(*Ibid.* 144.)

I have never yet heard any answer to that—how a man without any capital who, upon your own showing, is upon the verge of starvation, is to be able to take additional land, and to stock and use it so as to be a profit to himself, and to enable him to give a reasonable return to the person who now has it let to people who have capital, and who are able to give that return. I continued—

> "That was to say, it was proposed by an Act of the Legislature to force upon the landlords of the Highlands an experiment which, unless capital were forthcoming for the working of it, must be an absolute failure. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was unable to give his right hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan) any help whatever towards carrying out the objects of the Bill. The landlords had been willing to try the thing that was now proposed on the consideration that the land should be stocked, or that there should be the means of stocking it. This was the difficulty which had led to failure wherever the experiment had been tried. The Commissioners' Report in regard to Lady Gordon Cathcart's property brought out the fact that large farms, consisting of thousands of acres of land, in the best parts of the Highlands and Islands, had been given over to crofters—in some cases to agricultural crofters, and in others to fishing crofters—and the result from beginning to end had been a total and absolute failure. There had been inadequate stocking, the arrears of rent were very great—in some cases no rent had been paid at all; and, in spite of all stipulations, the old system of destructive sub-division had gone on. One of the Members of the Royal Commission had stated very distinctly these two things—first, that these common grazings formed the real obstacle to improvement; and, second, that capital was indispensable in pastoral farming, if a profit was to be made out of it at all. Although everything had been done that this Bill contemplated, the result was that arrears, which in 1883 amounted to £1,000, in 1884 were £2,000, and in 1885 had increased to £2,800; and during that period Lady Gordon Cathcart had given £1,128 for seed, of which not one-half had been repaid. This was a distinct and clear question which must be dealt with if they would come to a rational conclusion upon it. Either these people were withholding rents which they were able to pay, or, if they were not doing so, this Bill could not do any possible good. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan) was on the horns of that dilemma."—(*Ibid.* 144-5.)

I then proceeded to give another example. Now, those statements which I made in 1886 stand uncontradicted to this day. I have always asked, and asked in vain, how it is proposed that people who have got no means of using land are to be made better in their position by obtaining that land. I believe I shall still wait for an answer. It surely is not harshness towards this people—it is surely not injustice, and not dealing with them in an improper way, to say to them — "You cannot do what your neighbours have failed to do. If by any means you could raise money by which you shall be enabled to stock additional land, there is no doubt whatever that success might follow, if the land was productive." But to set people on land which cannot be made productive without a large outlay of capital, and which, even if made productive with that large outlay, can never be so productive, from the nature of the climate, as land would be in other parts of the country, at a time when the value of all agricultural produce is admittedly so low, and when all unquestionably have suffered from the climatic changes during the last few years, when the depression has been felt in every department of commerce, when as a result the annual value of land has been reduced 30 and 40 per cent as compared with two years ago, and when the reductions two years ago are larger than would have been made at the time the Commission was first proposed—to set people without means on land at such a time would not improve their position at all. The hon. Member for Caithness told us to-night what I have often said in this House before, and what was then received by hon. Members with expressions of incredulity, that in nine-tenths of the cases of the crofters in Lewis, if they were given their crofts absolutely free from any rent, their position would not be practically improved.

Dr. CLARK: And throughout the Highlands and Islands generally.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: My hon. Friend adds "Throughout the Highlands and Islands generally." It is interesting and instructive to get this statement from my hon. Friend now. We have maintained all along that these people are sunk in poverty, that their position does not enable them—from whatever cause you may choose to attribute it to, you must deal with facts as they are—to do more than they are doing now, and that the crofts which they hold are insufficient if they paid no rent at all for them, and got the land in perpetuity, for them to live on in comfort. But the proposal is that they should receive additional land in order that they may cultivate it. I think that a very great deal indeed might be said for that proposition if it could be carried out with any reasonable regard to the rights of other people. But how can a man who is at present so absolutely sunk in poverty be placed in a position of success, unless, indeed, some kind friend would come forward and provide the means? Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway believe this can be successful, and that it can be made to pay. In the case of any speculation which is known and believed to pay, you will find plenty of money in the market to carry it on. We heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) the other day that he was able to borrow money at £1 12*s.* 6*d.* per annum on six months' Exchequer Bills. That is a state of things which is comparatively new in this country. If money is in that position—if these speculations can be made to pay—I am perfectly certain that if my hon. Friends went into the City and offered 2½ per cent for money to be advanced for such a purpose they would get the money tomorrow. But I am afraid when these gentlemen to whom they went made their inquiries and read the report of Sir John M'Neill, issued the other day, they would find that in dealing with such a country and climate and population, they never could make any such speculation a success. Is the matter to be dealt with upon every principle of common sense which rules men in their own affairs? Is Her Majesty's Government reasonable in coming to the distinct and definite conclusion that by endeavouring to maintain an excessive population in many parts of the Highlands and Islands you are bolstering up a tottering fabric, which must ultimately and inevitably fall? That is our opinion, and I hope hon. Gentlemen will give us credit for holding that opinion after careful and earnest consideration, and holding it with the deepest possible regret. Our view has always been—and we have not hesitated to state it in this House, and to state it in the face of much obloquy and misrepresentation of our motives—that without a considerable removal of the congested population of the Highlands to some other country where there would be an outcome for their industry, and where they would have some chance of success, there is no hope of relieving the state of things which exists in those congested parts of the Highlands. It is no doubt, true that many people in that part of the country have the greatest aversion to do that which many of us have to submit to in our own families. Many of us have to sacrifice our love of home, and leave our own shores, and seek our fortunes elsewhere. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Caithness, who brought forward this Motion, has never had reason to regret that he went abroad a good deal, and there are other hon. Members below the Gangway who, no doubt, have done the same with great success. No doubt, these poor people are attached to their glens, and cling to them with a love which it is very difficult for us to appreciate. I admire them for it. It is one of the best features in their character, but it is one of those features which, if it is allowed to take an exaggerated position in a man's mind and affections, does an injury, not only to his own personal interests, but to the community in which he lives. Surely we are not doing a cruel thing in taking such measures as we can to give these people in the Highlands an inducement to throw aside their dread and horror at leaving their native country and establishing themselves elsewhere—in places where they can form happy and prosperous communities. This has been done in other countries, and wherever it has been done efficiently and under good management, it has led to a feeling among the people that it is a wise and sensible thing to do. I can tell my hon. Friends that at the present moment there are a good number of families in the Islands of Scotland who are prepared to go and establish themselves elsewhere the moment a scheme has been devised which will enable them to do so with some reasonable chance of success, and with the prospect of obtaining a comfort which they were not able to secure at home. I begin to feel that my hon. Friends below the Gangway are leaning more and more towards this view of the case. The feeling of agitation is over. As long as there was really a feeling of agitation in the Highlands, any word uttered by hon. Members below the Gangway in favour of emigration would have brought them into great disfavour among those whom they represented. But that feeling is subsiding; and as to the danger to peace and order in the Highlands, I can assure this House that the views of the hon. Member for Caithness on that matter are absolutely groundless. Unless the agitator gets among them again—the agitator whose business it is to keep up excitement and endeavour to create breaches of the law —I am certain from the reports the noble Marquess the Secretary for Scotland (the Marquess of Lothian) has received, that there is no reason to fear any breach of the law at present. But will hon. Members go among these people and encourage them to take the course which we suggest they ought to take? This is an experiment which the Government are determined to carry out with the utmost rapidity. We hope to be able in the course of a year to remove some families who are willing to go, and to set them up in a distant country where they will meet people of their own blood and people of their own particular sentiments and associations. These people, I am certain, if once we can get them settled, will send home news which will induce hundreds and hundreds of others to follow their example. The moment you have a reasonable number of people leaving these crofts, you at once have land available for the purpose of aiding the others who remain behind. It is one of the wise provisions of the Act passed in 1886, that, in the event of any crofters moving from their crofts, these crofts are not to be appropriated into the general estate, but are to be used for the purpose of increasing the area of the existing holdings. I am certain that you cannot, by the schemes which have been brought forward by the hon. Gentleman below the Gangway, really produce that which every honest man desires to produce—namely, a permanent and efficient relief to the crofters in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland from the difficulties in which they are at present involved. A mere empirical remedy will do no present good; a mere heroic Act, though it may give temporary relief, will not do any ultimate good. We believe still in the principles we have enunciated over and over again in this House, and we are glad to think that some of these principles are now gaining some sort of acceptance from hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. We augur well from that, and if they will join us in that which we are prepared to do, great good may be effected, and the greatest possible blessing to the Highlands and Islands may be accomplished.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT (Roxburgh) said, he entirely agreed with much that had been said by the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald). At the same time, he thought the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman would have been more satisfactory if he had been a little more distinct in stating the proposals which the Government had in their mind for the relief of the population in the Highlands.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, his hon. and learned Friend was probably not in the House when, at an earlier period of the evening, it was announced that a full statement would be laid before the House in the form of an estimate on another day. He would have been perfectly ready to have entered more fully into the matter had the plan been properly digested.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, he thanked the right hon. and learned Gentleman for that statement. He was glad that the Government intended to have the whole subject sifted. The sending of gunboats and marines might be necessary under some circumstances, but he thought they must look to other means for the settlement of the difficulty which existed in the Highlands. It would have been much more satisfactory if the hon. Member who moved (Dr. Clark) and the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Buchanan) who seconded the Motion for Adjournment of the House, had done a little more to show how a remedy could be found for the present condition of things by amending the Crofters' Act. They had not shown how any alteration of the Act could get rid of the difficulty pointed out by the Commission as the reason why the Crofters' Act had been inoperative. The hon. Member who made this Motion for adjournment had not suggested any remedy for the difficulty arising from inability to stock farms.

Dr. CLARK said, he had pointed out that the recommendations of the Royal Commission would have remedied that.

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, that no one would say that the Report did not lay the greatest stress on emigration.

Dr. CLARK said, there were two recommendations made by the Royal Commission. One was to give holdings compulsorily, and he had said if that power was given it would be all they asked for.

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, he was pointing out that the House and the Government had not followed the recommendation of the Royal Commission, that the most important was that of emigration, and it had not been acted upon. The reasons pointed out by the Commissioners made it very difficult, to his mind, to amend the Crofters' Act in the direction indicated, and he considered that the suggestions of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway were not enough to enable the House to get out of those difficulties. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had made a very strong statement as to the Government taking means to assist emigration, and hon. Members would look forward with interest to the plan that he would propose, in the hope that it would be found to put an end to the difficulties experienced during the last three months.

Dr. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) said, the hon. and learned Member for Roxburgh (Mr. A. R. D. Elliot) had pointed out that the hon. Gentlemen the Mover and Seconder of the Motion before the House, had given no explanation of the way in which the Act could be amended. They wanted more land for the crofters, which the Government would not give to the extent of an inch. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had given them many unanswerable arguments, and one of them was that there had been no application for any land; but he would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman if he could give a single instance of a crofter getting an inch of land from a deer forest?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he had always assumed that when hon. Gentlemen in 1866 pressed that land for the deer forests should not be taken from the crofts, that in pressing this they had some practical end in view.

Dr. R. MACDONALD said, they certainly had a practical end in view. They wanted the migration of crofters from the congested districts into other parts; but the Act said that the land of the crofters was to be contiguous to and conterminous with the deer forests. But the owners took care to drive away not only crofters, but publicans. They would not have an hotel within five miles, and hon. Members knew that one had not long ago been shut up on that account. The moral of this was to allow the crofters to get more land wherever they could find it. The Commissioners recommended that from the congested districts the crofters should be migrated to places where there was room for them. The last Government did not give that power, however, and they were not allowed to remove any men from those districts. It was left for the present Government to break leases in Ireland; and, if that were so, why should not the large farms in the Highlands be broken down to afford more land for the crofters? The Royal Commissioners also recommended that harbours should be built, but that had not been done. Then there was the question of the school rates in the Highlands, which amounted to 6s. 8d. in the pound; and he asked if the Government could not have done something to relieve the people in that respect? The right hon.

and learned Gentleman said there were very few applications for the increase of holdings. But there had been 310 applications, and he might tell the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate that the reason there were not more was that the crofters knew it was a hopeless case. They had, over and over again, pointed out that this was not a question of rent, but that it was a question of the want of land; and the Land Commissioners had told them that the principal point urged in almost every district was the restriction of the area of the holdings. The Commissioners said—

> "That in most cases a considerable degree of indulgence, almost amounting to benevolence, might be discovered in the case of small holdings;"

they believed

> "that the grievance of increased rents had been urged in many instances, but with much less force and earnestness than that of the restriction of areas."

The average reduction of rent made by the Commissioners was 31 per cent; and, after that, would anyone say that the Highlanders, who had not grumbled for so many years, were not a long-suffering people? Were they not deserving of having their grievance with regard to area redressed? The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate said that hon. Members on those Benches would not help the Government in a scheme of emigration. Certainly they would; there was no fear about emigration, but the crofters asked why they should be called upon to leave their country when the greater portion of it remained uninhabited? Why not give the people at least one-half or two-thirds of the Islands? He should be pleased to help the Government in every way to ameliorate the condition of the people. But there were now 2,000,000 acres of deer forests in the Highlands; and he asked if the right hon. and learned Gentleman proposed to clear the whole population out of the country, and leave it for deer forests? And if emigration took place, would not those who remained be just as poor as before under the present circumstances? Would the Government give assistance to these people for stocking their farms? There need not be any fear that the money would not be repaid, and that might be seen in the Commissioners' Report. They had been given money for boats, and he could not understand why they should not be assisted with money for the purpose of stock. They had all along been contending that the holdings of the crofters should be increased; and if a man had a small holding by the cultivation of which he could not live, the only cure was to give him a larger holding. He was very sorry the right hon. and learned Gentleman had taken up the position he had with regard to this question, and he was very much afraid that his optimistic views—although no one would be more glad than he if they became true—would not be realized. It was well known that the people were very nearly starving; he himself had been the means, with the assistance of some Members of the House, of sending a lot of seed potatoes to them, and he was told that the people were on the point of starvation. When people were in that condition, and when it was no disgrace, as in Ireland, to go to prison for breaking the Land Law, he said it was a very bad thing for law and order. He regretted that the Government were not going to do anything for these people, and that their last word was that they must clear out of the country.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) said, he believed the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate, by adopting a different course, might have saved much of the discussion which had taken place. He was quite certain that he did not mean to maintain that nothing should be done in order to make beneficial the Act which that House had taken so much trouble to pass for the benefit of the crofters. He did not think they could go behind that Act. The House of Commons intended that the crofters' holdings should be extended, and the Commission was expressly appointed to carry out that intention. But as it very frequently happened, Bills, however carefully drafted, sometimes when in operation failed to carry out the intention of their framers. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) had told them that the portion of the Act which related to the enlargement of the crofters' holdings was the one to which he attached the greatest importance, but he said there was not a single instance of an enlargement of a holding having taken place. The Crofters' Commission had issued a Report in which they referred to the reason for the failure of the Act as a perfectly obvious one — namely, that the Act required that the land from which the enlargement was sought must be "contiguous to the holding." That was a matter which he thought could be got over without difficulty. The second difficulty to which they called attention was the poverty of the crofters, which prevented them stocking their holdings. That might be a difficulty if the Government were in power which passed the Act, because they had declared their intention to give no money from the public funds for the purpose of carrying out the Act. He remembered, when the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself was in Opposition, how sarcastic he was upon the Government for taking up that line of policy, and how remorselessly he chaffed them for not putting their hands in their pockets to do something practical in the direction of carrying out the recommendations of the Crofter Commission. The present Government did not look at the matter now in the same light; but they were giving bonuses for fishing boats and emigration purposes. And what did all that result in? He had risen particularly to call attention to one small matter regarding which there could be no diversity of opinion, and which, if the law were amended, would greatly facilitate the operation of the Crofters' Act. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman looked through the Report, he would see that in a great number of cases the Crofter Commission had not been able to overtake the work—that such and such applications had not been attended to, "because the district had not been visited by the Commission;" and that in another the Commissioners "had been obliged to leave the district before they had attended to the applications;" and so on. Why should not the Government do what he had over and over again suggested—namely, to strengthen the Commission, which would enable them to get through their work without delay? The cost of two additional Commissioners would be very little, and if these were appointed he believed the country would be able to get out of the Act what good there was in it. That was a point on which he was certain the Government might legislate with assistance and support of every section of the House.

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) said, he should not have ventured to intervene in the debate were it not for the fact that about 12 months ago he had visited, on the invitation of the representatives of the crofters themselves, the districts affected, and spent some time in the Islands of Lewis and Skye, as well as the adjacent mainland. During that visit he had made inquiries of the people themselves as to what their grievances were, and as to the remedies which they thought the Legislature ought to provide for them. He had seen them in little knots on the road side, at meetings in schoolrooms and out-of-the-way places; and altogether he must have spoken with many hundreds of them before he finished his tour, and in every case the account which they gave of their condition and wants was almost precisely the same. It was quite true that the great difficulty in regard to the crofter population was the insufficiency of the land which they cultivated. The question of rent was altogether of minor importance, and no doubt any grievance with regard to that had been adequately met by the legislation passed three years ago. But with regard to the desire for more land—he might say the necessity for more land, if these people were to subsist in their present situation—there could, in his opinion, be no doubt whatever. In many cases the occupants of the holdings, or their predecessors, had taken them in the hope and expectation of gaining an extraneous subsistence, either from the getting of kelp, or from other kinds of labour. But those other kinds of labour had entirely failed them, and they found it absolutely impossible to get a living out of the land. In many cases the difficulty had no doubt been caused by the improvidence of the people themselves, who had, when they got the land, allowed cottars to settle on it, and had allowed their holdings to be sub-divided, so that the land which was originally sufficient for one occupant had ceased to be sufficient for its present population. To these facts, which could not possibly be disputed, must be added the sentiment of the people that they were suffering a grievous injustice on the ground that the land had in past times belonged in some sort to themselves, and that they had been removed from it against their will to make way for large farms and deer forests. They accordingly claimed that they should be restored to what they said their ancestors possessed. He had also on his visit seen many landlords, whose story, of course, put a different face on the statement received from the crofters. The landowners generally disputed the historical accuracy of this sentimental grievance, and maintained that the land was never the property of the crofters, or of their predecessors; and that the transfer of the population which had undoubtedly taken place was as much in the interest of the crofters themselves as of the landlords. They maintained that at the time the crofters were thereby offered a better chance of livelihood by the seaside than they could possibly have obtained in the inland parts to which they now desired to return. But whatever might be the absolute historical truth of the matter, it was perfectly certain that this sentimental grievance on the part of the crofters very much strengthened their feeling that it was unfair to propose to them any other alternative until the alternative of migration had been exhausted, and he was convinced that no scheme of emigration would have a fair chance until the crofters were satisfied that the Legislature had done all that could be reasonably expected from it in affording them the opportunity of obtaining a larger portion of land in their own country. But even if the Legislature were to do all that hon. Members from Scotland were now asking, it must not be supposed that any very large and material amelioration of the condition of the crofters would result. There were two difficulties in the way, to which allusion had been made by the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate. In the first place, there was not enough land to provide for all the population. At the present time in Lewis, if the whole of the land were given to the crofters, it could not possibly provide for more than one-half of the population. But in answer to this the crofters said—"Give us what there is, and when that has been exhausted we will talk about emigration. Let those who can be provided for be provided for at home." Then there was the second difficulty, which was still more important and hard to overcome—namely, the impossibility of the crofters stocking the land, or doing anything satisfactory with it if they obtained it. He was told, a short time ago, that the celebrated Ben Lee pasture land, which was the original cause of the disturbances in Skye, and which, by the act of the Commission, was handed over to the crofters, remained without a single head of cattle upon it, the crofters being unable to stock it. That, at any rate, was the case 12 months ago. It was all very well to say that the Government could find the money to stock the farms. He protested against that; and when he was with the crofters he told them that he would never support such a proposal, and that he believed that the House of Commons would not undertake so risky an operation as that of lending money on stock to these small tenants. It was a doubtful policy to lend money on boats and nets, which could, at all events, be insured, and on land which could not be removed, but those things offered a better security than cattle and sheep; and if ever money were to be lent in the manner suggested, he felt quite sure that the greater portion of it would be lost. He had pointed out to the crofters that they had no right to call on the people of England, Scotland and Wales, who were, many of them, quite as poor as themselves, to guarantee this assistance. The conclusion at which he had arrived, and which he was most anxious to impress on the crofters, who were most worthy of sympathy and assistance, was that a great portion of them must seek their remedy in emigration. By their own admission there was no room for them all at home. Some of them must go; and at the present moment the point was how those who went could be best provided for. He did not hesitate to say that this operation must be carried out with the assistance of the Government, and that course, in his opinion, need not involve any serious risk. The plan would be materially assisted if the Government would consider, before bringing forward their proposals, whether they might not at the same time offer some facilities for migration. He did not think those facilities would be availed of to a large extent, but he believed that the sentiment of the people would be met if they were told that in future, at all events, those who could stock additional land would be provided with it, so far as such land existed. He believed that the whole difficulty of extending the holdings lay in the words of the Act, "contiguous holding." He could not for the life of him see why those words should remain. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) had recommended his Act to the House very much on the ground of the enormous abuse created by the deer forests of Mr. Winans. Everybody in the House admitted the abuse, and would be glad to see it remedied; but those words had made it impossible to take one inch of his lands. That was certainly a scandal, and he (Mr. J. Chamberlain) could not conceive why some portion of the enormous deer forest of Mr. Winans on the mainland, which was admirably suited to the purposes of the crofters, should not be taken for the benefit of the crofters, even though they lived on the Islands of Lewis and Skye, which were not contiguous to his property. He had risen for the purpose of urging upon the Government that this matter should, at all events, be taken into consideration, although he entirely agreed with the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate that the cardinal and real remedy was to be found in a generous and carefully devised scheme of emigration.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) said, he did not wish to intervene in the debate for the purpose of complaining of the remarks of his right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate, but simply to say a few words because of the urgency of this question. The crofters had stated before the Commission and by their Representatives in that House that they could not get the quantity of land which they desired to cultivate. In February of this year the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) had pointed out the reason why the Crofters Act was a failure, and hon. Gentlemen had now got the evidence of the Crofters' Commission, over whom agitation could have no control whatever, and that evidence fully corroborated all that hon. Members on those Benches had said upon the subject. Now, the answer which they got from the Government was unmistakable—namely, that they would provide for the emigration of the people who wanted land to cultivate to the extent of £10,000. With all due deference to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, he would like some further confirmation of his statement that the people desired emigration. Then, with regard to Lewis, did the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate mean to say that it was typical of the whole of the Highlands?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, that was not the case either in regard to population or distress.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND said, he was glad of that admission, because in that case the contention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman with regard to Lewis did not apply to any part of the Highlands. [Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald: They apply in degree.] He (Mr. A. Sutherland) was glad that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) had approached this question in a tone and spirit quite different from that of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate. He (Mr. J. Chamberlain) had gone to the Highlands, and conversed with the people themselves, and he thought if the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate were to do the same he would considerably modify the statement he had made. The contention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman that there had been no application for land in the case of deer forests, had been amply disposed of by the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty (Dr. Macdonald). The right hon. and learned Gentleman had said that there was power in the Act to extend holdings, but the clause providing for this was limited by no less than 20 conditions, and it was a mere mockery to tell the people, under the circumstances, that there was power to enlarge holdings. He was glad that the Government of the day which passed the Act had no responsibility for that clause. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham that they should first exhaust the resources at home before emigration was tried; but the people distinctly refused to emigrate until they had seen what could be done by the enlargement of holdings from these extensive deer forests and sheep farms. He said it was nothing less than a calamity to receive the answer which the right hon.

and learned Gentleman had made to the question put to him; and he hoped he would be better advised, and see his way to withdraw the opinion he had given. But if the answer of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate was the last word of the Government, hon. Members would know exactly where they stood.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, that the Members for Scotland on those Benches were indebted to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) for his sympathy with the people in the Highlands. The cause of the failure of the Act was a radical fault in the measure itself as respects the enlargement of holdings. It had been pointed out from the first that it would be inoperative, and the result had proved the truth of that statement. He (Sir George Campbell) thought that if the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate would try to get over the difficulty by amending the Act, instead of quoting long speeches from *Hansard* to show that he always was utterly opposed to the whole system of the enlargement of holdings, the Government might find a way out of this difficulty.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he had never stated anything of the kind. He had said most distinctly that if the scheme of the Government were accepted, the removal of the people from the congested districts would set free land for the enlargement of the holdings of those who remained.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he quite understood that; but as regarded any other enlarging of holdings, he repeated that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had done nothing but use all his forensic eloquence to prove that it ought not to be done. The difficulty in the case of Lewis arose, no doubt, from the increase which had taken place of the inhabitants; but in the Highlands at large there were lands which had once been cultivated, and might be cultivated again, and he thought, notwithstanding that the difficulties were very great, something might be done. With regard to the advance of money, he pointed out, although he admitted the difficulties referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, that the crofters were not large in number as compared with the whole population of the Kingdom, and that this rich country, which could spend £70,000 on a picture, and many millions in miserable wars, might very well do something, if only a little, to aid them in stocking the land. The remedy of the Government was emigration. But he could not admit that this was a simple and easy remedy, and one which would get rid of the whole difficulty. It would cost at least as much to settle a crofter in America as in Scotland, and, looking to climate and habits, they would not always succeed. The Government had done a good deal for Ireland; they had amended the Irish Land Act, and he was at a loss to understand why they should not also amend the Crofters' Act.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) said, he had the honour of sitting on the Commission of 1883, and he must say that the question of enlarged holdings was a remedy pressed upon the Commission most strongly. He was very much disappointed with the answer of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate; and hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) would not allow the debate to close without saying something more than they had heard from the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate. If they had heard the last word of the Government, he feared the effect would be very disastrous for the people of the Highlands.

MR. HANBURY-TRACY (Montgomery, &c.) said, he wished to make an observation with regard to one question that had been raised in the course of the discussion—namely, as to repayment by the crofters of money advanced on the security of crops and cattle. Under a former Government, Lord Cross had three years ago introduced into the House of Lords a Bill for the purpose of enabling a body of rich men, capitalists and philanthropists, to advance money in that way. The noble Lord had studied the question very deeply, and Lord Salisbury took upon himself the introduction of the measure referred to; but owing to the drafting, and the fact that the Bill was brought in at a moment's notice, and perhaps from the fact that the noble Lord had not fully appreciated all the circumstances, the then Government, which was a Liberal Government, objected that the Bill would confine the lending powers to a certain body of men and would not make the provisions general. He would take this opportunity of asking the Government whether they would in the present case give facilities to persons of capital for advancing money to the crofters for the purpose of stocking their holdings?

The FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Sir, I rise to say a few words in response to two questions put to me by hon. Gentlemen opposite. But, first, I may be allowed to say that I cannot help thinking we are acting somewhat harshly towards the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) by taking away from him the time he has reason to expect will be conceded to him. I may also point out that the observations of the hon. Member for Montgomery (Mr. Hanbury-Tracy) illustrate the inconvenience of such Motions as that which is now before us, the subject he has raised being one of which no Notice has been given. The hon. Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh) has asked me to supplement the answer of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald). Well, Sir, the answer of my right hon. and learned Friend is, I am sorry to say, the answer of the Government. I think that, on reflection, the hon. Gentleman will himself perceive that it would not be wise for us to hold out to the crofter population, for whom everyone in this House has sympathy—expectations which in the nature of things cannot be fulfilled. It is not a difficult matter for persons to make promises, but it is incumbent upon those who do so to be quite certain that their promises are fairly capable of being realized. One of the difficulties we have to face is that there is no adjacent land which can be added to many of the existing crofts, and I know of no means by which land can be created for the purpose. This, Sir, is one of the inherent difficulties of the case which has to be confronted when dealing with this question. Another inherent difficulty is that of the absence of capital and the absolute poverty of the crofters themselves; and in the course of this and the previous discussions which have taken place on the subject, no hon. Gentleman has pointed out how land can be cultivated unless the owner has capital to enable him to do so, nor has any hon. Gentleman shown how capital can be advanced in the present case with proper security for repayment. The hon. Member for Montgomery has asked if the Government will give facilities to enable persons of capital to advance money upon land; but I would point out to the hon. Gentleman that, as a matter of fact, such facilities already exist. There can be no doubt whatever that the difficulties which have been pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) are real difficulties, and such as the Government would not be justified in minimizing or ignoring; and I may add that we should be unworthy of the position which we occupy if we were to seek to deceive the House of Commons, or the unfortunate crofter population, by holding out expectations or promises which would prove utterly fallacious and could not possibly be realized. Therefore, Sir, if the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark) thinks it right to press his Motion to a Division, the Government will be bound in duty to oppose it; but I would suggest to the hon. Gentleman that some hon. Gentlemen might vote for the Motion, simply to avoid a night's debate upon a subject which those who sympathized with the object of the hon. Member for Northampton wished to discuss.

DR. CLARK said, in deference to the sense of the House, he would ask leave to withdraw the Motion. [*Cries of* "No, no!"]

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 99; Noes 205: Majority 106.—(Div. List, No. 87.)

NOTICE OF MOTION.

—o—

NEW WRIT—THE ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN DIVISION OF THE CITY OF DUBLIN.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): I beg to give Notice that, unless the hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar), or another Member of the Party to which he belongs, take action in the matter, I shall to-morrow move that Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant for the election of a Member for the St. Stephen's Green Division of the City of Dublin, now vacant.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I should like to ask whether this Notice has been given in consultation with the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), and whether he has given his approval to a course which is entirely contrary to the practice of the House and to the courtesies usually observed?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS) (Kent, St. Augustine's): Perhaps I might be allowed to answer the Question of the hon. Gentleman. I have to say that the action of my hon. and gallant Friend has not been taken in concert with me, nor in concert with the Government at all. The understanding which generally binds official Members of the House is that 24 hours' Notice should be given of the intention of either side to move for the issue of a new Writ, and the Motion is generally made by a Representative of the Party to which the Member whose seat is rendered vacant belongs. I was not here when my hon. and gallant Friend gave his Notice; but if he gave 24 hours' Notice, no doubt the understanding between the two sides is kept. As far as I am myself concerned, I will not take any action in the matter.

MOTIONS.

—o—

WASTE AND VACANT LANDS.

RESOLUTION.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) in rising, pursuant to Notice, to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, ownership of land in the United Kingdom should carry with it the duty of cultivation or utilization, and that in all cases where land capable of cultivation or utilization with profit, and not devoted to some purpose of public utility or enjoyment, is held in a vacant, waste, or uncultivated state, the local authorities ought to have the power to compulsorily acquire such land by payment to the owner of a sum representing the capital agricultural value of such lands, in order that such local authorities may, in their discretion, let the said lands to tenant cultivators, with such conditions as to term of tenancy, rent, reclamation, drainage, utilization and cultivation respectively as shall afford reasonable encouragement, opportunities, facilities, and security for the due utilization, cultivation, and development of the said lands,"

said, that the array of Amendments which had been put down to the Motion that he now had to submit, induced him to hope that at least the subject was one in which the House was beginning to take a greater interest, and the unanimity almost of opinion among those who had given Notice of those Amendments that there was a large quantity of uncultivated land in this country also led him to hope that he might secure their assistance against the other Amendment which challenged that proposition. There was an Amendment put down by the hon. Member for Wandsworth (Mr. Kimber) which, if it was not moved that night, might, he supposed, be taken as a speech for that debate, and which declared that the proposition contained in his Motion was one that was not consistent with the liberties of a free people, and that the process of compulsion shadowed forth in it was so repugnant to that hon. Gentleman that he must earnestly protest against it at once. There was a comfort in having opposed to him a devoted follower of the Government like the hon. Member for Wandsworth, because when that hon. Member saw the First Lord of the Treasury going into the Lobby in support of that Motion—as he would be bound to do if he carried out the traditions of his own Government—he hoped that the hon. Member would no longer denounce the principle of compulsion. He should hardly have ventured to take up the ground he did upon this subject if he had not known that the present Prime Minister had twice within the last eight years deliberately made proposals and put them into force for the compulsory taking of uncultivated land. In Cyprus a law was passed to promote the cultivation of land, and the Ordinance was dated the 2nd of April, 1879. Among other things, it enacted that where a landowner had left more than two-thirds of his land which was capable of cultivation in an uncultivated state he should pay a penalty, a tax on the whole of the land, to the Government as a fine for not having cultivated it. That having failed, the Government took more stringent measures, and in an Ordinance dated June 24th, 1885, it was set forth that all cultivable land which had been left uncultivated for 10 years should be confiscated by the Government. In the discussion of this question, he would lay down certain propositions, the first of which was, that the ownership of land should carry with it the duty of cultivation or utilization in some form. In a crowded country like this no right of property should allow a man to pursue a dog-in-the-manger attitude, and arrest the development of the natural resources of the soil. The authorities should compel the possessor of land to use his land for the general welfare. The action of the Government in Cyprus showed that they had accepted that proposition, at least in part. In the debate on this subject last year the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) said that land carried with it the duty of cultivation, and also the practice, unless there were good reasons to the contrary. Unfortunately, he had learnt that in law the ownership of land did not carry with it the duty, and he should submit that it had not carried with it the practice, of cultivation. In the case of "the Attorney General against Lord Sefton," Mr. Baron Pollock stated that the proprietor of the land had a right to make what a reasonable use of it he pleased, and sometimes even an unreasonable use of it, and that he was not bound so to use it as to make it yield the largest revenue to the Government or to pay taxes as if he did. He challenged the doctrine that a man had the right to prevent the opening up of mines underneath his property. He did not challenge the law; he challenged that it should be the law, and he submitted that, in a crowded country like this, where admittedly hunger and misery existed, no right of property ought to be allowed by which a man might forbid the natural development of the wealth of the country for the benefit of the toilers and workers in it. If the law at present gave a right to an owner of 50,000 acres to say that, although his land would provide employment to hundreds or thousands of people in mines underneath it, he would not permit mines to be worked there, and would compel the people to starve, it should be altered, and the authorities should have the right to step in and compel him to utilize his property, as they compelled the labourer to utilize his labour, for the well-being of society, of which the individual was a part. His next proposition was that there was a large quantity of land in this country in a waste and uncultivated condition, which might and ought to be cultivated. In speaking of cultivation he did not mean corn-growing. He meant that the land should be utilized for whatever it could be used profitably. It was estimated last year that there were some 12,000,000 acres of land in the United Kingdom and Ireland in an uncultivated state, which land might be cultivated with profit. Taking England, Wales, and Ireland—he proposed to leave Scotland to the hon. Member for the Leith district, who he hoped would second the Resolution, and who could speak with a special knowledge of the country—Mr. Denton, in his evidence before the Royal Commission on Agriculture in 1882, said that the irreclaimable land in England and Wales was 4,722,100 acres in extent, the cultivable land 27,000,000 acres, and the uncultivated land capable of improvement 5,596,000 acres. Within a few miles of London, in the County of Sussex, there were 100,000 acres of waste and uncultivated land. Some thousands of this were in Ashdown Forest. He did not know who was the owner, but *The Weekly Bulletin* stated that it was the property of the Earl De La Warr, who was lord of Ashdown Forest, and he had satisfied himself by abundant evidence that most of it was good land capable of profitable cultivation. In Ireland, according to high authorities, there were 6,000,000 acres of land lying needlessly unproductive. Professor Baldwin, examined by the Duke of Richmond, said there were 1,500,000 acres that would admit of reclamation and nearly 1,000,000 acres of bog land, while there were three or four times those quantities of semi-waste land that could be cultivated with profit. Why was not all this land reclaimed? Why did we talk of emigrating people while it was left uncultivated? There was plenty of evidence that the land in the greater part of Mayo and the mountain bogs of Tipperary and Kerry had been reclaimed by tenants without any assistance from landlords, who raised the rent upon it as soon as it had been made to produce anything; and with better security the land now unreclaimed could be made equally productive. Similar things had happened in England, particularly in the case of lands controlled by the Duchy of Cornwall. He did not pretend that all kinds of cultivation could be made profitable in this country; but we imported £3,000,000 worth of eggs annually, and uncultivated lands would at least maintain the poultry that produced eggs in lieu of those imported. In many places agricultural labourers were not permitted to keep fowls, and in some places where they did, the business was made unprofitable by the landlords' foxes. We also imported fruit and dairy produce that we ought to produce at home. It was true there were difficulties in the way, and among them was the favouritism shown by our Railway Companies to imported produce. The Mayor of Manchester gave evidence that produce was brought from France at less rates than were paid for carrying English produce one-third of the distance. It was dearer to take fruit from one part of Lincolnshire to another than to take it from the South of France to a Lincolnshire market. The question was also complicated by the absence of market facilities in this country. He asked the House not to reject his Motion because there were difficulties in the way, and to recognize that he was raising the question, not for the purpose of making an attack upon landowners, but of suggesting the best way of meeting the rising storm which must one day break out from the close juxtaposition, especially in our large towns, of hunger and misery with vast accumulations of wealth. It would be wise to meet that storm by remedial measures. The Socialist cry which was heard everywhere was translatable into the expression of hunger and want. If they met the cry of the belly, there would be little difficulty in meeting the argument of the brain. If he pleaded with the House on this question it was because he was speaking for the class among whom he was born and for whom he was bound to plead. He was convinced that much of the land in the country which now did not pay could be made to pay, and he knew of one striking instance in Northumberland where a landowner having failed to get anything out of 700 acres had handed them over to his bailiff, with the result that the land was made profitable. He was asking the House to listen to facts, and his proposition was that the ownership of land involved duties as well as rights, and his desire was to avert in England what in Ireland had already become, and in Scotland was gradually becoming, a fearful war between one class of society and another. He earnestly hoped, therefore, that he would not be met by a bare *non possumus.* His plan would do far more for the people in this country than the many plans for the employment of the unemployed which generally ultimately involved an increase of debt and taxation. He had modified his Motion into a form which he hoped would prove acceptable to the House. It was said that he proposed to confiscate property; he did nothing of the kind, and for all that he proposed to do, he could plead the authority of the present Government.

Mr. MUNRO-FERGUSON (Leith, &c.), in seconding the Motion, said, he thought the arguments of the hon. Member who just sat down would reassure many of those who were uncertain of his objects in bringing forward this Resolution. The hon. Member had shown a desire to meet all reasonable objections. He voted last year in favour of the Motion with considerable hesitation, but he would do so on this occasion with perfect confidence. It might not be even yet absolutely perfect, but if hon. Members opposite would deal with the matter in a fair spirit, any reasonable Amendment which they might suggest would be accepted, so long as the principle was not impaired. The principle of the Resolution was that some efficient check should be secured against the misuse of land. In Scotland, for instance, there were a few proprietors practically owning the whole of the country. He thought some action of the sort indicated in the Resolution would give the public confidence that those rights of property were not abused, and hon. Gentlemen opposite might accept this as a serviceable prop for the present land system. There was no practical agriculturist who would not admit that land with better management might be turned to much better account than it was at present. The land system of this country was peculiarly open to attack, and in the Allotments Act the Government had themselves assailed that system in much the same way as was proposed in the Motion before the House. After all, what did the Resolution come to? The Allotments Act of last year gave compulsory power to purchase land for allotment and common pasture at market value; but under the Resolution it would be taken at its capital agricultural value. If hon. Members would turn to the Crofters' Acts, they would find that, under very strong restrictions, land could be taken from deer forests for the crofters at its agricultural value, and without regard to its sporting value. Under this Resolution, no land could be taken unless the landlord choose to allow it to lie waste. He had come to the conclusion that it was by this method that the land difficulty in the Highlands might be most readily met. He thought, within proper limits, the system of forests was one which might add to the wealth of the country without injuring the population. But there must be two important exceptions drawn to that system. The first was as to lands which were capable of agricultural or pastoral occupation, and the second as to lands which were suitable to the growth of timber. He did not think that in the forests there was a large amount of land which was capable of agricultural occupation; but he did know some very bad cases in which land capable of cultivation had been allowed to go waste, and was now under deer. A much larger proportion of land should be devoted to the growth of timber, and one of the most important recommendations of the Forestry Commission, which met last year, was that large tracts of land in Scotland should be planted. In order to show the reasonable character of the proposals in this Resolution, he would draw a comparison between them and that portion of the Crofters' Act dealing with the "more land" question in the Highlands. The principle embodied in that Act was so essentially Communistic that it had to be restricted in a manner which practically rendered its application nugatory in order to secure that there should remain any private property in land. The Crofters' Act rested partly on an imaginary basis. Its operation was confined to an imaginary Highland area; while without restrictions on compulsory leasing the capital value of land would be destroyed. But, in comparison with this, the Resolution now before the House stood on a firm basis. Various proposals were being made for amending that Act by extending the Highland area and in other ways; but he thought the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton was safer, more comprehensive, and practical. It rested on a firm basis of expediency, and enlarged the scope of those provisions of the Crofters' Act which had been shown to be of very little value as they now stood. He thought some checks on the expropriation of land by Local Authorities would be entirely reasonable, otherwise they might have a case such as might occur in Sutherlandshire, which practically belonged to one man, in which the representative authority might expropriate the owner on his own security, and, probably, against his will, without any safeguards. If it were required, some confirming authority could be very easily obtained. Either in that or some other way the land difficulties would have to be seriously approached. It was no use laughing at this or that scheme and entering a *non possumus*, for until the question was solved it would grow more and more serious. It ought always to be borne in mind that though land might not be able to pay rent to a landlord, still that it might be profitably cultivated under a system of individual occupying ownership. Rent-paying tenants in this country had to compete with rent-free tenants in America; and he was confident, from what he had seen of the results of that competition, that one of the ways in which they could most effectually meet it was to have an occupying ownership at home. He did not quite agree with the Resolution as to the management of land by Local Authorities. He did not think it was likely to be very successful. But that was merely a change of method. He said we should have peasant proprietorship; and it was perfectly easy, through expropriation, for the Local Authorities, or by means of such a scheme as that of the Land Banks of Prussia, to establish peasant proprietorship. Emigration had been presented as a solution of the land question. It must always be of importance to consider whether, with the great opportunities there were abroad, we should accept inferior opportunities at home. But no system of emigration would be successful unless it was conducted so as to avoid any rankling sense of wrong in the minds of those who emigrated. Certainly there might advantageously be a good deal more emigration than at present, and it might be necessary to consider the whole question of State-aided emigration, especially as the Colonies were ceasing to help emigrants. There was the proposition that we should revert to Protection rather than carry out reforms in the land system. Did any hon. Members believe they could carry out a system of Protection with the present land system without incurring the danger of a revolution? The competition they now experienced was breaking up the present land system; and he would not admit that it was an unmixed evil. It was argued that land was becoming a luxury for the rich. He could hardly conceive a more pernicious doctrine. At the same time the more land that was owned by men with capital the better. Capital should be attracted to the land in every possible way. He defied anyone to prove that a Resolution in favour of securing some check against waste lands in this country would succeed in diverting one sovereign from the soil of the country. They should deal with these questions impartially and fearlessly, and in a spirit of patriotism which would rather overlook personal interests and pleasures for the common weal, for the maintenance of their social stability, and for their national strength. If we were to remain the centre of a strong Empire there was no better way of securing our strength and stability than by well-considered land reform. He admitted that the agricultural interest was now suffering under many burdens that might be fairly alleviated. Before, however, the agricultural interest could be strong so as to secure its due, the present system, which created disunion and jealousy, instead of union and strength, would have to be reformed. If the present system was broken up and replaced by a system of occupying ownership the agricultural interest would be in a much better position to meet foreign competition. Land was the most important as it was the most permanent source of our well-being, and the object of true statesmanship should be to educate and encourage an educated and thrifty peasant proprietary.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, ownership of land in the United Kingdom should carry with it the duty of cultivation or utilization, and that in all cases where land capable of cultivation or utilization with profit, and not devoted to some purpose of public utility or enjoyment, is held in a vacant, waste, or uncultivated state, the local authorities ought to have the power to compulsorily acquire such land by payment to the owner of a sum representing the capital agricultural value of such lands, in order that such local authorities may, in their discretion, let the said lands to tenant cultivators, with such conditions as to term of tenancy, rent, reclamation, drainage, utilization, and cultivation respectively as shall afford reasonable encouragement, opportunities, facilities, and security for the due utilization, cultivation, and development of the said lands."—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helen's) said, he rose for the purpose of moving the Amendment which stood in his name; but, in the first place, he desired to say he sympathized with a great deal that had fallen from the Mover and Seconder of the Resolution. He sympathized with the general principle those hon. Gentlemen had propounded in their Resolution. That general principle he took to be that the land of this Empire should be put to proper and profitable uses. He also agreed with the principle of the proposition the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) started with—namely, that the ownership of the soil should carry with it the duty of utilization or cultivation, where it was profitable so to do; but he submitted that the hon. Gentleman had failed altogether to lay stress upon the fact whether to do so was a profitable transaction or not. That, it seemed to him (Mr. Seton-Karr), was an important part of the question. He listened most carefully to the arguments the Mover and Seconder of the Resolution had used; but he confessed that though the assumptions they made were very large indeed, the hon. Mover seemed to disregard altogether the financial aspect of the question, and based his objection to the present proposal on the one ground that what was not economically sound could not be politically right. On that basis, he proposed to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice. If the hon. Member who moved the Resolution, or the hon. Member who seconded it, could show him that what they proposed would be a profitable transaction—that it would result in pecuniary and economical profit to all parties concerned—he would gladly vote for their proposition. Now, the first general objection he took to the Resolution was that it would compel the landowner to accept the first person who applied as the tenant of his land, regardless of the terms and of the circumstances. The landowner would have his hand forced. He would not be able to exercise his discretion as to the kind of tenant he would have, because the penalty suggested was that if he allowed his land to remain out of cultivation for a season he was to be liable to have the land compulsorily forfeited. That was a proposition which could not be entertained. It was a violation, to a very great extent, of the rights of property; and if the principle was to be admitted in this instance, it appeared to him it must apply to all kinds of property. The only justification for interfering with the right of a landlord to let his land in such a manner as might appear to him proper was that there was a danger of a monopoly in land. It was true there had been legislation to regulate the charges made by Water Companies and to regulate the rates charged by Railway Companies for the carriage of goods; but neither of these cases applied to the question now before the House. Had any man in his wildest financial dreams ever thought of getting up a "corner" in land? It had been already pointed out that evening that it was impossible for any landowner to do anything of the kind, for the simple reason that foreign competition regulated the price of agricultural produce in this country—dictated the price at which that produce should be sold to the consumer. He was aware there was a class of men outside the House who took a very low view of landlords; but he submitted that hon. Members were entitled to assume that landlords were men in possession of all their faculties. Could any sane man suppose for a moment that landlords, taken as a class, would leave their land uncultivated, if it were possible that that land could be cultivated or let to a tenant at a profit? Although he did not dispute that there were barren acres in the country, he could not admit the accuracy of the figures of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh). Where there was uncultivated waste or vacant land in this country, it was land which hard and bitter experience had taught landowners could not be profitably cultivated. He asked the House, and especially the hon. Member for Northampton and the hon. Member for the Leith Burghs (Mr. Munro-Ferguson), to account for the fact that in many parts of the country labourers preferred to work for wages rather than cultivate holdings for themselves which, under recent legislation, they could obtain upon easy and reasonable terms. If the cultivation of the soil was to override every other consideration, why did not the hon. Member for Northampton attack the system under which land and agricultural produce was so unfairly taxed? The heavy taxation of land was a much more crying evil than that the land was held by a comparatively few men. As a matter of fact, it was not necessary for him to labour the argument. It was admitted on all hands that, under the present system of local administration, land and agricultural produce were far more heavily taxed than any other property. He believed the Local Government Bill now before the House would deal with the question; but his point was, why had not those who were so jealous about the cultivation of the soil attacked the system under which land was now so unfairly taxed? The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Leith Burghs had alluded to the question of Protection. It seemed to him (Mr. Seton-Karr) that the Mover and Seconder of the Resolution ought to become Protectionists, because, logically, that was the only position they could assume, for the very reason that Protection was the most direct remedy for bringing about the extended cultivation of the land which they complained was waste. He (Mr. Seton-Karr) himself was not a Protectionist—he would never advocate the protection of corn—but if the Mover of the Resolution considered that the cultivation of the soil was to override all economical objections, it seemed to him that the hon. Member ought to go to the most direct remedy he could find. Now, he wished to come to some of the objections to the Motion which were founded strictly on the terms of the Motion itself. He had no desire to misrepresent the hon. Member when he said that the Resolution raised distinctly financial and economical matters. The Resolution proposed that—

> "The Local Authorities ought to have the power to compulsorily acquire such land by payment to the owner of a sum representing the capital agricultural value of such lands."

But by the terms of the Motion the land in question had no capital agricultural value, and the price to the landlord was to be regulated accordingly—that was to say, he was to get nothing for his land. He (Mr. Seton-Karr) submitted that that was a violation of the rights of property. The supporters of the Resolution might call it compulsory purchase if they liked; but it amounted, as far as he could understand the matter, to unqualified robbery. He did not think that was a principle which they, in these days, were inclined to carry out. The same principle might with equal justice be applied to all kinds of property; and if that principle was to be discussed at all, let it be discussed in all its naked deformity, and not as applied to one kind of property alone. But he would assume that the supporters of the Motion mean to allow some market value—that they meant to provide that the Local Authorities should give some market value for the land they acquired at their discretion. Did the hon. Member (Mr. Bradlaugh) include permanent pasture in the land which was described as "vacant and waste?" The hon. Member made no sign of assent.

MR. BRADLAUGH admitted that there was no explanation on that point in the speech he delivered that night, although there was in the speech he made last year. He explained that he had quoted from the Agricultural Return, and he took the uncultivated land described in that Return for the purposes of debate.

MR. SETON-KARR took it that the land included land laid down for permanent pasture. If it did not include that, he would like to know where the hon. Member got his figures from?

MR. BRADLAUGH said, the figures in the Agricultural Return showed a much larger quantity of uncultivated land altogether than 12,000,000 acres, which he put as the quantity in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland.

MR. SETON-KARR said, that, he took it, was land which by no possibility could be cultivated or reclaimed. But to return to his point, the terms of the Motion. The uncultivated lands of this country were used, to a more or less extent, for grazing purposes, and land of this kind, that was now being put to the best possible use, was to be the subject of the experiment of the hon. Member for Northampton. In that case the owner would get something for his land; but he would not get the full value. Precedents had been quoted for the terms of this Resolution. It had been pointed out that in the case of railways and canals powers had been given for the compulsory acquisition of land. But there was this difference between railways and canals and the cultivation of waste lands—that in the case of railways and canals, and such-like public or *quasi*-public undertakings, land was always paid for in full, and the valuation was arrived at by full investigations before a properly qualified tribunal. But in this case the hon. Member substituted an arbitrary valuation of his own, and that seemed to him (Mr. Seton-Karr) a very strong financial objection to the hon. Member's proposal. But let him examine the matter a little further. Local Authorities, it seemed to him, would not get such a good bargain as one might suppose. The land would be obtained, perhaps, for a fraction of its value. Then, by the terms of the Resolution, the Local Authorities were to give—

> "Encouragement, opportunities, facilities, and security for the due utilization, cultivation, and development of the said lands."

Those words filled him with considerable alarm. What was the plain meaning of those words? The new cultivators would be impecunious; if they had any money of their own they would certainly lose it; but it would not be their own money they were to lose, but the money of the ratepayers. What did that really amount to? It meant that landlords were to have a portion of their land taken from them compulsorily and below its real value, and they were to be rated on the remaining portion, in order to prop up an unprofitable enterprize. This was not a financial scheme which recommended itself to his limited intelligence, and it was upon the economic ground that he should strongly oppose the proposal of the hon. Member. As he had already said, he agreed with a good deal which had fallen from the hon. Member for Northampton. What were the evils which this proposal was intended to remedy? They formed, as a matter of fact, the great social problems of the present day. They were, overcrowding in certain parts of the United Kingdom, and the want of employment; they were the misery and want which were caused by the rapid increase in the population, and by the agricultural and industrial depression. The agricultural depression was driving agricultural labourers into the large towns at the rate of 60,000 a-year. They had to deal with a very large and serious difficulty; they had to deal with thousands of starving peasantry and crofters, and thousands of unemployed in the large cities. Was that economically unsound proposal calculated to remedy this state of things? It seemed to him that something far wider and more extensive was required. Compulsory purchase necessarily could do nothing to reduce the density of the population of these Islands; and he submitted that no evidence whatever had been laid before the House to show that the land which was described as "vacant, waste, or uncultivated," could by any possibility be made more profitable under the agency of Local Authorities than it was now under the present system of private ownership. He believed the hon. Member (Mr. Bradlaugh) was entirely sincere in his motive; but he submitted that the hon. Member's energies were misdirected, for he was attacking the owners of the soil, instead of the conditions under which they lived, as Don Quixote attacked the windmill, or a flock of sheep for a host of men. He did not desire to detain the House longer than he could possibly help; but there was one case he desired to refer to. It was the case of the crofters in the Island of Lewis. They had heard something of them already; but the authority he should like to take, and which he did not believe had been referred to in any of the speeches that evening, was the Report which the Secretary for Scotland laid on the Table of the House in January of this year. It was a Report signed by two gentlemen who held official appointments in the Island of Lewis, and there was no reason to suppose that they were in any way biassed in their political views. They certainly did know that those gentlemen knew what they were talking about, and understood the condition of matters. They pointed out that the population of Lewis had increased since 1850 50 per cent; it was then 17,000, and it was now 25,000. They pointed out that the herring fishing, which arose in that year, and which then prevented a serious crisis, was now practically destroyed by the altered conditions of the case; and the Report went on to show that the prices of stock in the island had fallen by 50 per cent since 1884. The Report also alluded to the fact that hon. Members representing crofter constituencies were opposed to emigration, or, as he preferred to call it, colonization, and that they advocated the destruction of deer forests. As regarded the Crofter Members, he had every wish to do them justice for their sincerity of motive; but they were chiefly remarkable in that House for the difference of opinion amongst themselves when any legislation affecting crofters was proposed. The Report then went on to say, in most remarkable words, that if the whole deer forests were divided amongst the crofter population they had no capital to cultivate them, and if the necessary capital was supplied the old difficulties would recur again in a few years in an aggravated form. That seemed absolutely conclusive against the proposal of the hon. Member for Northampton. They had heard the unbiassed evidence of officials who were acquainted with the facts, and this Report was embodied in a Parliamentary Paper. He submitted that they were bound to accept that evidence as conclusive, and he reminded the House that that evidence was dead against the proposal of compulsory purchase. He could offer the State a much better bargain than compulsory purchase. The hon. Member proposed to deal with the 12,000,000 acres of the worn-out soil of this country, which could only be acquired at a ruinous price, or else by an unquestionable violation of the rights of property, where the density of the population amounted to over 300 per square mile. He (Mr. Seton-Karr) proposed to deal with 1,000,000,000 acres of foreign soil better than our own, in countries where the density of population was under two per square mile, and where the land could be acquired either for nothing, or at a nominal price—he alluded to our vast Colonial Possessions in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and at the Cape. He knew he was treading on dangerous ground. His Colonization Amendment had been ruled out of Order, and, therefore, he would not detain the House longer. He trusted, however, that before the Session was out they would have some opportunity of going thoroughly into this question, because he believed that colonization rested upon a thoroughly sound financial basis. He was confident that in a wide application of the principle which was contained in the Motion—namely, a profitable use of the vast uncultivated land of this Empire—the profitable use of the broad acres of our Colonies—they would find the true remedy for the great social problems of the present day. He asked the House to remember that our Ministers were not only the Ministers of the United Kingdom but of the Empire, and that as theirs was the opportunity so theirs also was the responsibility of utilizing the resources at their command. He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "whilst recogizing the fact that considerable portions of the lands of the United Kingdom, including those in a so-called vacant, waste, or uncultivated state, cannot be profitably cultivated owing to Agricultural and Industrial Depression, and are, therefore, unable to support their increasing populations, this House is of opinion that conferring powers of compulsory purchase on Local Authorities is not an effectual or desirable remedy for this state of things."—(*Mr. Seton-Karr.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at a quarter before Nine o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 2nd May, 1888.

MINUTES.] — New Writ Issued — *For* Dublin City (St. Stephen's Green Division), *v.* Edward Dwyer Gray, esquire, deceased.

Select Committee—*First Report*—Navy Estimates [No. 142].

Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Early Closing [8], *put off;* Victoria University * [198].

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

EARLY CLOSING BILL.—[Bill 8.]

(*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. John Barry, Mr. Burt, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Whitley.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University), in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that the late hours to which in many places shops were open had been conclusively shown over and over again, especially by the Report of the Royal Commission on Factories in 1876, and by the work of Mr. Sutherst, to whose energy the cause of early closing was so greatly indebted, and the House of Commons Committee of 1886. He might, indeed, rest his case as to the facts on the authority of that Committee, which reported unanimously—

"That in many districts the shops are kept open until very late, especially on Saturdays,"

and that they were—

"Satisfied that in many districts the hours of labour of many shopkeepers and shop assistants range as high as 85 per week."

That, indeed, would not be denied. The Committee also reported that "little could be expected from voluntary action, and that nothing short of legislation would be sufficient." When the Factory Acts were proposed, their supporters were never expected to prove that manufacturers themselves were in their favour. The facts being admitted that thousands and thousands of shop assistants were being worked 14 hours a day and 16 on Saturdays, surely there was an overwhelming case for legislation. He hoped, however, to show that he had shopkeepers with him, and that strengthened the case immensely. In support of this he would again quote the Committee of that House who reported—

"A widespread desire has been expressed by grown-up persons employed in shops that in some way their labours also may be limited by law; and your Committee believe that employers are not indisposed, as a rule, to such limitation, provided that it takes the form of general early closing of shops."

In consequence of the interest excited by the evidence taken before the Committee of the House of Commons, the then Lord Mayor of London called a great representative meeting of shopkeepers at the Mansion House. Some 800 were present, and a resolution, proposed by Mr. Stapley and seconded by Mr. Crisp, was adopted by more than 10 to one, as follows:—

> "That, while heartily accepting Sir John Lubbock's Shop Hours Regulation Bill" (which had now become law), "which would undoubtedly confer a great benefit on young persons engaged in shops, this meeting earnestly prays Parliament to go further, and to add a clause enacting a compulsory general closing at 8 o'clock on five days of the week, and at 10 on Saturdays, a measure which would confer an inestimable benefit on the whole shopkeeping community, and relieve them from the intolerably long hours from which they now suffer."

This resolution ran like wildfire round London. Meetings were held at once in Holloway, Paddington, Shoreditch, Kensington, Camden Town, and elsewhere—in fact, all round London—at which the same resolution was enthusiastically adopted. But it had been asserted, and one or two meetings had been made the most of as showing, that in London the small shopkeepers were not in favour of early closing; therefore, he would, with the permission of the House, adduce more evidence on that point than otherwise would have been necessary. Mr. Barr, a draper in South London. told the Committee that he inquired of a large number of his neighbours, and that a great majority would be only too glad to have legislative interference —the small shops as well as the larger ones. Mr. Jones, Chairman of the Holloway and Finsbury Park Association, stated that they had canvassed over 400 tradesmen in that district, and found 95 per cent in favour of 8 o'clock closing. Mr. Noel, who had inquired among the shopkeepers of Shoreditch, found quite as large a majority. Mr. Lilley, Chairman of the Boot and Shoe and Leather Trade Association, and who was deputed by the Leather Section of the London Chamber of Commerce, stated that in his district the general opinion was in favour of a general 8 o'clock closing. Mr. Walton, tea dealer in Bethnal Green, said that he had made inquiries, and found 19 out of 20 in favour of it in his district. Mr. Rutter, of Walworth Road, went so far as to say that he believed every tradesman there would be glad of it. Mr. Parker had inquired of 200 tradesmen in the Harrow Road, and found 188 of them in favour. Mr. Lacey, Chairman of the Vauxhall Tradesmen's Club, stated that they were in favour of a general closing. Mr. Barber, of Kensington, said that the general feeling in that district was for an 8 o'clock closing, and some thought 10 hours quite long enough. Mr. Pomeroy, Vice President of the Bermondsey Tradesmen's Association, told the Committee—

> "I have been deadly opposed to legislation upon the subject until lately, and am now a new convert to legislation, having seen how powerless voluntary effort is when it has to contend with the opposition of two or three men."

He was asked—

> "And you believe that the feeling among the smaller shopkeepers is as strong as it is among the larger ones that there should be a compulsory hour for closing?"

And he said—

> "Every one of them was in favour of some law by which they should all close earlier."

Mr. Sanderson, pawnbroker, of Islington, stated that he believed the Bill was generally welcomed in his district, and he was supported by the evidence of Mr. Walter for Aldersgate Street and Stoke Newington. Mr. Coomer, of Lavender Hill, told the Committee that he had spoken to nearly every tradesman in his district, and—

> "They are strongly in favour of legislation being brought to bear to close the shops earlier."

Mr. Cooke, hatter, of Seven Sisters Road, told the Committee that 95 per cent in that district were in favour of it. Mr. Beverley, Vice Chairman of the Tradesmen's Association in Harrow Road, had asked 183 of his neighbours, and found 178 for and five against it. Mr. Elmstre gave similar evidence with reference to Battersea, as also did Mr. Sterry, an oilman in Hornsey Road, and Mr. Randall, a butcher, for Highgate. It was true that the hon. Member for the Dulwich Division of Camberwell (Mr. Blundell Maple) stated that in St. Pancras the tradesmen were seven to one against it; but on cross-examination he admitted that he was judging from only 88 tradesmen. The Early Closing Association, up to last year, had opposed legislation; but their able and active secretary, Mr. Stacey, was much impressed by the evidence given before the House of Commons Committee. In consequence they made inquiries of 2,000 small shopkeepers in the poorest and latest closing districts of London, and found a substantial majority in favour of the Bill. In fact, it was in consequence of this that they now energetically supported the Bill. Witnesses from the Provinces gave similar evidence as regarded Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh, Dublin, and elsewhere. At Liverpool a circular was sent to 2,000 shops; 1,770 were in favour and only 200 against. In the Bill, as printed last year, chemists were excluded; but so many chemists wrote begging to be included that the editor of *The Chemist and Druggist* sent out a circular to all the chemists in the country. There were about 8,000 chemists' shops, and over 2,000 returned answers—1,330 wished to be included in the Bill, and 700 were against it, which showed that two out of three were in favour of the Bill; and in a leading article on the subject the editor said that he was satisfied that two-thirds of the chemists in the country would welcome the Bill. To the honour of our tradesmen he said, then, that this was the shopkeepers' own Bill. But, then, it would perhaps be asked, if so large a number of shopkeepers were in favour of early closing, why should a Bill be necessary at all? Because a small and selfish minority insisted on keeping open, and thus forced the others to keep open also. The great majority desired to close, and the Bill would give effect to their wishes. He would give one illustration of what had happened over and over again. In one district of South London the drapers wished to close earlier, and they all agreed to do so. Two hundred and fifty shops closed. But a new man came. He opened a shop and kept open late, hoping to get all the late business. Very soon his next neighbour opened too. Then another and another, until in a few weeks they were all open again, except the committee of the Association. Then the committee met and passed a unanimous resolution that nothing short of legislation would shorten the hours. Thus one shop kept the other 250 open. This was no isolated case, but had happened over and over again Passing on to the question of health, the Committee of 1886 reported to the House that the protracted hours of labour in shops were dangerous, and often ruinous to health, especially in the case of women; and on this point the evidence was very strong. Dr. Rutter, medical officer to the Milliners' Association, stated that he had had occasion to see professionally a great number of women engaged in shops, and that it was impossible for women, and especially for girls, to work so many hours without great injury to health, and that the evil was greatly aggravated by the fact that they had to stand so much. The hon. Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell) was so struck with the strength of his evidence that he asked the witness—

> "The terms you have used are very strong—you use them deliberately?"

And the witness answered—

> "Yes; deliberately."

Dr. Abbotts called the especial attention of the Committee to the question as affecting women. In reply to the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst), he said he had no doubt that the long hours led to diseases of the pelvis, and that girls who had stood so long could not expect to be mothers of healthy children, so that the question was of vital importance as regarded the physical condition of our race. The medical aspect of the case could, however, be dealt with more authoritatively by the hon. Member for the Ilkeston Division of Derby (Sir Walter Foster); and he (Sir John Lubbock) would only, therefore, mention the fact that the Presidents of the Colleges of Physicians and of Surgeons, and of the British Medical Association, Sir James Paget, and many of the other leaders of the Medical Profession, and over 300 medical men practising in London had petitioned the House in favour of the Bill, on the express ground that the present hours of labour in shops were "grievously injurious to health, especially in the case of women." Again, he would call attention to the Petitions in favour of the Bill signed by the clergy of all denominations, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, several other English Bishops, and over 200 beneficed London clergy, by over 300 Nonconformist ministers of religion in London, and by Cardinal Manning and over 100 Roman Catholic priests in London, on the ground that it was impossible with these long hours for shop assistants to improve themselves, or to pay any attention to their moral and spiritual welfare. Not half the assistants in London were able to go to church on Sundays—they were so worn out by their labours during the week. What was the use of night schools and free libraries if they worked 14 or 15 hours a-day? There was one other class of evidence to which he would also refer —namely, the opinion of the Inspectors of Factories, who had exceptional opportunities of forming an opinion. Mr. Redgrave, the principal Inspector, stated that the hours of shop assistants ranged as high as 85 per week; that that was very injurious to health; and that there was a very strong feeling, both in and out of London, that they would gladly accept a general closing hour. Mr. Lakeman, who had specially studied this question with reference to the East of London, stated that there was no prospect of shortening the hours by voluntary action; that the present hours were ruinous to health; and that he believed there was a general desire for shorter hours, provided they were general. Lastly, Mr. Cooke-Taylor, Inspector for the North-West of England, informed the Committee that he believed the Inspectors were now almost unanimous in believing that legislation for shops was desirable. What, then, were the provisions of the Bill? That every shop should shut at 8 o'clock for five nights in the week, and 10 on the sixth, excepting public-houses and places of refreshment, tobacconists, and newsvendors. The hour was also to be extended to 10 p.m. on any day preceding a public or Bank Holiday. It was also provided that if any particular district desired for a time to obtain an extension of the time, two-thirds could make application to the Local Authority to obtain permission to remain open. This was intended to meet such cases as the summer season in seaside places. The same clause provided that if any district wished to institute a half-holiday two-thirds might make application to the Local Authority, who could give an order which would make the half-holiday compulsory for the whole district. Some towns in the North already closed within the hours mentioned in the Bill; but they were very anxious it should pass on account of the provisions with reference to half-holidays. The 13th clause raised the penalty for Sunday trading. Those were the main provisions of the Bill. They might seem stringent; but, after all, the shop assistants, even then, would have to work 12 hours on five days, and 14 on the sixth. Surely that was long enough. What, then, were the objections? In the first place, as to the small shopkeepers. He had given strong—he might say conclusive—evidence that the majority of small shopkeepers were in favour of the Bill; but, of course, he did not deny that some were opposed to it. They had been assured by the hon. Member for the Dulwich Division of Camberwell that it would injure their business. He believed that was entirely a mistake, and that, on the contrary, the small shops would actually do more business, because, the time being shorter, people would shop more in their own immediate neighbourhood. The trade, in fact, would be more localized. If early hours crushed the small shops, then in early closing towns the shops ought to be few and large. Newcastle-upon-Tyne was an early closing town. So far as the hours of closing were concerned, it would not be affected by the present Bill. His hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) had been kind enough to ascertain for him the number of shops in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and he found that, with a population of 140,000 persons, there were no fewer than 766 grocers' shops. It was obvious, therefore, that early closing had not ruined the small shopkeepers. The costermongers had been induced to oppose the Bill; but that was due to a misapprehension, as that class were not affected by the measure. The hour of closing did not apply to costermongers. A strong opposition came from the off-licence holders, because they feared that if the Bill passed they would sell less wine and spirits. He did not know that that would be a disadvantage. Lastly, they were opposed by the Liberty and Property Defence League in the name of liberty and property. They opposed the Bill in the name of liberty. What liberty, and whose liberty? Not the liberty of the shop assistants, but that of the capitalist to work his assistants 14 or even 16 hours a-day. He felt disposed to say in the words of Madame Roland—"Oh! liberty, liberty! what crimes are committed in thy name!" What hypocrisy it was to oppose the Bill in the name of liberty! As to property, it was almost enough to make people Socialists to find an Association actually defending the power of making men and women work 14 hours of labour a-day in the name of property. He was glad, however, to say that the opposition was local. There was—he did not deny it—some in London, and there was some in Leeds. But it would be found that outside of London there had hardly been a single open public meeting against the Bill. He noticed that an attempt which the hon. Member for the Dulwich Division of Camberwell had made to pass a hostile resolution at a meeting in Brighton recently had been defeated by an overwhelming majority. Then the proposed legislation was characterized as un-English. But they already regulated the hours of closing public-houses, because it was considered to be for the general advantage to do so; and if it was for the general advantage, why should they not do so in the case of other shops also? There was no difference in principle between the two cases. So far as principle was concerned, the objection to the Bill would apply equally to the Factory Act, the Truck Act, and many others. One objection which was urged against the old Factory Acts could not be brought against this Bill. It had no bearing on foreign competition. Under it all would be treated alike. The shops would do just as much business. There would not be a pound of tea or a yard of stuff sold less than now. Some had objected, because they said they did their best business after 8. No doubt that was so; but they would, under the Bill, do it before 8. That was the only difference, and the great advantage. What was now done between 8 and 10 would be done between 6 and 8. The last two hours were the most trying. It was after the gas was lit that the air became hottest, driest, and most impure. He did not wish to underrate the importance of what he was asking the House to assent to. Far from it. He asked the House to mitigate these long hours; but he did not ask the House to commit itself either to the particular hours suggested in the Bill or to the exemptions proposed in the Schedule. The hour of 8 in the evening had been proposed by the shopkeepers themselves. This, with opening and shutting, would mean at least 12½ hours in the day. Was that too short? Surely not; but if London Members really thought so, they were strong enough to alter it in Committee. If they thought 10 o'clock too early on Saturday, they would be strong enough to make it 11. Was the change too sudden? He admitted there would be much to be said for making the hours 9 and 11 for a year, and then to come to 8 and 10. Was it necessary to exempt any other special class of shops? That, again, was a question for Committee. Some hon. Members might consider that it would be best to leave the hours of closing to the discretion of the Local Authorities. That was, indeed, the suggestion of the Committee of the House, and it was the only point on which their recommendations had been departed from. They suggested that the Act should leave to Local Authorities the power of fixing an hour, and for this there was, at first sight, much to be said. However, the shopkeepers generally, as far as he had been able to ascertain their opinion, preferred that the closing should be general. For instance, if the shops were shut at 8 in Manchester, but not elsewhere, the result would be that the late business would be transferred to the shops immediately beyond the borough limits, and thus an injustice might be done. That, however, would again be a question for discussion in Committee. Now, what was the opinion of working men? The House would see that the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), to whose opinion on such points all looked with respect, had put his name on the Bill. They had also received very valuable aid from the hon. Member for West Nottingham. It would, indeed, be extraordinary if the working men, who had secured comparatively short hours for themselves, did not sympathize with others. But he was happy to say that they had come forward nobly. At a recent meeting of the London Trade Council, the following resolution was proposed by Mr. Marks, seconded by Mr. Gayford, and carried unanimously:—

> "That this delegate meeting, representing more than 26,000 adult artizans and mechanics in the Metropolitan district, strongly denounce the system and practice of late shopping as being fraught with injurious consequences, both moral and physical, to a vast portion of our overworked industrial population, and,

therefore, earnestly urges all workers in the constituencies of the United Kingdom to call upon their Parliamentary Representatives to support Sir John Lubbock's Early Closing Bill, which, in its operation and result, is calculated to become a blessing to those employed in shops and an advantage to the national welfare."

The Bill was also supported by other Trade Councils, as, for instance, those of Glasgow, Oldham, and Bolton, and he was not aware that any had opposed it. He was anxious to appeal to hon. Members representing country districts. Possibly they might, at first sight, imagine that the Bill would mainly affect great cities. But where did the shop assistants in great cities come from? Many a poor girl from Scotland, or Ireland, or country places in England, had come up to one of our great cities strong and happy, to work in one of these shops. She was away from all her friends, and —he was not blaming the shopkeepers, he had shown that they themselves regretted the present system—she returned home after a year or two utterly broken down in health and strength. Eighty-four hours in the week meant 14 hours a-day. What did that mean? At least two hours must be allowed for dressing and undressing, for breakfast and supper. Eight hours was little enough for sleep under such circumstances, and that made up the 24. Not a moment was left for fresh air, for relaxation, for self-improvement, or for friendly and family intercourse. In factories the hours of labour were limited to 54; consequently the shopmen, and —what was much worse—the shopwomen too, were actually in a great many cases at the present moment working for no less than 30 hours per week more than factory hands. Moreover, in a vast number of cases the short and irregular time allowed for meals, the closeness of the atmosphere, and the absence of seats rendered the labour even more severe. The seats, in fact, were on the wrong side of the counter. It was obvious that, as the House of Commons Committee reported—"Such prolonged labour must be exhausting and ruinous to health, especially in the case of girls." By Sunday morning they were utterly exhausted. These were no sensational statements of his. They were literal and melancholy facts brought out by a Royal Commission, and confirmed by the House of Commons' Committee. It was understating the case to call this a life of slavery; for it was, though he would not say in all respects the worst, but certainly the most laborious and exhausting which the world had ever known. No class ever worked so hard. Without legislation, then, there was little hope of shorter hours, and the lives of shopmen and of shopwomen would still be the same weary monotony of shop and bed, a life of drudgery, and an early death. In the name of the Bishops and Clergy, of the Nonconformist ministers, of the Roman Catholic priests, of the medical men, whose Petitions he had presented, he appealed to the judgment and reason of the House. In the name of the 100,000 shopkeepers and assistants—whose humble Petitions had been presented since the Bill had been before the House—he appealed to the hearts and the mercy of hon. Members to pass the Bill. If they did, there would be hope of happier days and brighter hours for these people, and some little leisure at the end of their hard day's work. To-morrow morning papers would be looked for with intense anxiety in thousands of poor homes by many worn and weary men and women. If the House rejected this Bill, they would condemn thousands of assistants and shopkeepers to a life of misery and suffering, and an early grave. If they passed the Bill they would send a ray of light and hope into many a poor home, and to many thousands of poor, worn, and weary sufferers.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir John Lubbock.*)

Mr. BLUNDELL MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich) said, that according to the Notice he had placed on the Paper he rose to move the rejection of the Bill. His object in doing so was that he did not consider that this was a necessary piece of legislation. He represented the retail trading business with which he had been intimately connected for more than 25 years, and his experience led him entirely to disagree with the hon. Baronet the Member for the London University (Sir John Lubbock) that the shopkeepers were an unkind class, or were willing to keep open their shops longer than was necessary to supply the wants of the people. It was now 27 years since the Early Closing Association was started, and it had done a vast amount of good in bringing the hours of shopping within much more reasonable limits than formerly. For instance, the firm with which he was connected used to be open until 10 o'clock every night, and 12 o'clock on Saturday. They now closed at 7 on five nights in the week, and at 2 on Saturday. He could not understand the necessity of such legislation as this. In 1886 a Bill passed through the House for the regulation of labour in shops, which Bill prevented the employment of young people under the age of 18 for more than 74 hours a-week. Therefore, the question dealt with by the Bill was a new question altogether. It was, in fact, a Bill to bring compulsory legislation to bear on adult labour. Men could take care of themselves, and it was unnecessary in this country to legislate for persons who could take care of themselves. It was said that in the shops the atmosphere was bad, and that a great deal of disease would be found; but the hon. Baronet did not read the Report of the Registrar General, who showed that in the shopkeeping class in this country the health was much better than in many others. For instance, that Report showed that among publicans the death rate between the ages of 15 and 20 was 7·81; while among shopkeepers it was only 5·13, and among general labourers 12·63, or more than double that of shopkeepers. So, again, between the ages of 25 and 45, the death rate among publicans was 22·63; whereas among small shopkeepers the average was only 9·04. He thought that showed conclusively that the shopkeeping class was not an unhealthy body, nor was the atmosphere or the labour as oppressive in the shops as it was in the factories. In the factories people were constantly at work at the same thing and in one place; whereas in the shops they were continually moving about. He grieved to say that in some few cases the masters did not study the interests of their servants; but was that a reason why the whole body should be branded with a charge of unkindness? He could assure the House that the shopkeepers had no desire to burn their gas and keep open their shops late if the business did not come to them, and the business would not come unless there were purchasers. It was all very well for the hon. Baronet to refer to Newcastle and a few places like that, where the working classes finished work at 6 o'clock; but in other towns, and especially in the Metropolitan district, there was a vast body of working people who did not leave off work until 7 o'clock, and if this Bill passed they would only have an hour in which to get home and then do their shopping. There was, therefore, no necessity for this legislation. The Preamble of the Bill set forth that the Bill was introduced in the interests of the shop assistants. He did not find anything stated in the body of the Bill itself about the assistants, and he would ask what was to be done with the small shopkeepers who had no assistants, where poor people kept shops, lived in a back room going into the shop, and attended themselves upon the customers that came, with a view of earning a few shillings in order to keep them from the Union? It was not only a Bill that would affect the employers of labour and their assistants, but it would crush out many a poor widow and her orphan children, and drive them into the workhouse. Having said so much, he would remark that certain persons were of opinion that the early closing movement, and especially the provision which had been made for Bank Holidays, had been greatly assisted by the action of the hon. Baronet who had just introduced the Bill. Bank Holidays, however, came from a very different source. Twenty-six years ago, when he (Mr. Maple) first started in business, there used to be one day of closing, on Boxing Day, but no Bank Holidays. It was the large shops that first started the early closing movement. The Bank Holiday Bill did not compel the shops to close at all. It was a Bill brought in by the hon. Baronet for the express purpose of making it legal for acceptances due on any day set apart for a Bank Holiday to be presented on the day following such holiday. All the demand for Bank Holidays came from the spontaneous voice of the nation, and was not the result of compulsory legislation. The shopkeepers did all they could to close early, and it was to their interest to do so. Then, again, the Shop Regulation Act had been passed, and that measure prohibited young people from being employed for more than 74 hours a-week, including hours set apart for meals. That Act had been adhered to conscientiously. He had asked the Home Secretary in that House, on the 9th of April, what number of convictions had taken place from the passing of the Act in 1886 up to the 31st of March in the present year, and the reply he received was that there had only been four in the Metropolitan area—namely, three in Marylebone, and one in Lambeth. It had been found quite sufficient to call the attention of shopkeepers to the matter, and no legal proceedings were rendered necessary. Therefore, hon. Members would see that the law had been carried out, and that young people were not being employed too long in the shops. How about those who kept wholesale warehouses, and how about the bankers in England? Did they not employ people for long hours, and did they not also come within the range of criticism? In *The Citizen* of last week there was a long report in relation to the Bank *employés*. If it were necessary to bring in legislation to interfere with the retail trading class, it should also be applied to the wholesale traders and to the bankers. The hon. Baronet, in his remarks, inferred that the assistants in these shops lived off the premises; but they nearly always lived on the premises. Again, it would be found that in very few shops the hours of closing would be interfered with by the Bill, and especially those shops in which a large number of assistants were kept. All the large shops closed well within the time fixed within the Bill, and he could not understand why they had signed Petitions in favour of the Bill. Before Petitions were presented, they should declare, at any rate, that the persons by whom they were signed were not only in favour of the measure, but that they approved of the conditions under which it was introduced. Now, he found that the opinion in regard to compulsory closing being necessary was not so universal as the hon. Baronet would have the House to believe. There had been meetings held in all parts of the country. He (Mr. Blundell Maple) had been taunted with having attended a meeting at Brighton, at which a resolution in opposition to his views was carried against him. He would explain to the House how that occurred. The meeting was held at 8 o'clock at night, and a gentleman, a Mr. Stacey, Secretary of the Early Closing Association—he did not know whether he was sent specially by the hon. Baronet or not—went among the shops and collected together about 350 young shop assistants for the express purpose of ousting him at that meeting. That was certainly something to be proud of. The taxpayers and shopkeepers of Brighton, who attended the meeting, would have carried the resolution he had proposed by a large majority, if they had not been outvoted by the shop assistants. He would, however, ask the hon. Baronet how he had himself got on at the meeting held in Morley Hall, Hackney; and whether he did not find strong opposition to the early closing movement?

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, that the advocates of early closing were not allowed a hearing there.

MR. BLUNDELL MAPLE said, he was sorry their case on that occasion was so bad that the hon. Baronet was not allowed a hearing. However, so much for public meetings; and as to the addresses which had been presented, they had come, no doubt, from large and important bodies; but he thought that when their effect was measured, the House would recognize that there were six on the one side and half-a-dozen on the other. In the City of London the Common Council met the other day, and that Common Council was to be made the Local Authority of the City. At their meeting, however, it was decided by a very large majority that the Bill should be opposed. There had been very much opposition to the Bill of the hon. Baronet. It was argued that the Bill did not affect the City, but only a small class outside it, who were strongly in favour of the measure; but, nevertheless, the resolution was adopted to oppose the Bill. It would, therefore, be seen that the feeling was not altogether on one side. What was the case with regard to the Factory Act? When that Act passed, a clause was inserted giving power to the factories to work for 90 days during the year overtime, so as to cater for the requirements of firms during a season's business. If this Bill passed, the law would, consequently, not be so oppressive against factories as against the small traders. In London a large number of the working classes were engaged in the centre of the Metropolis, but had to reside outside the Metropolis. In the firm with which he was connected, there were working men who resided three, four, and even six miles away, and it would be 7 or 8 o'clock before they got home. Surely it was very hard that they should not be able to do their shopping after they reached home, and that their wives should be obliged to lay in a store of everything they required beforehand. The hon. Baronet said that costermongers were not included in the Bill; but if hon. Members read the Bill, they would find that the word "shop" included—

> "Any building or portion of a building, booth, stall, or place where goods are exposed or offered for sale by retail, and includes a place where the business of a barber is carried on."

Therefore, it must be presumed that the hon. Baronet must mean that the costermongers who used barrows on wheels were not included, but fixed stalls were included. Now, a great many costermongers who sold goods had a fixed stall outside some shop or other; and to clear these persons away at a certain hour would be the cause of severe loss to them. At present they went into the markets, after the buyers from the West End shops, and purchased the vegetables and other goods they wanted at a cheap rate, which enabled them to sell them again to poor people at low prices. Then, again, the hon. Baronet proposed to refer the Bill to a Select Committee. He (Mr. Maple) did not understand the reason why that proposal was made; because, as everybody knew, an enormous amount of evidence had already been collected. A Committee which had been appointed held 16 meetings, at which 75 witnesses were called, whose evidence filled 276 pages. Almost the only class of retail traders to whom the operation of the Bill was not to extend were the vendors of intoxicating liquors. It certainly was somewhat shocking to find that that was the only business that was to be exempt from early closing. The exception was so startling, that he was prompted to ask—"Why are not our temperance friends to the front?" Again, refreshment-houses, where hot cooked provisions were sold, were exempt; while places for the sale of cold provisions were to come within the operation of the measure. It would thus be legal to sell a hot sausage, or a hot polony, or a hot tart, or hot milk after 8 o'clock; but no cold milk, and no cold tart, nor any cold provisions whatever. That meant that every dining place and every baker's shop where the necessaries of life were sold, together with lemonade and ginger beer, were to be closed, because the articles they sold were not hot. Then, again, tobacconists' shops might be kept open, and news agencies; but if hon. Members would turn to Clause 7 of this wonderful Bill, they would find it laid down that shops in which two or more trades were carried on were to be closed by a certain hour. That meant that if a tobacconist sold sticks or umbrellas he must close his shop, or if a newsagent sold toys or lollipops he also must shut up. The only things that were allowed to be sold were newspapers and tobacco. The House was informed by the hon. Baronet that Clause 11 had been inserted at the instance of the chemists, 1,300 of whom were in favour of it, while 700 did not want it. Was that House going to compel 700 persons to do what they did not want to do because 1,300 wished to deprive certain people of an opportunity of getting their daily bread? Such legislation as that, he trusted, would never be assented to. It would appear from Clause 11 that—

> "A pharmaceutical chemist and druggist shall not be liable to any fine under this Act for supplying medicines, drugs, or medical appliances after the hour appointed by this Act or by an order made thereunder for the closing of shops; but this section shall not be deemed to authorize a pharmaceutical chemist, or chemist and druggist, to keep open shop after the said hour."

Therefore a chemist might supply a customer with a black draught; but if he supplied him also with sweets to take away the taste of the black draught, or a tooth-brush, he would come under the penalties of the Act. Supposing that a chemist had just retired to rest, and his assistant went to him to inform him that one of his customers had just come in and wanted some medicine, and also required some sweets for his child—were the sweets to be supplied? If the assistant did supply them, he would come under the penalties of the Act, because the Bill distinctly laid down that shops were to be closed where two or more trades were to be carried on. It was a most severe Bill, and it did one thing which the House would not regard with approval—namely, that under it we should have police espionage. In Clause 10 in the last sub-section, there was this provision—

> "It shall be the duty in England and Ireland of every Chief Officer of Police and in Scotland of every Procurator Fiscal, to cause the provisions of this Act, and of any order made thereunder, to be duly enforced throughout the area in which he has authority."

The effect of that clause would be to cause police, who were now regarded in some quarters with no great favour, to be looked upon with suspicion throughout the length and breadth of the land. He was very sorry that such a provision should have been included in a Bill of this nature. Then, again, as regarded the penalties. He found it laid down in the Bill that the first fine was to be 5*s*., the second 20*s*., the next £5, and every subsequent fine £5. The Bill took all power and all discretion out of the hands of the magistrates with regard to the fine. If the magistrate found that the offence had been committed he must inflict a fine. Now, what was £5 to a large firm? But it might mean ruin to a poor widow or a small shopkeeper. She might plead that her clock was slow; but, nevertheless, she must be fined £5, the magistrate having no jurisdiction. Not only so, but it would be found by Clause 9 that where an offence for which the occupier of a shop was liable to a fine had, in fact, been committed by some agent or servant, such agent or servant was rendered liable to the same fine as if he were occupier. Consequently, if a shop assistant made a mistake, he was to be fined £5 in the place of his master; and not only so; but if the fine was not paid, what was to become of him? He would be sent to prison, he supposed, for contempt of Court. These were strong reasons why the House should not accept the Bill. Then, again, by Clause 13, it was proposed to revive the old Act of Charles II. with regard to selling on Sunday, although the framers of the Bill recognized the fact that under this Closing Act, by making people close early on a Saturday, it might be necessary to enable them to open on a Sunday. Would it not be better to allow the shops to remain open later on Saturday, so that all the shopping that was necessary might be done? It was, however, provided that butchers and those who dealt in fruit, vegetables, milk, and the like might keep open until 10 o'clock on Sunday. He hoped the friends of temperance would recognize the fact that while all temperance houses were closed, and all those houses which sold oranges and ginger beer, the public-houses were to remain open; so that, in fact, they were only forcing the people into the public-houses in order to get what they required. Then, again, as regards houses with off-licences. At present they were allowed to remain open as long as public-houses; but under the Bill they would be closed, which meant that everybody who had been in the habit of buying bottled beer or bottled wine from his grocer would have to go after 8 o'clock at night into a public-house, and thereby he would be frequently tempted and encouraged to take a glass. Then came the question of compensation. In the Local Government Bill it was proposed to compensate publicans. If this Bill was passed it would curtail immensely the hours of trading of the off-licence holders, and greatly reduce the value of their property, as also their profits. It would be a serious question whether, in many localities, when the off-licensed houses had to be closed early, the value of the houses would not go down, and the rates suffer enormously. His was not a Party opposition to the Bill. Hon. Members below the Gangway on the other side felt equally with him that the measure was badly drawn, and was not called for. He hoped that both sides of the House would seriously weigh the provisions of the Bill, and do what they felt to be just to the small traders of England, and that they would not allow this slur to be cast upon them, or the frightful anxiety from which they were now suffering to continue. He could assure the House that at that moment the small shopkeepers were suffering a great amount of anxiety as to the action of the House. He therefore trusted that the House would decide that day, once for all, whether or not they would accept the principle of the Bill. Did they wish to force, by compulsory legislation, the adult workers of the country to cease work, and to ring, so to speak, a curfew bell which would send them home? He knew that the Clergy and the Medical Profession were in favour of shortening the hours of employment. He did not agree with the hon. Baronet that there were *employés* who did not go to church. They did go to church, and they were a much more religious body, he believed, than they ever were before. This Bill interfered with the liberty of the subject more than any previous legislation, and he trusted that the House would reject it in the Division which he hoped would take place that day by a large majority, seeing that it was the most oppressive measure which had ever been introduced.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.) said, he rose for the purpose of seconding the Amendment. All acknowledged the motives of the hon. Baronet who had moved the second reading (Sir John Lubbock), and the value of the measures he had successfully passed through the House to lessen and lighten the hours of labour of the working man. He (Mr. Cooke) could not help thinking that the hon. Baronet had now reached a stage when all philanthropists should draw the line between reasonable legislation and unreasonable meddling. He thought the hon. Baronet should know where it was necessary to stop in the career of useful legislation he had worked out for himself. Possibly, the hon. Baronet was not an entirely free agent in the matter, seeing that he was backed up by powerful associations, and with a large body of subscribers, whom he must satisfy in some way or other. No doubt, the hon. Baronet himself felt that he could not, even if he would, withdraw from a position which, by some intimation which had been given to the opponents of the measure, he would be glad to compromise. It was, however, very difficult to withdraw from such a position, seeing that the present supporters of the hon. Baronet would always be able to find some other prominent politician who, for no higher or better motive than popularity, would be ready to champion their cause. His (Mr. Cooke's) objection to the measure was confined to one part of it, and to that part the hon. Baronet had devoted no attention whatever when he addressed the House. His objection was the same as that of the hon. Member (Mr. Maple)—namely, that the Bill interfered unwarrantably with the freedom and liberty of grown-up people who represented the large class of the community. There were three classes of shops. In the first place, there were the large shops with a great number of assistants, who would in no case be benefited by the Bill, because they already had that which the Bill enjoined. That class had been referred to in the course of the debate from a practical point of view by the hon. Member. There were other shops in which one, two, or, say, a few assistants were employed, in a different part of the town, as a rule, to that in which the other class of shops he had referred to were situated. It was quite possible, and very probable, that the hours of labour of the assistants in these small shops were longer and more arduous than they should be, and if the Bill were entirely confined to regulating the hours of labour of assistants in such shops he should have very little to say against it; but the Bill went very much further than that—it included, he believed, as it was at present drawn, notwithstanding the disavowal of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London, costermongers. They were told that costermongers were not to be included, therefore possibly some words would be inserted in the Bill expressly excluding them. Costermongers were a considerable and a popular body in public estimation, and they certainly knew how to shout. That was the sole reason why they were to be excluded, because there was no reason why a difference should be made between the stall-keepers who interpose themselves between the barrows of the costermongers and the costermongers themselves. This Bill was, as he had said, much more sweeping in its scope than the Preamble would indicate, and that was the ground, and he thought the main ground, why there was no opposition, or not so much opposition, as there otherwise would have been. The hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) had referred to the fact that there was not much opposition. He (Mr. Cooke) thought the reason of that was that persons were in the habit of reading the Preamble of a Bill, and of supposing that those who drew the Bill intended to carry out the intentions they had expressed in the Preamble and those intentions only. If people had known that this Bill included in its scope grown-up men and women of full age, and of full understanding, and prevented them carrying on their business in the way that was most preferable to them, and at a time when they could make the most of it, there would unquestionably have been considerable opposition to the measure all over the country. Let them see what would happen supposing this Bill became law. The executive officer under the Bill was the gentleman in blue, for the police would have to carry out the Bill; and, as his hon. Friend (Mr. Maple) had reminded the House, the duties which the police had to perform would not add to their popularity among the lower classes of the population—the gentleman in blue would go up to a stall-keeper and say—"My man, you must go home." The stall-keeper might say—"Why, I am just in the thick of my business; I have not sold my stock out." "You must go home for the sake of your health," the policeman would retort. "Don't I know as much about my health as you do?" might be the rejoinder. Thereupon the gentleman in blue might say—"No; the Legislature says you do not; therefore you must go home." It is not merely on the ground of the health of the people that this Bill was introduced. The hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London had referred to a document which they had all received that day, in which was made the assertion, whether it sprang from the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the President of the Royal Society, or the other gentlemen named, who, no doubt, were well acquainted with the wants and habits of the East End of London at 12 o'clock at night, or not, that the present excessive hours of labour left absolutely no time or strength for family intercourse or self-improvement. The gentleman in blue, therefore, after having spoken to the stall-keeper about his health, would say to him—"If you do not go home now, you will have no opportunity of family intercourse; you must go to attend to your wife and family and nurse the baby." "But, if I do that," would say the man, "I shall have no money to provide for my wife and family, because my stock has to be sold, and out of the proceeds I have to provide for my family's wants from day to day, and possibly from hour to hour." That, even, would not satisfy the friend in blue; but he would say, "If you do not go home, you will not improve your mind; go home and study the Homerian theories and French exercises. If you do not leave the stock unsold, and if you do not go home, I will have you up before a magistrate, and you will be fined £5 for breaking the law of the land." He (Mr. Cooke) maintained, therefore, that this was an unwarrantable interference, in the words of the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), with the freedom and liberty of grown-up people, and it was, besides, the introduction of an entirely new principle into our life, and certainly into the laws of the country. He had beside him an hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Darling) who was very well acquainted with the Statutes of the Realm and Common Law. The hon. and learned Gentleman would be able to say whether he was right in saying that except in so far as a trade carried on was a noxious trade, or a trade regulated for other purposes than the health of those carrying it on, such as the licensed victuallers—where a trade was not conducted in such a way as to be a nuisance to a neighbourhood, the law of the land did not permit interference between grown-up men and grown-up women and the performance of their duties in carrying on of their trade or business. If he was wrong in that view, his right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, who, he believed, intended to speak, not on behalf of the Government, but on his own behalf, would set him right. He did not intend to labour the point, because the only really strong point against the Bill was interference with the liberty of action of grown-up men and women, and he was strengthened in that view by the fact that the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock), who introduced the Bill, carefully avoided that particular point. He did not desire to dwell, as he might do, upon the many evils and ill-consequences that would follow to a variety of people in this country, if the Bill became law. They were stated to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) in a most admirable, clear, and exhaustive style by a large, influential, and representative deputation which waited upon him at the Home Office yesterday afternoon. There were, doubtless, other hon. Members who wished to speak upon this Bill. He saw on the Benches below the Gangway opposite the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), who looked as though he was going to address to them one of those instructive speeches which they never listened to without feeling that they were better than they were before. But there was one instance of the inconvenience which would be incurred by the working classes, especially in the country, which came under his notice a day or two ago, and which he thought he might as well mention, because he could not believe it was an isolated case. He mentioned it because the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) had said in the House, and outside the House, that the opposition to the Bill came from London and the great towns, and not from the smaller towns, because there the shopkeepers felt they would be benefited by the operation of the Bill. Last Friday he was passing through a small country town in Herefordshire, when he was accosted by an old friend of his, a man who occupied an ironmonger's shop. His friend, having seen that he (Mr. Cooke) had a day or two before taken part in a meeting held against the Bill at Exeter Hall, expressed his approbation of the course he had pursued. He (Mr. Cooke) asked his friend how it affected him, because he knew that his friend closed his shop at 10 o'clock on Saturdays and on other days of the week at 8 o'clock, and earlier still when there was a holiday. His friend said, outwardly and visibly I close my shop at that hour, and all my shop assistants go home; but my customers know that I am on the spot, that I am living on the premises, and they come to me knowing I am there and ready and willing to serve them, and I do serve them sometimes up to 11 o'clock at night. He (Mr. Cooke) asked what kind of people they were who came at that time, and his friend said that they were, almost without exception, working men. What did these working men come for, he asked? The reply was, they came for tools; they had been engaged in their work all day, and if they left their work earlier they would lose time, or if they could not get their tools overnight, the probability was they would lose time in the morning, and perhaps lose the job to which they were going? That was the first person he had spoken to in the country on the subject, and that was the reply he got, and he thought it was not likely to be the last of the kind if he had pursued his inquiries further. He had said all he thought it was necessary to say on this subject, and he was obliged to the House for listening to him. He opposed the measure in conjunction with his hon. Friend (Mr. Maple) on the main ground that it was contrary to private interests and public policy to interfere with the labour of men and women; that it would prevent that personal enterprize, energy, and supervision which was at the bottom of the industrial supremacy of this country. Therefore, he heartily supported the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Blundell Maple.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said, he rose to support the Motion for the second reading of the Bill, and he did so on general grounds with reference to the effect of the Bill on the health of the population. There were in the Bill some details from which he differed; there were many points in regard to which he thought the Bill might be improved, and he had no doubt that in Committee the united wisdom of both sides of the House was capable of making the Bill free from every objection urged against it by the two hon. Gentlemen opposite who had spoken against the measure. He was particularly interested to hear the Mover of the Amendment (Mr. Blundell Maple) ask why public-houses should be exempted? If the hon. Gentleman would move an Amendment including public-houses, he (Sir Walter Foster) would be most happy to give it his support; indeed, he was sure that many hon. Members would be glad to see public-houses closed at 8 o'clock at night. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Blundell Maple) also said that tobacco shops and newspaper shops, if they sold other articles, would be liable to be closed. Now, this was in order to prevent an open and clear opportunity of evading the Act. If they had a shop in which tea, coffee walking sticks, and other things were sold, the keeper of that shop would be able to evade the Act by putting a couple of newspapers in the window, and saying, "I am a newsagent," unless some clause such as that in the Bill providing against such evasions were passed. In order to meet some difficulties, he should not object to making it a permissive Bill, or, in other words, to admit the principle of Local Option in respect to the operation of the Bill in the different localities. He believed that if the Bill had been drawn on such lines it would have met with more general acceptance, and, probably, would have been more universally approved than it would in its present form; but the great question which underlay the principle of the Bill was that of public health. Many Members who sat upon the Opposition Benches were anxious that the Bill should pass, because they believed that it would add to the well-being and the health of the community. During the last 25 years he, personally, had seen numberless examples of people broken down in health from the long hours they had been obliged to work in shops, and he wanted to see the whole country taking up the hard cases of these unfortunate individuals. He had seen young people come up fresh and healthy from the country who at the end of six months were blanched and weakened by the long hours of labour, and were sent home to die as wrecks in consequence of the iniquitous system under which they were required to work 14 hours a-day. In the interest of the community he wanted that system abolished. That was no new question, because, if they went back as far as 1845, they found that a Royal Commission sitting at that time reported to both Houses, that from inquiries it appeared—

> "That the relative excess from consumption among tradesmen and artizans, as compared with other classes, is mainly to be attributed to the vitiated state of the atmosphere in their shops and dwellings. The average age at death from consumption has been found to be lower in the case of tradesmen than among artizans; this is stated to be owing to a larger portion of the latter being employed in outdoor work, and therefore less continually exposed to the influence of impure air."

Dr. Guy, who was one of the principal witnesses before the Commission, gave evidence which bore very strongly upon this point. He said, in answer to a question—

> "The proportion of consumptive cases in the three classes of gentlemen, tradesmen, and artizans is respectively about 16, 28, and 30 in the hundred,"

showing an enormous difference between the classes who spent a large proportion of their time in the open air and those who were cooped up in unhealthy dwellings and close shops. Some 15 years ago he (Sir Walter Foster) undertook a large inquiry into this very question. He was interested in the prevalence at this time of chest diseases in the different parts of the country. He took rural districts, and compared them with towns, and he took one town and compared it with another town, and he found that wherever there was a large population confined in factories or shops during the greater portion of the time they were at work, there was a larger prevalence of chest complaints among that population than was usual among the ordinary population. Wherever, on the other hand, he found a class of people working in the open air, he found a much smaller consumption death rate in proportion to the general run of the disease. But this question was probably more delicately worked out by taking particular classes of the population. He took the female part of the population, as he was enabled to do by the supplement to the Registrar General's Report, and he found the remarkable fact that in women the death rate from consumption varied almost directly in various localities in accordance with the nature of their occupation. For instance, if they took a large manufacturing town in which iron works were mainly in vogue, and in which the women had little work to do in factories, they found that the death rate of women as compared with the general population was not in excess, but they found that the death rate of the men who were engaged in this heavier form of occupation was in excess of that of the general agricultural population. If, on the other hand, they had regard to towns where textile fabrics were manufactured, and where women in a large proportion were engaged in factories with close atmosphere, they found that the deaths from chest diseases were largely in excess of the normal rate for the whole country. They found that in these places the death rate of the women even exceeded the death rate of men engaged in similar occupations. Turning to agricultural districts, he found that, whereas in an ordinary agricultural district where the men were employed outdoor all day, and exposed to all sorts of weather, the death rate from lung diseases was comparatively small; the death rate of the women, on the other hand, who were cooped up in houses which were very often in an unsanitary state, was largely in excess of that of the men. These facts went very far to bear out the statement made by the Commission of 1845, that occupations which required prolonged remaining indoors were exceedingly injurious to the population in so far as they tended to develop diseases of the chest. As the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Dulwich Division of Camberwell quoted some statistics from one of the Registrar General's Reports bearing upon this point, he should like to refer the hon. Gentleman to the statistics that had been prepared by the Registrar General in his supplement to the last decennial Report. The figures were remarkable, and had almost a direct bearing upon the Bill before the House. In fact, if the hon. Baronet the Member for the London University (Sir John Lubbock) had wanted a statistical basis for his Bill, he could not have found a better one than that which was given by the Registrar General in his last supplement. Taking all diseases together, the Registrar General showed the comparative mortality between the agricultural classes who spent most of their time in the open air and the shopkeeper classes. The comparative mortality figure of the agricultural classes was taken by the Registrar General at 644, the comparative mortality figure in the shopkeeping classes was 877, showing an enormous difference to the detriment of people confined in shops. The Registrar General proceeded to analyse these figures in the very instructive supplement. He compared the mortality among men working in impure air and those working in a pure atmosphere. Taking fishermen as the people working in the purest atmosphere, he found the comparative mortality figure from diseases of the chest was 198, while the figure, on the other hand, of agriculturists was 237. Then he came to grocers, a class of persons who would be affected by this Bill, and he found that the comparative mortality figure was 283. That among drapers he found to be 430, or more than double the death rate which occurred among fishermen, a people living mainly in the open air. Taking grocers and drapers together, he found that the comparative mortality figure was 357, as compared with 237 among the agriculturists of the country. No figures could be more eloquent to drive home the fact that this Bill was necessary for the health of the population, and he was content to rest his support of the Bill entirely on the statistics that had come to them officially from the Registrar General of England in the Report he had quoted. It had been said that the Bill interfered with individual liberty, and hon. Gentlemen opposite had been unfortunate enough to quote as their champion the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Birmingham (Mr. John Bright). The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Birmingham was not on the side of the Factory Acts when that legislation was passed, and he (Sir Walter Foster) remembered that when, nearly 20 years ago, an agitation was raised in which he bore an humble part in favour of preventing the food of the people being adulterated, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Birmingham was against them. The right hon. Gentleman wanted the liberty of the subject to extend even so far, forsooth, that one man should be allowed to poison another man's food. He (Sir Walter Foster) did not think that the opinion of such a champion of the liberty of the subject should have much weight with the House in the discussion of a Bill which aimed at the benefit of the public health. The whole argument about the liberty of the subject being interfered with by the Bill was an argument which ought not to receive much attention from the House, and he would tell them why. A good many hon. Members sitting on his side of the House thought there was something that was higher and something that was more important than individual liberty. Individual liberty was a good thing as long as it was used for the common good, but it might become licence, and he believed that at some future time they would find that in this country individual liberty would be more and more controlled when it was used by individuals for the detriment of the Commonwealth. A man had no right to injure his own health, because he owed a debt to the community to be a healthy citizen. A man had no right to follow or engage in occupations that tended to make other people suffer on account of his own breakdown in health. There were occupations which tended to develop chest diseases, especially consumption. The development of consumption in this country was a serious detriment to the well-being of the people. A man might choose, if he liked, to live under conditions which generated consumption, if the injury were limited to himself; but it was not limited to himself, it descended to other generations, and very often it affected his neighbours or the people with whom he was brought into contact. Now-a-days science had shown that this form of chest disease was capable of being transmitted from one person to another, and therefore, if they encouraged, by non-interference on the part of the State, habits that were detrimental to the community, they did two evil things. They encouraged the spread of disease, and they helped to deteriorate the character of the population, to sap the strength, vitality, and manhood of the country. Because he believed this Bill would do much to add to the vitality and strength of future generations, he gave it his support. He did not want it to be injurious in its interference with any honest industry, but he believed that honest industries could be carried on with efficiency between the hours of 8 o'clock in the morning and 8 o'clock in the evening. He believed that working men through their Representatives in the House were supporters of this Bill; he was anxious that no community or district should be injuriously affected by the Bill, and, therefore, he would rather see it pass upon permissive principles, or, in other words, on the principle of Local Option. A complete answer to objections raised by hon. Gentlemen was contained in the fact that the Representatives of the working classes in the House were largely in favour of the Bill being passed, and that it was not felt by working men that any inconvenience would result to them through the operation of the Bill. In his opinion, the great argument as regarded health had not been answered by the hon. Gentlemen who had spoken from the Opposite Benches, but, on the contrary, had been strengthened immeasurably by the figures he had quoted.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he desired to offer the strongest possible opposition to the second reading, not only on account of the principle of the Bill itself, but on account of the principle that it challenged, although, at the same time, he fully recognized the humane motives of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London and those who supported him. He believed they really desired to benefit the classes in whose interests they thought they were legislating. It was because he believed those classes would suffer material injury in consequence of such legislation that he wanted to make the House sensible of what was involved in the passing of the measure. He felt that the House was very likely to be moved by the eloquent peroration of the hon. Baronet, and by the pathetic appeal he made to the House; but he would urge upon the House that, however strongly they might feel that individuals were suffering, it was not useful for hon. Members to allow their emotions to govern them too much in their legislation. This Bill proposed to interfere with grown-up people under circumstances in regard to which, so far as he knew, no Act of Parliament had yet endeavoured to interfere. Moreover, it interfered with people under conditions which, if accepted in this Bill, would open the door to legislation which might be of the most terrible character. The hon. Baronet congratulated the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) that he and the men of the county which he specially represented had secured for themselves the shorter hours of labour which he sought to imply would be secured by this Bill. He, however, did not see the force of the hon. Baronet's congratulation, for how had these shorter hours been secured? By voluntary effort and voluntary organization. They were asked to pass the present Bill on two grounds—first, because it was favourable to the health of the individuals who it was supposed would be relieved by it; and, secondly, because it was for their moral advantage. Did he understand the hon. Baronet to submit as a proposition to the House that, whenever they were reasonably sure in their minds that some livelihood open to an individual carried with it greater risk to his health than some other, they were therefore to prevent him from carrying on that livelihood? ["No!"] Well, if not, the whole argument for the Bill fell to the ground. [An hon. Member: Within limited hours.] Within limited hours? But was a person to be permitted to follow some vocation that rendered him more liable to disease during certain hours of the day, and not during others? That was an illogical position. There were many employments which were very dangerous to health, and in which science should be appealed to to lessen the danger. If they were to prevent grown individuals from entering upon work on this score they would destroy many industries in the country, and would reduce to starvation people who earned their living under difficulties as it was. He said at once that he was in favour of shorter hours of labour for everyone. This was no new advocacy on his part. He had always advocated the securing of short hours of labour by voluntary effort and association on the part of workmen, so that they might be intelligently represented in their discussions with those who bought their labour, but he had always been against the endeavour to compel it by legislation. If they legislated for shop assistants, how could they prevent persons engaged in other branches of industry from asking the House to legislate for them also, and how could the House determine what was the right limit of labour in each particular industry? The number of hours that the hon. Baronet would be satisfied with for shop assistants would be absolutely destructive of life in other vocations. If they acceded to this they were going to introduce the principle of interference between grown men and women, not allowing them to judge for themselves as to what was healthy or unhealthy, and would hinder them from following certain employments without a thought as to whether they could obtain other means of livelihood. If hon. Members were going to make people moral and healthy by Act of Parliament they would have a large job of work carved out for them, and they would fail in their attempt. The Bill before the House did not, however, necessarily secure shorter employment for shop assistants. It was a Bill to close shops, even though no assistants were employed. The hon. Member for the Ilkeston Division said that no man should be allowed to injure his health, but how far was this to go? Many persons maintained that smoking was injurious to health. He had seen heaps of statistics showing that persons who smoked died quickly. If hon. Members were convinced of that, was there to be legislation against smoking? If so, they would be giving legal sanction to any fanaticism or prohibition, and, under cover of a regard for health, thrust their own fads down other people's throats. By this Bill a man in his little shop, in which he and his wife served, or perhaps the wife served while the husband was at work, was to be prevented from keeping his shop open because somebody else got ill in some other establishment. This was legislation which, if not grandmotherly, was, at all events, strained to an extent which the English people would never tolerate when they understood its full bearing. The hon. Baronet urged that the great majority of the shopkeepers desired this Bill. If that were true, they could carry out their desire without the Bill. It was said that this was impossible, inasmuch as some shops remained open to the injury of the trade of those which were closed. But no shops would remain open unless there were customers who were ready to buy, and this brought him to the conclusion that late hours were in some cases absolutely necessary in order to enable persons of the artizan class earning wages which were paid from day to day, and returning from work after 7 or 8 o'clock in the evening, to make their domestic purchases. If the Bill were passed, there were many poor men who, earning their wages from day to day, did not get home from their work till 7, 8, or even 9 o'clock at night, and they would have no means of buying what they wanted to buy, except that they would be left to the establishments which the hon. Baronet proposed to leave open. The hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) had explained that the alteration he sought was mostly needed by females. Doubtless, long hours were injurious, especially to women; but why, then, did the hon. Baronet exempt bar-women, the girls who stood behind counters in places of refreshment till a late hour of night, and those who were engaged in cigar shops? The hon. Baronet must not be offended if he suggested that the inference was that they were exempted because the interests of those for whom they worked were too powerful to attack. But that was a descent from the high grounds of morality taken up by the promoters of this Bill. Where a class was powerful they might murder the people, and it was only where interests and trades were not powerful enough to unite in opposition that they were proceeded against. The hon. Baronet practically said this—"This is a question of morals and health, but we will discuss it on the lines of expediency, and will ask the House of Commons to recognize by statute that too powerful classes may make their *employés* immoral and unhealthy, while others may not." The hon. Baronet said that in towns where a half-holiday was now obtained, the people were always trembling lest the holiday should be taken from them. He did not think that those who had gained the half-holiday were in any fear of losing it; they had won it by convincing public opinion, and the history of our country showed that, taking a period, no step which the people had won by voluntary combination, educationally or morally, had ever been lost, though, of course, there were periods of flux and reflux in all progress. Earlier closing might be brought about in the same way. He quite agreed that the opportunities for education and relaxation in music, art, and literature which the galleries, collections, and institutions of our great cities now afforded ought to be at the disposal of all working men; but was Parliament to legislate to close industries because grown people had made arrangements which seemed to shut them out from those things? What gave them —Members of the House of Commons— such a right? As counsel or as critics, yes; but as legislators and administrators, no; and on behalf of the people he would resist any such attempt. They were told that the Inspectors of factories desired this legislation; no doubt they did —people who had machinery for grinding all thought that grinding ought to be done with that machinery. In these self-regarding matters men who had their labour to sell should be left to sell it in the best fashion they could. They should be encouraged to organize, to get the best price they could for their labour; but they should never be taught that when they were weak and divided the Legislature would step in and give them a weapon or a shield, not for them, but for the Executive to use. It was said that only some small shopkeepers opposed the Bill. Experience, however, told him that the small shopkeepers of the Metropolis were not now organized in opposition to it, only because they did not contemplate the possibility of the House of Commons being unwise enough to meddle with the ordinary avocations of their life. It was desirable that shopping should be done before 8, but how could it be by persons who did not return home till after 8? He was in favour of shorter hours of labour, if possible; but he thought legislation of this kind would, by raising antagonism, hinder that movement rather than promote it. The hon. Baronet, using a phrase which was out of harmony with the kindly tone of the rest of his speech, said it was hypocritical to oppose the Bill on grounds of personal liberty. Now, he opposed the Bill on those grounds, and he hoped that he was not hypocritical. If they began by recognizing the right of Parliament to interfere and control personal liberty in that way in regard to one trade, where would they stop? The Bill was, he thought, absurd in its details and immoral in its principle. It was immoral in its principle, because it would strike a blow at the self-reliance of the individual; and it was absurd in its details, because, among other things, while it professed to be required for the welfare of the shop assistants, it gave one-third of the shopkeepers in a district the power of preventing its provisions from being put in operation. He, therefore, trusted that the House would reject the measure.

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester) said, that the powerful speech of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) would be read to-morrow by many a poor shop-assistant in the country with feelings of very great disappointment. But the reasons which had induced the hon. Gentleman to oppose the Bill of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) were so entirely different from the reasons adduced by the Mover and Seconder of the Amendment, that he was not without hope that ultimately they would find the hon. Member on the side of the weak against the strong, as he had always been in the past. It would be presumptuous in him to attempt to reply to all the points the hon. Gentleman had raised in opposition to the Bill; indeed, he only intended to trespass for a few minutes upon the attention of the House, while he gave his reasons for the vote he was going to give in support of the measure. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton had asked—

> "Whether the law had any right to prevent a man running a special risk, or from engaging in a trade which was attended with special risk."

This was not the first time that that principle had been raised and decided in the House. What was the object of the Merchant Shipping Acts? What became of the inspection of ships before grown men were allowed to embark in them, if the contention was correct that grown men ought to be trusted to look after themselves? Again, all mining legislation proceeded on the principle that men needed protection, which they were unable to obtain for themselves. He would like to know what was the excuse for the Irish land legislation, which had had no stronger supporter than the hon. Member for Northampton, if it was not that "grown men" needed the interference on their behalf of special law, and had not been able to make free and fair contracts on their own account? They had heard a great deal about interference with grown men and women. The Factories Acts in this country were specially passed for the protection of grown women. How about the Bank Holiday Act, which the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) succeeded in passing, and for which he had earned the gratitude of the country? He would like to ask whether grown warehousemen and grown-up clerks in this country would have been enabled to enjoy the Bank Holidays if they had been left to get the privilege themselves? How about the Truck Acts, which they passed a very short time ago, and which the hon. Member for Northampton was specially active in supporting? Were they not aimed at the protection of grown men and women from forces which were too strong for them individually? They had heard a good deal, and no doubt they would hear a good deal more, about the impossibility of making men moral by Act of Parliament. No, they could not; but arguments of that kind had been urged against all sanitary legislation—against the establishment of baths, washhouses, and free libraries. They might do a great deal to make it easier for people to be healthy and moral, and that was all the law could do. More than one hon. Member had said that if the Bill was only to apply to shops in which women and young people were employed, he would be ready to support it. If hon. Members would read the evidence given before the Sweating Committee, they would see it was this kind of philanthropy which had led to the insertion in the Factory Acts of the clauses under which a vast amount of sweating had been rendered possible in the country. Take one clause of the Factory Act, that an Inspector should not have the power to enter any room used as a bedroom. The result was that people who wished to evade the Act erected a bed in a small room where eight and 10 and 12 poor people were kept at work until unreasonable hours. Another clause, introduced, no doubt, with the best intentions, but which had worked much evil, was to the effect that the Act should not apply to places in which a man only employed members of his own family. He (Mr. Winterbotham) could take hon. Members to sweating dens in the country in which very numerous families would be found, all the *employés* being alleged to be sisters and children and cousins and aunts. From these places the Factory Inspectors were shut out. Reference had been made to Newcastle. It had been shown that the Act would have no effect there. Why? Because a large industrial population like that at Newcastle-upon-Tyne had found, by practical experience, that they were not inconvenienced by the shops being closed at 8 o'clock, and the small shopkeepers themselves had found that they had not suffered any harm or danger by the early closing of their premises. That one fact was worth a ton of theory as to the way this Bill would work. Then he thought it was a little unworthy of the hon. Member for Northampton to make that stab in the back of the Factory Inspectors. He (Mr. Winterbotham) did not think there was a body of men who did their work better or more honestly than the Factory Inspectors, and therefore he refused to admit the argument that they were for their own sakes found in favour of this Bill. He did not approve of a good many of the details of the Bill. For instance, he totally disapproved of leaving out public-houses. There was a great deal to be said for the exemption of refreshment and provision bars, for the reason that the actual work done by young people behind those bars was concentrated into a very few hours in the day. [Mr. LABOUCHERE: What about Swindon?] Yes, at railway refreshment bars there was little work during many hours of the day, the work being concentrated within a limited number of hours at certain periods of the day. He supported the Bill because he regarded it as only one chapter in a long and very old struggle; it was only one chapter in the struggle of labour against capital; it was only one chapter in the struggle with which the names of Romilly, Wilberforce, Shaftesbury, and Howard were associated; the struggle on behalf of the great principle that the material well-being of the few should not oblige the sacrifice by the weak and the many of health and recreation and leisure, and sometimes of even life itself. That was the principle on behalf of which he pleaded, and which he found in the preamble of the Bill. [*Laughter.*] If hon. Members could not see it, he was very sorry. He found that principle in the Bill, and that was the reason why the measure received his support. The same arguments were trotted out against all measures of this character, the same old arguments were trotted out against every one of the men who had worked on behalf of the principle which he was pleading for. What were those arguments? First, there was the argument of freedom of contract, or, "Why do not you leave us alone?" That was a god that always had been worshipped by rack-renting landlords and sweating manufacturers. That was an argument that had always been used by the strong in oppressing the weak, and if it had been listened to, the legislation as to factories, workshops, mines, and merchant shipping would never have been passed. The second argument was the argument of supply and demand, the argument of the monopolist. A third argument was one which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) was the first to use in this debate—he had expected to hear it from other lips than those of the hon. Member—and that was the argument that this was grandmotherly legislation. One could always raise a laugh by trottting out this argument—by saying—"Why cannot you leave people to look after their own concerns, and not molly-coddle them?" This argument had been used again and again in defence of every one of the evils of which complaint was made; it was an argument of greedy manufacturers all the world over, and always had been. It was only a fortnight ago that a most heated harangue was delivered from the Treasury Bench against a Bill to prevent people from having the right to blow up their own boilers. It would be in the memory of the House that the proposal was proved quite uncalled for, because the hon. Member had been up the flues of boilers in his earlier life, and therefore knew all about them! He (Mr. Winterbotham) and his hon. Friends were beaten on that occasion. They would very likely be beaten again to-night, and it was not at all unlikely that some Member of this very talented Government would get up and argue that he spoke from practical experience that 14 hours behind a counter in an unhealthy atmosphere was not an unreasonable day's work. He spoke on behalf of poor girls who worked for 84 hours a-week. He appealed to hon. Members to read the evidence given before the Royal Commission of 1886. It was because he had read that evidence that he felt so strongly upon the subject. It was no mere assertion that shopmen and shopwomen worked this excessive number of hours. We prided ourselves that we were not like other men, that we had abolished slavery. But slavery existed in our workshops and in the agricultural districts. As an illustration of what he meant, and in reply to the hon. Member who had dealt with the question of the impossibility of men who worked long hours, at the end of those hours being able to purchase the necessaries of life if this Bill became law, he (Mr. Winterbotham) reminded the House that a Question had been put only yesterday concerning a labourer in his own constituency. The case was that of a man who worked 96 hours in the week for 8*s*., or at the rate of 1*d*. per hour. Well, hon. Members who objected to State interference with adults in these matters not only would allow this man to continue to work 96 hours, but would require the shopkeepers to keep their shops open to a late hour, in order that this man and others like him might make purchases after their day's work was done. It was because he believed a small proportion of selfish shopkeepers could and did oblige a majority against their will to keep their shops open to a late hour; it was because he believed that the overwhelming majority of shopkeepers, who were earnest Christian men, were anxious for a change in the law; and it was because he believed the shop assistants were not strong enough to combine and compel justice for thenselves, that he gave his support to the Bill. He cared nothing about the supporters of the measure being in a minority. They had been in a minority before; but, so far as he knew anything about the question, the working classes of the country were unanimous on this matter. ["No, no!"] He said so far as he knew anything about it, and he meant that in his part of the country they were unanimous. The question was one for the working classes to take up and settle. Hon. Members were nothing but the servants of the working classes, and if the working classes took up this question and insisted that shop assistants should have shorter hours—that these poor shopmen and girls should have some consideration extended to them—they would win in the country, and that would make them very soon win in the House of Commons.

MR. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth) said, he had heard since he had been in the House that the hon. Baronet who had moved the second reading of the Bill intended to introduce in it some modification for the purpose of exempting that industrious class, the costermongers, and it should be pointed out that in making such modification——

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, that what he had stated was that costermongers were not included in the Bill, but if it was thought necessary he would introduce any words to put this beyond a doubt.

MR. ISAACS said, that all he could say was that he had read the language of the Bill with great care, and although he was not a lawyer, he ventured to think that the words "booths and stalls" would bring the class of costermongers within the provisions of the Act—a class who were especially interested in the question affected by the measure. Unless costermongers were included in the measure there would be a manifest injustice done to small shopkeepers. If the hon. Baronet would take the trouble to go into the districts which were especially the scenes of action of the small shopkeepers and the costermongers he would find that the two classes carried on their trade in the same locality and in the same streets; and it was a curious fact that the shopkeepers in certain districts, so far from objecting to costermongers using their streets for the purpose of their trade, absolutely encouraged them to go there, as the effect of their frequenting the place was to create a market which did as much good to the shopkeepers as to themselves. He would venture to point out to the House that if the costermonger class were to be included within the provisions of the Bill, it became necessary that the House should know something of the conditions on which this numerous class of people carried on their trade; and as he happened to be possessed of information on the subject, he asked the indulgence of the House for a few moments, whilst he endeavoured to give something like an outline of the very hard lot of these people. They were an humble but very industrious class. Frequently the whole capital at the command of a costermonger was one sovereign, or even less, so that it was of the utmost importance that this capital, which went by him and his class under the name of "stock money," should not be diminished. It would be understood that it was necessary that these men should have the fullest opportunity of purchasing and disposing of the articles in which they dealt, for the reason that the goods they bought and sold were, as a rule, of a perishable nature, such as fish, vegetables, fruit, and things of that character, and they had no ice-stores or warehouses or other suitable places into which they could put their goods if unsold at the end of the day's work. The bedroom was frequently the living-room also, so that they always made an effort to sell out their stock each day. He (Mr. Isaacs) therefore asked the House to pause before passing a piece of legislation which would inflict grievous injury on such a class of people. Next to the costermonger they had the small shopkeeper, whose case had been referred to. Now, in the poorer districts of the Metropolis—and this was also the case in the poorer districts of all large towns—there was a class of struggling shopkeepers who were just on the one side of the line of demarcation which separated those who contributed to the rates from those who received relief therefrom; and it required but the slightest push from legislation like that now proposed to drive those people from one side of that line over to the other; and of a surety if they passed this Bill the House would be largely contributing to the increase of the number of those who were compelled to go upon the rates for parochial relief. He ventured to ask that in this matter there should be one law equally applicable for the trader who carried on his business in the streets by means of a stall or a barrow, as for the man who conducted his business in a shop or warehouse. If they said that a man who conducted his business in a shop should close his doors at a given hour, the peripatetic dealer who carried on his trade on a stall or barrow should be compelled to close at the same hour, otherwise a manifest injustice would be done to the small shopkeeper. Then, again, there were a large number of buyers to whom it was a physical impossibility to get to the places where the goods of which they stood in need were retailed, if those places of business were compelled to close at 8 o'clock in the evening. Take the case of an ordinary artizan—a bricklayer, a carpenter, or a plasterer. He would frequently have to walk miles from the place of his work to his residence; probably an hour would be occupied in the journey. If he left off work at 6 o'clock he would get home at 7, then, some time would naturally be consumed in satisfying the pangs of hunger, and a still further delay would be rendered necessary by his cleaning himself up and rendering himself tidy after his day's work. To say to such a man that unless he could do all this before 8 o'clock in the evening he should not be allowed to make any purchases would be a grievous hardship. The result would be that the artizan would find that the only place where he could make purchases would be the public-house. The outcome of the passing of this Bill would be that poor artizans and humble individuals, who now went to a variety of shops to make purchases, would find that the only practicable mode of satisfying their wants would be to go to the public-house. He would ask the House whether such a system would contribute to the cause of temperance—that was to say, putting an embargo on every other trader and leaving the publican free and uncontrolled in the matter of supplying the daily wants of artizans? In the interests of those who wished to buy as well as in the interests of those who wished to sell he trusted there would be an agreement on the part of the House, that so far as adults were concerned the system this Bill would establish should not be adopted. He could assure the House that if the measure became law a great number of costermongers and others, who now found an honest occupation, would be driven into poverty, or, still worse, into the arms of crime.

Mr. J. BARRY (Wexford, S.) said, he must congratulate the hon. Member for Dulwich (Mr. Blundell Maple) on the admirable maiden speech he had delivered in this debate, but felt sorry that that speech had been made in support of such a bad cause. He (Mr. J. Barry) found it difficult to understand the position of the hon. Gentleman on this question, because everyone acquainted with the subject would admit that in the annals of voluntary early closing the hon. Member had borne a highly honourable and distinguished part, and there was no one who would proclaim more readily the advantages which had followed the steps of voluntary early closing, not only in regard to the physical condition of the young men and girls employed in shops, but also in regard to their mental improvement. The hon. Gentleman, he (Mr. J. Barry) was sure, whilst contesting the argument used in favour of the Bill, would admit that numerous advantages had flowed from voluntary early closing. If, then, the supporters of the Bill could prove that the voluntary system had thoroughly broken down, and that it was impossible by such effort to bring about early closing, he thought he could consistently ask the hon. Gentleman to join the ranks of the supporters of the Bill and vote for it on another occasion. He (Mr. J. Barry) was surprised to find the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) opposing the Bill, seeing that he had played so large a part, both politically and socially, in the work of ameliorating the condition of the working classes. The hon. Member seemed to him to base his opposition to the measure chiefly upon the ground that it was introducing an entirely new principle into legislation and interfering with contracts freely entered into by grown persons. But, surely, no one knew better than the hon. Member himself that during the last 40 years our legislation really bristled with instances of this kind. The hon. Member had surely not forgotten the existence of the Factory Acts, the Employers' Liability Act, and the Act in connection with which the hon. Member himself had played a distinguished part—namely, the Truck Act of last year, which was neither more nor less a direct interference with the action of grown people. Let him (Mr. J. Barry) refer to the operation of the Truck Act. Its object was to deal with cases where an employer set up a store for the sale of goods, and made a bargain with his *employés* that they should purchase their goods at that store. The *employés* in such cases entered quite voluntarily into the bargains; but yet the hon. Member brought forward his Bill to prevent such bargains, and succeeded in carrying it. He (Mr. J. Barry) was glad the hon. Member had succeeded in carrying a Bill through the House limiting the power of employers and relieving *employés* from the necessity of purchasing at the stores of their employers; but there could be no stronger instance of interference with the action of grown people than was afforded by that Act. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton had relied with great confidence on the operation of the voluntary principle, and he had pointed to the results which had followed union and combination amongst the trading classes in this country; but he (Mr. J. Barry) would ask the hon. Gentleman to remember that there was absolutely no comparison to be drawn between the cases of members of trades unions and shop assistants. The conditions which surrounded the unfortunate shop assistants were totally different from the conditions which existed in connection with manufacturing and trade operatives. The latter class, it would be found, received something like one uniform rate of wages, and the interests involved were the same amongst all classes of operatives; but amongst shop assistants they found the widest diversity in their positions. One man, a junior, would receive £20 a-year, whilst another a bit older would be in receipt of £60 or £80 a-year, and managers and heads of departments would be in receipt of salaries of £200 and upwards. When they had a condition of things like that, he submitted that it was impossible to establish trades unions or bring about anything like uniformity amongst the *employés.* A great many attempts had been made to do it, but without success. The story of voluntary effort was a story upwards of 40 years old. He had known something during the past 25 years of the operation of voluntary efforts in bringing about early closing, and during that period, from first to last, he had witnessed the same never-ending recurrence of partial success—early closing being established for a short time, then someone or other who had agreed to close breaking the honourable understanding and setting an example which others were bound to follow. Very vigorous attempts had been made in London of recent years to bring about a system of voluntary early closing. Earnest and enthusiastic gentlemen engaged in trade had endeavoured to carry out early closing, and had succeeded, but only for two or three weeks at a time. Someone always broke away from the honourable understanding, and the old hours had once more to be established. And it was in the very nature of the case that this sort of thing must continue. It was impossible to bring about anything like a real combination and union amongst the shop assistants. Then the fact must not be overlooked that it was not only the assistants who were concerned in the movement, but that the interests of employers were identical with the interests of those they employed. The employers were as anxious for a reduction of the hours of labour as the assistants. He (Mr. J. Barry) had had the honour of sitting upon a Select Committee which took a great deal of evidence on this question in 1886, and though he was fairly intimate with the state of things existing in regard to closing both in London and in the Provinces, yet he was bound to say that he had been very much startled at the nature of the evidence submitted to that Committee. It was a very easy thing to make general statements on this question, and to express opinions as to the number of people who were in favour of or against this proposal; but if the House would allow him, he would submit one or two instances of a definite character which were given before that Committee on this question of long hours in shops. There was the evidence of Mr. James Baldwin Latham, Inspector of Factories for the Metropolitan district. In reply to Question 853, this gentleman said that it might be taken that in the Metropolis shop assistants were required to work on an average between 80 and 86 hours per week. Then a small shopkeeper from Bermondsey, named Ambrose Pomeroy, was asked what number of hours per week shops were kept open in his district, and the reply he made was to the effect that in Bermondsey the majority of shops were open from 84 to 88 hours per week. In reply to a further question, this witness said he was sorry to say that for some time past the shops in Bermondsey had been kept open later than had been the practice three or four years before. The witness declared that he was a new convert to compulsory legislation in this matter, having seen how powerless voluntary effort was to contend with the opposition of only two or three tradesmen. The witness added that he had obtained the signatures of 96 out of 98 tradesmen in his district in favour of early closing, but that the effect of their being two dissentients was that only eight of those who had given their signatures stuck to their promises. He (Mr. J. Barry) could go on multiplying instances of this kind at great length; but it would suffice to say that the whole tendency of the evidence submitted to the Select Committee was to show that in every district in London and a great many towns in the country a percentage varying from 90 to 95 per cent of the shopkeepers were absolutely in favour of early closing, and would voluntarily carry out such a system were it not for unfortunate breaches of faith on the part of some members of their body who broke away from their engagements, and by so doing re-established the entire system of late shopping again. Now, a great deal had been said in the course of the debate upon the medical aspect of the question, and he thought he might fairly claim as a supporter of the Bill that medical testimony was unanimously in its favour. He would not trouble the House with any detailed evidence upon this point, but would merely refer to one opinion—namely, that of the very eminent authority Sir Risdon Bennett. This gentleman had said that there was no more fruitful source of blighted health and early death from consumption and other diseases, than late hours which shop assistants were subjected to. Other eminent medical authorities had given evidence in language still more emphatic, and he had not heard of a single case from the other side of any medical authority who took a contrary view. He might, whilst upon this point, be permitted to mention a few facts which had occurred within his own experience. In the year 1859 he went to business at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and in that same year eight other apprentices had also gone to the same place of business. They were all exceptionally strong lads; the employer would not accept anyone unless he was an exceptionally strong boy. The working hours were from 7 in the morning until half-past 9 and 10 o'clock at night, and on Saturday it was generally from half-past 12 until 1 o'clock on the Sunday morning before they were at liberty. Well, after six years three of the apprentices, including himself, left the business to seek some more healthy occupation, and the remaining six who had remained in the business, he was sorry to say, were now all dead. The oldest did not survive beyond the age of 35, and the others died between the ages of 18 and 34. He did not know whether this was an exceptional case or not; but all he knew was, as he had said, that the boys were exceptionally strong and healthy, and he had seen those who had remained in the business year after year being gradually worn down by the grinding weariness of their long hours; and he was certain of this—that if the other three of whom he had spoken, and of whom he was one, had not escaped to a more healthy occupation, and obtained outdoor exercise, they would have died before now. He could also say, as a fact within his own knowledge, that the mortality amongst the young women employed in the place of business of which he spoke was even more startling than the figures he had given in the case of the young men. Now, he claimed that if it could be shown that this evil of late shopping presented year after year such terrible mortality, he maintained that they had established a case for the interference of the State. If they could show that the voluntary system had absolutely broken down, and that under no circumstances was it likely to succeed, they clearly established a case for the active interference of Parliament. A statement had been made, by one of the previous speakers, to the effect that the working classes were opposed to this Bill. Now, that was a statement which he utterly and entirely denied. He did not know that there was much to be gained in a discussion of this kind by assertion and denial; but he should like to mention, as an argument in support of his contention in this matter, what had been done by the working classes themselves in carrying on retail business. He should like to give as an illustration the case of the co-operative societies throughout the country. These societies existed generally in the interest of the working classes. The directing committees were elected by the working classes, and naturally every arrangement was made to meet the convenience of their clients —the working classes. In the majority of cases, he believed he might safely say that in every case, the co-operative stores were closed at 7 o'clock in the evening. There might be cases where they might remain open until 8 o'clock, but of that he was not certain. Many hon. Friends behind him were more intimately acquainted with this branch of the subject than he was, and they would correct him if he was wrong, though he said that 8 o'clock was the latest hour at which these places were kept open. He was reminded by an hon. Member that not only did they close early at the co-operative stores, but that in many cases the assistants had a half-holiday in the week. Now, seeing that these co-operative societies were familiar with the desires of their clients, was it likely that they would fly in the teeth of public necessity and close earlier than the necessities of the case demanded? The committees who managed these societies were changed annually, and if it was found that inconvenience resulted from the arrangements adopted as to early closing, new committee men would be appointed and longer hours would be adopted; but, as he had said, there were instances throughout the country where late hours were adopted. Then, again, it had been stated in the course of the debate that the shortening of the hours of shopping would entail ruin to the small shopkeepers. The hon. Gentleman who had moved the rejection of the Bill had said that it would ruin many of the small shopkeepers; but he had failed to sustain that opinion by a single valid argument. He (Mr. J. Barry) utterly failed to see that if all shops were closed at 8 o'clock instead of at 10 o'clock there would necessarily be any diminution in the volume of trade. The same number of purchases would be made, and the only change would be that instead of making the purchases at 10 o'clock at night they would be made at 8 o'clock. The hon. Baronet, in moving the second reading of the Bill, had stated that instead of the small shopkeepers being subjected to injury by the adoption of this proposal, the tendency would be that in the outside districts their trade would be rather increased, for the hours being shorter, purchasers would have less time to go to a distance to carry on their shopping, and the probability was that they would purchase nearer home than at present. The House would see, on reflection, that the returns of the small shopkeepers would more likely be increased than diminished by the operations of the Bill. Then, again, statements had been made to the effect that a very large proportion of the working classes at public meetings had declared themselves against the Bill. Well, it was a remarkable fact that, although this question had been before the public for two years, and this identical Bill had been before them for several months, no active opposition had been raised against it except in three quarters—that was to say, London, Leeds, and Sheffield. [Mr. Picton (Leicester): And Leicester.] He had not heard of any opposition in Leicester; but it might be as the hon. Gentleman said, although probably the opposition there would not be of a very serious character. If the effect of this Bill was to be so disastrous and deadly as the opponents declared it would, it was a most remarkable thing that the opposition in the country had been of such a limited character. On the other hand, innumerable Petitions had been presented in favour of the measure—Petitions from small shopkeepers, from assistants, and from public bodies. The trade associations of the country had declared emphatically in favour of the measure, and he thought that, in revising the whole circumstances of the case, any impartial mind would admit that, so far as the feeling of the country generally was concerned. But the balance of opinion was decidedly in favour of the Bill. The deadly system which prevailed at present not only left its influence on those who were its victims now, but that influence was perpetuated in future generations. Medical testimony proved that up to the hilt, and he thought that, if moved by no nobler motive than its material interest, the State should adopt a Bill of this character which would have a beneficial effect upon those who were enfeebled by the long hour system, and to whom you must look to fight the battles of the future—which would throw into the light of the sunshine the lives of people who were now working under hopeless and depressing conditions.

Mr. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) said, he should like to know from the hon. Baronet who had introduced the Bill, if he would be prepared to confine the scope of the Bill to the shops where assistants were kept, and also whether he would agree to exempt from the operation of the measure all vendors of food? If those important modifications were made, almost all his (Mr. Montagu's) objections to the measure would be removed; except that he thought that all interference on the part of the State with the work of adults was bad in principle and ought not to be lightly adopted. The Bill, as it stood, would materially affect many of his constituents. Whitechapel, Spitalfields, and Mile End New Town, which he had the honour to represent, were filled, with a very small exception, with the shop keeping and artizan classes, who would be seriously injured by this Bill. Last year, when a similar Bill was proposed, he took occasion to consult many of his constituents with a view of obtaining the advice of those in whose interest the Bill was said to be introduced, and he found so much difference of opinion amongst the few that he was able to reach, that he determined upon obtaining the opinion of his constituents in a formal manner. Consequently, he sent a circular to all the ratepayers and lodgers in Whitechapel, together with an impartial statement; he had used, in fact, almost the identical words in the account given by the Early Closing Association. He asked for opinions with regard to the Bill, and he had received in all 1,772 replies, of which 945 were against the Bill as it stood, and 720 were in its favour; whilst 107 papers were neutral or had been spoilt. If vendors of food were to be exempt, 889 were in favour of the Bill, 776 against it, while 107 replies were neutral or spoilt; and if the Bill were to contain an increased penalty for Sunday trading, 919 were against, and 447 were in favour of it, and 107 replies were neutral. Amongst those who had expressed themselves in favour of the Bill were a great number of large shopkeepers who now closed their shops at 6, 7, or 8 o'clock, but who, very probably, in the earlier stages of their career kept them open to 9 or 10 o'clock. These people, now they had prospered and were able to close early, wanted to place new beginners on the same footing as themselves. A large proportion of those also who had expressed themselves in favour of early closing were, no doubt, interested in the four particular trades exempted, including, of course, the publicans and all those connected with them, who wanted to have a monopoly of the evening trade. He trusted the House would not sanction the closing of butchers' and bakers' shops, whilst they left the beershops open. He held that if the Bill were passed, it would prove altogether unworkable, for it bristled with difficulties, and would require to have a whole army of detectives to see that its provisions were not evaded—to see that the public did not pass through the side doors of shops to make purchases, and to discriminate between those who were customers and those who were lodgers. As costermongers were not to be interfered with, small shopkeepers, in cases where they experienced any difficulty in obtaining a livelihood, would simply have barrows in front of their shops, and when 8 o'clock came would shut up the latter and continue their trade at the front until a later period; also, since hawking was not restricted in the Bill, the small shopkeepers would send round their assistants to their customers with samples of their wares, and would thus absolutely increase the labour of those whom the Bill was intended to benefit. In Victoria a similar measure had partially failed. It was true that in Melbourne, where early closing had been adopted, the hour for closing was 7 o'clock; but in the case of that city exemptions were extremely easy to obtain, and also extensions of time. The early closing in Melbourne had, to a large extent, proved a failure, as he would show by reading an extract from *The Argus* of September 23, 1886. He had, in view of the Act of last year, obtained the latest information accessible with regard to the working of the system in Australia, and this was the result—

"A very large deputation, representing merchants of Melbourne, the Victorian Shopkeepers' Union, and shopkeepers, waited on the Premier and Chief Secretary yesterday, to protest against the compulsory closing clause of the Factories and Shops Act. Mr. Zox said that the Act had had a fair trial, and it had proved that the clause compelling shops to close at certain hours was doing great injury. A Petition to the Legislative Assembly, signed by 3,000 shopkeepers of Melbourne and the suburbs, had been prepared, protesting against the clause. As British subjects they ought not to be coerced in such a matter. Mr. Carter said the Act had utterly failed to carry out the object for which it was passed—namely, to shorten the hours of labour of *employés*. There were many shopkeepers, however, who had no *employés*, and who were being harassed. Many small shopkeepers would be utterly ruined if that section continued to be enforced. Mr. H. Perkins, President of the Victorian Shopkeepers' Union, said that the Petition was signed by many shopkeepers who were exempted under the Act, such as tobacconists and others. They suffered loss of trade through the streets being unattractive and empty at night. Collins Street people had also signed it. The keepers of large music warehouses, who shut at 6 o'clock, objected to be compelled to do so. Even the Government Inspectors were ashamed of the work they had to do. That was the reason why so few prosecutions had taken place. If there was to be compulsory closing, it ought to be consistent. Let the tramways, railways, and drink traffic be stopped at 7 o'clock, so that the community could see the full effects of a system of motherly Government. Mr. J. F. Lancashire said he had two establishments, one in Collingwood and the other in Richmond. The Collingwood shop could be kept open until 9 o'clock, and the Richmond shop had to be closed at 7 o'clock. His Collingwood *employés* worked 49 hours a-week, and his Richmond *employés* 56 hours a-week. The grievance suffered during the last six months would be nothing compared to the suffering that would be caused during the next six months. Mr. P. Blashki said that the compulsory clause had ruined several shopkeepers. Not 10 per cent of the shopkeepers had refused to sign the Petition. Mr. J. Bradley said that on the previous day he had received two dividends out of debts due to him in insolvent estates, and the cause of insolvency was represented to be the compulsory early closing. Previously, if shopkeepers had a bad day, they generally made it up after 7 o'clock."

Another objection he took to the Bill was this—that in it London was put down as a unit in the matter of giving permission or obtaining exemptions; and if that system were carried out, it was clear that the West End and other portions of London would out-vote the East End, when applications would be made for an extension of time, and if extensions were refused, an artizan—a carpenter, for instance—would find himself in this position—that he might be employed at his trade in the back premises of a shop where furniture was sold until a late hour at night; but at 8 o'clock the shopkeeper would not be allowed to sell the furniture that he had made. It must be borne in mind, so far as the small shopkeepers were concerned, that the work of those who attended to them was not very hard. In many of the little shops the owners themselves were the persons who served customers, and they sat in a little room behind the shop reading, smoking, or working until customers summoned them. It seemed to him particularly hard that, in the present condition of the East End, restrictions, such as those proposed in the Bill, should be placed upon the earning of a livelihood by large numbers of poor people.

Mr. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) said, he wished to give some reasons to show why, in his opinion, this kind of legislation was unsound, One of the chief reasons was its advocacy of compulsory idleness. It was said that the Education Act had been instrumental in reducing juvenile crime; but, in his opinion, that was due not so much to the educational effect of that Act, as to the fact that it had taken children off the streets and prevented them committing peccadilloes which brought them before the magistrates. If the Early Closing Bill were passed, a large number of young people would be turned out at the hour of 8, and would go about the streets until 10 o'clock or later. That would not be to their advantage, and he was certain those enforced hours of idleness would have a detrimental effect upon our criminal returns. Again, when a man became of full age and had children to support, nothing should be done which would in any way prevent him earning all he could for his family to the best of his ability. A good deal was said nowa-days about checking the competition of life. In his opinion, success in life largely depended upon the competition to which people were subjected. To his mind it was against the law of nature and against public policy to endeavour to artificially restrain what was evidently the law of our being. We were told that Parliament had sanctioned the principle over and over again. He was quite prepared to allow that; but he would remind the House that the Factory Acts, of which so much had been heard, were still upon their trial; and if we looked around and observed the competition to which this nation had to submit from foreign Powers, and observed also how foreign nations by their longer hours of labour were underselling us in all parts of the world, and turning out more than we could by our restrictive legislation, then we might fairly hesitate before we went further and prevented our able-bodied fellow subjects from doing all they could to bring bread to their children and turning out goods for the sake of the community at large. A great deal had been said about the merits of Bank Holidays, but he did not think Bank Holidays were an unmixed boon. He had heard a great many clerks object to Bank Holidays, because they compelled them to take their holidays gregariously, and not at their leisure, and this deprived the holiday of its chief enjoyment. An hon. Member had tried to overcome the strong facts in regard to the health of shopworkers brought forward by the hon. Member for the Dulwich Division of Camberwell (Mr. Maple); but, if the hon. Member would look at the Returns published at the end of the Blue Book on the Shop Hours' Closing Bill, he would see that the Returns of the hon. Member could be made even stronger than he stated them. The hon. Baronet the Member for the London University (Sir John Lubbock) had mentioned Liverpool in support of his case. It was a singular fact that in that city of 650,000 inhabitants, with no less than nine Members, not one of those Members had been asked to present a single Petition upon this subject that Session or the last. He (Mr. Lawrence) himself had not received a single communication upon the subject for two years. He, therefore, inferred that the figures which the hon. Baronet had submitted to the House regarding Liverpool were old figures, and that the silence which had existed since they were collected seemed to show that they were artificially got up. It was easy to get up factious opposition and factious support, and great care ought to be taken in dealing with figures and with Petitions. It was very singular to notice the Petitions which the hon. Baronet presented. Of the 46 Petitions he presented in support of the Bill, 19 came from matrons and nurses of hospitals in London, and three or four from clergy. The people for whom he spoke were those who were perfectly prepared to work and to support their families, and he held that when 19 or 20 out of 46 Petitions in favour of the Bill came from hospitals and clergy, the petitioners who, if they had any families at all, were workers at fixed wages, with regular hours or at their discretion, were not qualified to speak in support of this important measure, which was only partially concerned with the health of the people. There was one other class of people which the hon. Member did not seem to consider—the class to which he (Mr. Lawrence) himself belonged, though he did not practice much now. He referred to barristers, who worked all hours of the day, and very often all hours of the night, for more or less inadequate fees. ["No, no!"] He spoke for the able-bodied men who were able and anxious to work, and held that it was preposterous that certain classes should be totally exempt from that Bill, while others should be prevented from carrying on their business in any way they thought would best advance their private interests.

MR. BURT (Morpeth) said, that as his name was on the back of the Bill he felt it to be desirable that he should say a few words in its support. It was not without some hesitation that he had made himself responsible for what must be, to a large extent, a new principle in our legislation—namely, the dealing with the hours of adult male labour. He had listened very attentively to the debate, and he gathered that, with the exception of the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) and the hon. Member for West Newington (Mr. Radcliffe Cooke), all the opposition on the part of those who had spoken was to details of the Bill, dealing with the amount of the fines and other matters of detail that might be very well settled in Committee. The junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) certainly attacked the principle of the Bill, and he (Mr. Burt) thought it would be admitted on all sides of the House that his speech was powerful and very well reasoned. He confessed that he hesitated to put himself in opposition to his hon. Friend on any question of this sort, because he knew that the hon. Gentleman spoke not only with knowledge, but with sympathy, and that he always had advocated the voluntary principle of short hours for labour. But it struck him, while listening to the powerful speech of the hon. Member, that nearly all the hon. Member's arguments would have told equally against all the factory and mining legislation which had been among the most beneficent measures of the last 40 or 50 years. The hon. Member objected to interference with adult labour, but the law already interfered with adult female labour, and nobody, so far as he knew, was opposed to such interference. If he was not mistaken, the hon. Member also intimated last Session that he would be prepared to support the Bill for the compulsory payment of weekly wages. Was that not an interference with adults? And the Truck Act, which, with great advantage to the working population of the country, his hon. Friend had himself amended last year, was not that also an interference with free contract and with adult labour as between employers and workmen? That being so, he had no great difficulty himself in supporting the present Bill. He (Mr. Burt) opposed the Eight Hours Bill on the ground that the workmen, properly united, were perfectly able to settle the question for themselves; but he thought that if his hon. Friend would examine closely, he would find that he was not consistent all round in his opposition to the Bill. One of the most damaging criticisms against the Bill had reference to the exemptions, and especially the exemptions in connection with the bars where intoxicating drinks were sold. He would be one of the first to move in Committee to strike out that exemption, and he believed the hon. Baronet who had charge of the Bill would be very glad to accept the Local Option principle, and also, if the Bill was read a second time, to refer it to a Select Committee. In voting for the Bill, as he (Mr. Burt) was going to do, he simply asserted the principle that the hours of shop assistants were too long, and that Parliament ought to do something in the direction of shortening their hours.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) said, in what he was about to say, he did not profess to enunciate opinions binding anybody except himself—and, perhaps, to a certain extent, the Home Secretary—with regard to the action they took upon this Bill. He felt, however, a certain amount of responsibility in respect of the measure, because he had been a Member of the Select Committee which dealt with the Bill of 1886, and which showed a general desire, if some suitable means could be found, to shorten the hours of labour of those who were employed in some of the shops of the country, in order to give them better means of social enjoyment and intellectual improvement. But this Bill went a great deal further than anything that Committee desired to see effected. No one, however, doubted the disinterested and high motives actuating the hon. Baronet who had brought in the Bill. Nor was there any hesitation in declaring in favour of the ends the hon. Baronet had in view — namely, shorter hours and greater opportunities for recreation and improvement, were it possible to attain them without the unwholesome elements which the present Bill contained. A great deal of argument in favour of this Bill had been based upon the alleged effect of the evidence before the Select Committee. Having heard that evidence, he could not agree with the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. J. Barry) that so large a proportion as 90 or 95 per cent of the shopkeepers examined were in favour of early closing. The Committee had before it shopkeepers large and small—though not many of the latter—factory inspectors, and *employés* in shops. But there was one very large class entirely unrepresented before the Committee, and that was the general public. The question in 1886 was as to limiting the hours of labour of young persons under 18, though it was true that, in answer to leading questions, some witnesses gave evidence which might be construed in favour of universal and absolute early closing. The general tendency of the evidence, however, did not go the length of establishing the extreme proposition embodied in the Bill. So much with regard to the evidence given in 1886. What evidence had we as to the public opinion of to-day? The hon. Baronet had spoken of public meetings. It was a poor cause which could not get up public meetings in its favour. Those who had been a few years in public life knew well enough that in the case of a great many public meetings, you had an audience partly committed beforehand to certain propositions, and partly attracted by mere curiosity. At those meetings there were enthusiastic speakers, and passionate speeches were made, and those always on one side of the question, and in such circumstances it was easy to get the meeting to affirm the propriety of a particular measure. But the hon. Baronet was careful not to mention that there had been large public meetings at which resolutions were carried by great majorities against the Bill. The hon. Baronet told the House that the opposition to the Bill was merely local. But, unfortunately, the Bill was not merely local; it laid down a cast-iron rule for the whole country. In one part of the Bill it might look to a careless reader as if Local Option might be called into action for early closing. But nothing of the kind was the case. One-third of the shopkeepers *plus* one man could enforce the cast-iron rules of the measure, not only against the other two-thirds, but against the general public. The question whether it was for the advantage of the working classes to buy late had been decided by the working classes themselves long ago, and was written in the unmistakable evidence that they did it, and would continue to do it in spite of any law that might be passed. That might not have been done in Newcastle, but the House would require to know more about the circumstances of Newcastle before saying that what the working classes had not done there they did not intend to do at Sheffield, Leeds, or other towns. The conditions of industry varied so immensely all over the country that it was impossible they could have universal legislation on a matter of this kind which would be satisfactory. This was not merely a question of young girls and the poor shop *employés*. It was a question of general interference with the necessities of a great part of the public. It was a question whether you would take away entirely the livelihood of those who, being possibly in straitened circumstances, or being prevented by bodily infirmity, by sex, or by age from engaging in manual labour, set up little shops. Under the Bill, the dreary and unattractive streets of the East End would, after 8 o'clock every night, have nothing bright or attractive in them except the public-house, the drinking club, and the refreshment bar. Why did not the hon. Baronet, if he had anything in him of logic or courage, include within the operation of the measure public-houses and tobacconists' shops? If a man was allowed to buy drink, why could he not buy cold eatables after 8 o'clock; if he could buy tobacco, why should he not buy tea? This Bill, if it was worth anything, ought to include all kinds of distributors alike. The hon. Baronet shrank from applying the principle of the Bill where grown up men were concerned, who would insist upon having a reasonable amount of drink for refreshment and a screw of tobacco up to a certain hour at night. If there was anything established before the Committee there was nothing more abundantly proved than the inveterate habit of the working classes in certain localities to buy what they wanted for their families after 8 o'clock, But all the places where they could do so would be ruthlessly shut up by the hon. Baronet's Bill, while the places where liquor was sold would be left open. He had said that the habit of purchasing late at night was an inveterate habit; it was, however, far from being an inveterate vice; it was one of the unfortunate circumstances of the conditions of their life which he would be glad to see removed, but which certainly a Bill of this kind would do nothing to remove. It was said that this Bill was criticized only in points of detail; but in many cases the criticism of details showed that the principle of the Bill itself was unsound. The hon. Baronet had pointed out that in order to prevent the evasion of the Act it would be necessary to prohibit tobacconists and newsvendors selling various other small and useful articles within the prohibited hours. This was one of the ridiculous consequences of a Bill of this kind, which was started from unwarrantable principles of interference. The Bill also proposed that prosecutions should be originated and carried through by the police, and this practically amounted to a proposal that a particular class should have its special rights vindicated entirely out of the public money, while no such course was taken on behalf of other classes. The hon. Baronet said the Bill would not apply to costermongers. That was not at all so clear; but whether or not it applied to them as vendors, it certainly would apply to them as buyers. They had plenty of information before them to show that the costermongers were a class who had to buy very late their commodities for their own consumption, as well as for their stock-in-trade, as their customers did not patronize them till late. Parliament ought to hesitate long before laying its hands on this useful class. He did not speak on behalf of the Government; but as certain Members of the Committee of 1886 had stated that they had been convinced that the Act of 1886 was inadequate, and that this Bill ought be passed, he had thought it right, as a Member of that Committee, to explain why he still considered the Act of 1886 all that was required. He was then, and still, of opinion that young persons under the age of 18 years required protection, and he therefore voted for the recommendation of the Committee and in favour of the Act. Having passed that Act, it ought to be given a fair trial before further legislation was taken up. It was not the fact that that Act had been a dead letter. The smallness of the number of convictions was by no means an indication that it had been. On the contrary, the hon. Baronet himself had put a question in that House which implied the assertion that the smallness of the number of convictions was largely due to the voluntary efforts of traders to secure compliance with the law. He hoped the House would reject this Bill, because it would unduly interfere with the convenience of the great mass of the working population, because it would tend to raise the price of food by placing restrictions on its distribution, and because it would produce a still worse evil —it would tend to lower the self-reliance, and cause to degenerate the moral fibre of the people.

Mr. CAMERON CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston) said, so fully are the opponents of the measure aware of the great sympathy which is felt for shop assistants, that at the great meeting held at Exeter Hall to protest against the Early Closing Bill the noble Chairman said he was prepared to move an Amendment excluding from the operation of this measure all those shops at which no assistants were kept. When public sympathy was appealed to on such grounds, it was very significant that no such course had been taken to-night. The hon. and learned Member for West Newington (Mr. Radcliffe Cooke) had suggested that the Act for the relief of young assistants should be extended to meet the case of the older assistants; but it was noteworthy that this suggestion was made by the same hon. Member who had stated at the Exeter Hall meeting that that Act was a dead letter. The great difficulty in enforcing any measure for the restriction of the hours of young assistants is that they must be got to give evidence against their employers; and while an immense amount of good had been done in many instances by the hon. Baronet's measure, there were still an enormous number of instances where the law was evaded, and in which the law could only be enforced by having a definite hour of closing. They had heard a great deal to-night of the opposition to the measure amongst small shopkeepers. He

(Mr. Cameron Corbett) was aware that there was a large number, although he believed the minority of the small shopkeepers in London were opposed to the Bill, but in most other parts of the country there was no such opposition. They had a Petition from Edinburgh, signed by 1,200 shopkeepers themselves, not assistants. In Glasgow, a similar petition was signed by over 12,000 people, including 2,750 shopkeepers, and there was not 3 per cent of the shopkeepers in the City who refused to sign the petition. He was told in Dundee that practically there were no refusals at all. It had been a noteworthy feature that throughout the whole of Scotland there had been not a single petition against the measure. Nor had there been any Amendment moved against it at any meeting. Indeed, every indication of the feeling throughout Scotland of the small shopkeepers had been distinctly in favour of the proposal. It was a natural thing in considering a measure of the kind to look around and see whether there were examples of similar legislation in other parts of the world. In Toronto a measure had been so recently carried that they had not yet had an opportunity of judging of its success. They had been told that legislation on these lines had been a failure in Victoria, but he had asked the hon. Member the date of the newspaper from which he was quoting, and he said it was September, 1886. Towards the close of last year there were some Amendments introduced in the Factories Act under which shops were compelled to close early; but there was not only no alteration made in the law as to the closing of shops, but there was no agitation in favour of such alteration. He had beside him a letter from the Agent General of Victoria, written that day, assuring him that although there had been some fiction with regard to carrying out the Act at first, the difficulty had now disappeared, and the Act was working smoothly. So that the example called up in opposition to those who supported the Bill had produced proof that if there were opposition to the principle once, it had been overcome when those who at first objected to such legislation had seen it in practical operation. He hoped that no hon. Member would vote against the second reading on any matter of detail. There would be ample opportunity in Committee for dealing with any minor points on which hon. Members might disagree; and he would earnestly appeal to all hon. Members of the House not to vote against this proposal with a light heart. They had now an opportunity of affording relief to many of the most burdened and weary of their fellow countrymen, and he felt sure that if hon. Members only knew the misery of a life which was one continuous round of toil, without any intervals for recreation, the House would avail itself of this opportunity of increasing the comfort and happiness of those for whom they were called upon to care.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he thought it would be admitted that the balance of the speaking, and almost of the argument, during the discussion had been aimed against the Bill. They had listened to four speeches made in favour of the Bill. The last speaker was the hon. Member for the Tradeston Division of Glasgow (Mr. Cameron Corbett), and he said he was surprised that an Amendment had not been proposed to exclude from the operation of the Act all the shops where there were no assistants. But how could that Amendment have been proposed? Such an Amendment might be proposed in Committee, but the hon. Gentleman had not said that he and those hon. Members who proposed the Bill would accept it. Then the hon. Gentleman said that the feeling of the smaller shopkeepers all through the country with the exception of London was in favour of the Bill, and he proved it by referring to the opinion in Scotland, saying that Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Dundee were in favour of it. Then, let the hon. Gentleman bring in a Bill strictly limited to Scotland, and he promised that if he could get the majority of Scotch Members to declare in its favour, he would, on the sound principle of Home Rule for all parts of the community, vote for him, but he was not for the sake of Scotland ready to have the shops of his constituents closed. The hon. Gentleman said that he had looked to Toronto to see how the principle worked there, but that the Act had not been long enough in operation to afford the means of judging of its effect, which meant probably that the people in Toronto had tried but did not like the measure. His hon. Friend had stated that in Victoria the system had been tried and was a failure, and the hon. Member then produced the Agent General to say that he was in favour of it. The Agent General might have his private opinion about the matter, but the hon. Gentleman must not allow that to outweigh the opinion of the Colony; and he (Mr. Labouchere) gathered that the Bill had been a failure, and that there was the strongest feeling against it in Australia. The hon. Member said that the details of the Bill were a matter that could be settled in Committee. But, if all the details were to be altered in Committee, what would become of the Bill? They were then told that they must look to the principle of the Bill on the second reading; but it said that all shops, with a few exceptions, were to be closed at 8 o'clock in the evening. If that was the principle, he was entirely opposed to that principle, and it would be absolutely impossible if it were retained to pass the Bill in any shape or form. The Bill ought, therefore, to be thrown out on the second reading and not go into Committee. The hon. Member for the Cirencester Division of Gloucestershire (Mr. Winterbotham), who spoke in favour of the Bill, said that women in public-houses did not sit down, but that at railway stations they had time to sit down. That was a matter of opinion, but he should have thought that women at railway stations and refreshment bars had to stand up as long as those employed in grocers' and traders' shops. The hon. Gentleman had used what he must be excused for saying was a piece of clap-trap, when he stated that the voice of nature was in favour of the Bill; he said that because it was the sort of thing hon. Members did in that House when they could say nothing in favour of a measure. The hon. Baronet who brought in the Bill (Sir John Lubbock) had argued in the first place that the question of health was involved; he said that the present long hours were injuring the health of the men and women engaged as shop assistants, and that the women would not bear healthy children if the present system continued. The hon. Baronet cited the opinion of several doctors in support of that statement. But doctors always differed, and he ventured to say that in matters of this kind he should be able to put doctor against doctor; that is to say, if anyone brought forward a doctor to support a particular view, he would produce another on the opposite side. Then the hon. Baronet said, that the Archbishop of Canterbury and the President of the Royal Society or the Presidents of some scientific societies and medical bodies were in favour of the Bill. But this was a very practical measure, and he was bound to say that when he found the hon. Member for the Camberwell Division of Dulwich (Mr. Blundell Maple), who had made a most practical speech that morning and understood these matters—and his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), opposed to the Bill, he would put their opinion against that of any Bishop or Archbishop of any or all the churches in the world, and of every President and every member of every scientific association, medical or otherwise. The hon. Gentleman's objects, he admitted fully, were laudable and excellent. He wanted to put an end to the long hours that *employés* had to serve in shops; but how did he do that? By insisting that all shops, whether there were *employés* or not, should close at 8 o'clock in the evening. But there were some which opened at 6 o'clock. Again, everyone knew that when some shops were closed many *employés* had to remain to put things in order. The drafting of the Bill was so extraordinary that it would allow the unfortunate *employés*, if their masters liked, to remain in the shops for 14 or 15 hours *per diem*. The hon. Baronet must remember that the habits of the people of a country could not be altered, and it was a habit of the poorer people of this country to shop after 8 o'clock. He did not propose to close public-houses, shops where provisions were sold, or tobacco shops, but he would close all others. The effect of this would be a wild orgie after 8 o'clock. There were a great many people who shopped far later than 10 o'clock; they bought meat, cooked or otherwise; frequently wages were paid very late, and the women did not get the money before 10 o'clock. But, if the shops were closed the public-houses would be still open, and it was there that the wages would be spent. Did not the hon. Baronet know that the publicans contended against the closing of public-houses on Sunday, and that this was their great harvest day, and that the effect of the Bill would be to produce the same effect on week days as was now produced on Sundays? Under these circumstances he hoped the hon. Baronet would withdraw the Bill—[*Cries of* "No, No!"] Then it would be lost. If the hon. Baronet would bring in some fair Bill limiting the hours of employment of adult women, he would not say more than that the House would listen to it with more favour that it was willing to do in the present case; if he would bring in a Bill leaving the whole matter to the localities to decide, he believed that would be more favourably received. It was asked whether his hon. Friend had not legislated for adults and limited their rights by his Truck Act, and when he insisted on wages being paid once a week. But the object of that was to prevent fraud on the part of employers of labour; there was no wish to interfere with the employers of labour or the adult labourers. In those Acts they had endeavoured to rectify the balance as far as they could, but he should always be opposed to any interference between the rights of labour and capital, and he should be still more opposed to legislation which, in order to prevent *employés* working more than a certain number of hours a-day, would deprive of their business little shopkeepers who had no assistants, but came out to serve their customers when they heard the bell over their door ring. He hoped the House would not be misled by the notion that the Bill could knocked into shape in Committee. The Bill was unsound in principle and in detail, and he asked hon. Members to reject the Motion for the second reading.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) said, he had to say a few words on this Bill because he wished to justify the vote he was about to give, as he was one of those who, when the Bill was initiated, were certainly inclined to support it. He had always been desirous that the excessive hours of labour in shops throughout the country should be shortened, and he still hoped that some means hereafter might be devised to attain that object. As the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had just observed, if the Bill had been more of a permissive character, if it had relegated the decision as to closing to the Local Authorities, and above all dealt with female labour and child labour, then he thought that the House would have been disposed favourably to consider the proposal of the hon. Baronet. At a public meeting held at St. James's Hall last week, a resolution was moved, and carried on division by an overwhelming majority, against the Bill; an amendment had been proposed in favour of the measure, and the one serious argument that was adduced by the mover of that amendment, and which had a strong effect eventually upon the meeting, was the solemn declaration of that Gentleman that the Bill was permissive and relegated the decision to the Local Authorities. He (Sir Roper Lethbridge) ventured to point out that the Bill was not permissive, and, of course, no one who had read the Bill through could hold that view at all, although it might be believed to be so by many people throughout the country. He had no doubt in his own mind that the Bill was of an oppressive character, and that it was injurious alike to small traders who did not keep any assistants, but who would be limited to certain hours during which they could carry on their occupation, and above all it would be injurious to the working classes, especially in the Metropolis, who were told in the Bill that they were not to obtain the necessaries they might wish to purchase at the hours most convenient to themselves. For these reasons he hoped the House would reject the Motion for the second reading.

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON (Devon, South Molton) said, he wished to make a practical suggestion to the hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill, which was that he should agree, if the House gave a second reading to the Bill, to send it at once for consideration to a Select Committee. He said that because, having heard the whole of the discussion on the Bill, he found that the objections made by the opponents of the measure were based upon particular provisions. His hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) had spoken of public opinion being opposed to the Bill. The question, however, as to what opinion was in favour of or opposed to the Bill was one of a debatable character. The one fact absolutely true, and which had been gainsaid by no one, was that the

Preamble of the Bill was affirmed, and that the shop assistants were detained for too long a time, and that such detention was injurious to their health. That opinion, expressed in the Preamble of the Bill, was also to be found in the Report of the Committee of which the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State was a Member, and the hon. Gentleman who had just addressed the House (Sir Roper Lethbridge) would also remember the fact. One clause of the Report stated that the hours of shop assistants ranged from 84 to 85 hours per week; that such long hours must be generally injurious and even ruinous to health, and that the same amount of business as was now done could be compressed into a less space of time. It dealt only with persons under age, but the Report admitted that it was the custom and unfortunate habit of shopkeepers—not perhaps from any fault of their own, but owing to the necessity of things—to keep their shop assistants for the number of hours mentioned; that such detention was injurious and ruinous to their health, and that the business of the shopkeepers would not suffer by being compressed. In giving support to the Motion for the second reading of the Bill he should do it upon the clear and distinct understanding that he simply voted for the principle of the Bill in Clause 2, which was, that it was desirable and necessary that Parliament should impose some limit on the hours of labour. Having said that, he would be willing to support his hon. Friend's Motion on the condition which he hoped he would be able to accept—namely, that he would relegate every question of detail, the questions of costermongers, Local Option, and others which had been enumerated by several speakers, as they very properly could be, to a Select Committee of that House.

MR. LAFONE (Southwark, Bermondsey) said, the House had heard a good deal about the hours of shop assistants from the hon. Baronet who held a brief for them, but he thought hon. Members would be appalled by the number of persons who would be injured by the Bill among the class who earned their bread by daily wages. He could not do better than give an analysis of the wages sheet at one wharf on the Southern side of the River Thames, and it would then be seen how the Bill, if carried in its entirety, would prevent an enormous number of people obtaining, after they had done work, the necessaries of life. At the wharf in question there were in August 316 men, in September 3,200, in October 1,000, and in the following month 1,600 men, who worked till 8 o'clock at night. These men are only a sample of the large number who would be affected by the Bill of the hon. Baronet. There were other clauses in the Bill equally objectionable. In the first place, it was called a permissive Bill, which meant that the authority on one side of the street should close the shops on that side and that another authority should allow the shops opposite to the others to remain open. That was done already in another way in his own neighbourhood, and the result was that the passengers passed over to the shops that were not closed; and, therefore, the Bill in this respect would be unworkable in many cases. Then, again, the police had been brought into the matter, and it was most invidious that they should have to see that the shopkeepers carried out the very stringent rules of the Bill. There was also the clause which said that if two distinct classes of business were carried on, one would come under the closure rule and the other would not. Did this mean that the shopkeeper was to run up a sliding partition at 8 o'clock to separate the two kinds of goods sold? There were an immense number of persons who were not concerned in the Bill, because they belonged to the class of shopkeepers who did not carry on their business after 6 o'clock, and if figures meant anything these must be taken into account in considering the number of those who were in favour of the measure. It was very unfair and unjust that young people should not be permitted to assist their parents in earning their daily bread; but it was more so to those who were obliged to spend their money day by day as they earned it, and who were paid long after 8 o'clock. Many small shopkeepers had told him that practically all their business was done between 7 and 10 o'clock, and that if this Bill was passed it meant ruin to them. The Bill of the hon. Baronet would cause a revolution of the whole system of labour, and he was quite certain that it could not be carried into effect.

He hoped that the House by a large majority would reject the Bill, and put an end to this system of agitation carried on by the richer classes year after year, and which cast upon the poorer people an expense which they were ill able to bear.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) said, that when as Member for Tyrone he had to discuss this question in his constituency, there was practically absolute unanimity in favour of shortening the hours of labour in shops. In the Metropolis alone was there any serious opposition to the Bill, and he suggested that it was desirable that for the time, at least, the Metropolis should be exempt from its operation. There could be no doubt that the passing of the measure would confer an enormous boon upon a very large class. There were in all our large towns large numbers of young girls kept in shops as a rule up to 10, 11, and 12 o'clock at night, whose constitutions were completely broken. It had been to him one of the most painful experiences to see the failure of physical strength brought upon this class by the hardship of this system of late hours, which was so cruel and exacting that it was absolutely necessary to place some restriction upon it. There was a great necessity for extending the principle of the Factory Acts which had operated so well to a multitude of small trades not touched by them at present; and he hoped that principle would be confirmed by the House agreeing to the Motion for the second reading of this Bill, leaving such modifications of it as might be necessary to be dealt with in Committee.

General FRASER (Lambeth, N.) said, he was opposed to this Bill as the Representative of a constituency which included the New Cut or Lower Marsh, in which there were very large numbers of costermongers and small traders, and he did so because the Bill, if it became law, would bring utter and complete ruin upon thousands of families. If the hon. Baronet was a small trader in Lambeth, he and his family would come to complete ruin in the event of the Bill being passed. He had visited some parts where he had seen hundreds of people making jackets and waistcoats for soldiers at the wages of starvation; they lived from hand to mouth, and when they were paid they did not get home in time to purchase what they wanted before 8 o'clock. He sympathized with the young men and women who were shop assistants, and hoped their employers would give them opportunities for getting air and rest; but in a matter of this kind it should be remembered that it was far easier to lead than to drive. He would not trespass on the time of the House further than to express a hope that it would reject the Motion for the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. THEODORE FRY (Darlington) said, that, having been a Member of the Select Committee of 1886 which investigated this question, he might be allowed to add his testimony as to the overwhelming evidence given in favour of closing shops compulsorily at an early hour. Although it was true that the evidence was chiefly with reference to the employment of young people, yet it was a strong argument in favour of this measure that those who were in favour of young people being dismissed at certain hours, were almost all in favour of the earlier and compulsory closing of shops. He was not one who did not see that there were difficulties in the present case, but they almost all related to the Metropolis, and it might be possible to meet the views of hon. Members who objected to the Bill by making the hour of closing 9 instead of 8 o'clock. It was surprising to him that almost all those who objected to the Bill ignored the principle on which it was based—namely, the injury to health which resulted to those who were employed for so many hours. They were told by some large employers that the effect of passing the former Act would be the dismissal of young persons under 18 years of age, and that for some years none would be engaged until they had passed that period of life; but that, like many other objections, had not been borne out when the Act came into operation. He was glad to see the newborn zeal of some hon. Members opposite for the early closing of public-houses, and he trusted that the hon. Member for the Dulwich Division of Camberwell (Mr. Blundell Maple) would also take some part in that work. They all knew that the public-house *employés* were the hardest worked class in the Kingdom. An Inspector of Police told the Committee that he was in favour of the early closing of public-houses. He said that those who were engaged in them "were worked very hard indeed," and it was because of that he was in favour of public-houses being closed at the same time as the shops. He, therefore, trusted that this class would receive some share of the sympathy which had been expressed that day. One young woman, engaged at the refreshment room of a railway station, had told him that the assistants began work at 9 in the morning and worked till 12 at night, and that they were not allowed to sit down until 9 o'clock in the evening. He was sure that all that had been stated by the hon. Baronet with reference to the health of the *employés* in shops extended also to those who were engaged in public-houses and at refreshment bars. He did not altogether approve of the revival of the Act of Charles II., in whose days there were no tramcars, railways, or omnibuses. There were certain points which could be amended in Committee. He was fully alive to the difficulties of the case, but he should vote for the second reading of the Bill.

MR. COWLEY LAMBERT (Islington, E.) said, the hon. Member for Darlington (Mr. Theodore Fry) had stated that hon. Gentlemen who objected to the Bill ignored the question of health. But the hon. Member sat upon the Committee of 1886, and he would read in the general Report that the death rate among shopkeepers was considerably less than that of any other class mentioned. He found that out of 17 different classes mentioned, the shopkeepers' death rate was only 9 per cent, that of the other classes being much higher; in fact, it was 2½ per cent less than the death rate among physicians, who had to look after the health of the rest of the people. Out of something like 40 witnesses who came before the Commission as connected with trade, no less then 28 were drapers, and this might almost be called the Drapers' Early Closing Bill, because it was they who had got up the agitation, and, he believed, found the money for the meetings; they pulled the strings, and it was simply because they objected to other shops being kept open after they were supposed to close, that they carried on the agitation. As far as he—who represented a very poor district in the North of London—was concerned, he knew that almost the whole of the shopping done by his constituents took place between 8 and 10 o'clock, and even much later. Up to half-past 10 o'clock he found Essex Road and the New North Road a market in every sense of the word; and he knew that unless the people of the district had an opportunity of doing their shopping after 8 o'clock, they would run the chance almost of ruin and starvation, because the women could not go out to buy before the bread winner came home, and it was very difficult for him to get back before 8 o'clock. He had the strongest desire to see the health of the assistants improved and facilities given for rest and recreation; but, for the reasons given, he felt bound to oppose the Bill as strongly as he could.

MR. AUSTIN (York, W.R., Osgoldcross) said, the voice of Yorkshire on this question had spoken with no uncertain sound. The Petition presented against the Bill was signed by 32,240 persons, of whom 2,888 were small shopkeepers in the West Riding. It was signed by gentlemen well known to, and enjoying the confidence of, the working classes—31 Town Councillors, 596 grocers, 236 general dealers, confectioners, and traders in articles of general consumption in the large towns which he had the honour to represent—and he thought he was justified in saying that the voice of Yorkshire was in direct opposition to the Bill. It was not his intention to go into any details of the measure, because he believed the House simply wanted to arrive at a knowledge of the feeling on the subject of those persons whom it would affect. It had been pointed out by hon. Gentlemen opposed to the Bill that the people of the Metropolis would buy articles of consumption at a late hour; and he could inform hon. Members that an enormous number of ironworkers in Yorkshire had no opportunity of buying what they needed except at a late hour, and the thousands upon thousands represented on the Petition he had referred to showed how much they would suffer if the Bill were to become law. Many of the shopkeepers did not employ any servants; and he had received a communication from one who employed her three daughters, who said that not only would that assistance be taken away from her, but that the greatest hardship would be inflicted on her customers.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

MR. SPEAKER : I would point out to the noble Lord that there are still 10 minutes, during which the debate can be continued, and also that there is the right of reply on the part of the Mover of the Motion before the House.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I am only anxious to get a Division, and that this question should not be talked out, and no result shown.

MR. AUSTIN said, that in deference to the wish of the House he would close his remarks by saying that he opposed the Bill, because the two classes whom it would most affect — namely, the workingmen and small shopkeepers, did not want it.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, in opposing the Bill the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had stated that he would bring "doctor against doctor;" but he (Sir John Lubbock) was sure the hon. Gentleman would find it impossible to obtain medimedical evidence contrary to that which the supporters of the Bill had put forward. It had been said that these long hours were killing more people than the Reign of Terror. As regarded the effect of the Bill upon the temperance of the people, it was argued that under the present system working men went into public-houses and knowing that the shops would be open to almost any hour they remained late, and when they did come out they had nothing left to spend in the shops; whereas, on the contrary, if they knew that the shops would close at a reasonable hour they would do their shopping first, to the great advantage of their wives and families. The principle of the Bill was to reduce the hours of labour in shops, and he contended that he had shown grounds for making some effort in that direction. He hoped hon. Members would not be deterred from voting for the second reading because of any detailed provisions which they disapproved. He had stated that he and his hon. Friends would be glad to listen in Committee to all objections on points of detail, and he therefore hoped that those who were in favour of the broad principle of the Bill would vote for the second reading. Several hon. Members had spoken in favour of leaving the hours to be decided by Local Authorities. There were objections to this; but, at the same time, they would see that, by the introduction of a few words only, it would be possible to introduce that principle into the Bill, if it were thought desirable. He would be ready to discuss with hon. Members the exact hours to be fixed in the Metropolis. There were more than 60 Metropolitan Members, and if they were desirous of excluding London from the operation of the measure, they were, of course, strong enough to do so, much as he should regret it. He had no objection to the Bill being referred to a Select Committee. He hoped the House would agree to the principle of the Bill, for the hours of labour in shops were terribly long, and it was time that some determined effort should be made to shorten them.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 95; Noes 278; Majority 183.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Asher, A.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, Sir G.
Barbour, W. B.
Baring, T. C.
Barry, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Bolitho, T. B.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Byrne, G. M.
Caldwell, J.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, H.
Channing, F. A.
Cobb, H. P.
Coghill, D. H.
Corbet, W. J.
Corbett, A. C.
Cossham, H.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Crawford, D.
Crawford, W.
Crilly, D.
Cross, H. S.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Firth, J. F. B.
Flower, C.
Foley, P. J.
Forster, Sir C.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fry, T.
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gourley, E. T.
Grey, Sir E.
Harris, M.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Holden, I.
Hoyle, I.
Kerans, F. H.
Kilbride, D.
Lawson, Sir W.
Leake, R.
Lymington, Viscount
MacInnes, M.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Mahony, P.
Morgan, right hon. G. O.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Connor, A.
O'Kelly, J.
Pickard, B.
Power, R.
Price, T. P.
Pugh, D.
Quinn, T.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, R. T.
Richard, H.
Richardson, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, T. W.
Samuelson, Sir B.
Schwann, C. E.
Sellar, A. C.

Simon, Sir J.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, S.
Stack, J.
Sullivan, D.
Sutherland, A.
Sutherland, T.
Swetenham, E.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Talbot, J. G.
Tanner, C. K.
Thomas, D. A.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Whitley, E.
Williamson, S.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Wright, C.

TELLERS.

Burt, T.
Lubbock, Sir J.

NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Ainslie, W. G.
Aird, J.
Allison, R. A.
Allsopp, hon. P.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anderson, C. H.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Asquith, H. H.
Austin, J.
Baden-Powell, Sir G. S.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Banes, Major G. E.
Barclay, J. W.
Barnes, A.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Bazley-White, J.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beadel, W. J.
Bective, Earl of
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Bolton, J. C.
Bolton, T. D.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, Lord H.
Brunner, J. T.
Burghley, Lord
Caine, W. S.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, J. A.
Causton, R. K.
Cavan, Earl of
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, R.
Charrington, S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coddington, W.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Compton, F.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Davenport, H. T.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Dugdale, J. S.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Egerton, hon. A. J. F.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Esslemont, P.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Fellowes, A. E.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fielden, T.
Finch, G. H.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Flynn, J. C.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fulton, J. F.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gent-Davis, R.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Gladstone, H. J.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, right hon. G. J.
Granby, Marquess of
Gray, C. W.
Grimston, Viscount
Grove, Sir T. F.
Gully, W. C.
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E.B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, E.
Hardcastle, F.
Harrington, E.
Heath, A. R.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hill, A. S.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Holloway, G.
Hornby, W. H.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Howard, J.
Howell, G.
Hubbard, hon. E.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Illingworth, A.
Isaacs, L. H.
Jackson, W. L.
Jacoby, J. A.
Jennings, L. J.
Kelly, J. R.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, L.
Labouchere, H.
Lafone, A.
Lambert, C.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Legh, T. W.
Lennox, Lord W. C. Gordon-
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewis, Sir C. E.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Lockwood, F.
Long, W. H.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lowther, J. W.
Lyell, L.
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Macdonald, W. A.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Donald, P.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Matthews, right hon. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Menzies, R. S.
Mildmay, F. B.
Montagu, S.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, right hon. Sir J. R.
Muncaster, Lord
Mundella, right hon. A. J.
Newark, Viscount
Norris, E. S.
Norton, R.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, J.
O'Keeffe, F.
Parker, hon. F.
Paulton, J. M.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pease, A. E.
Pelly, Sir L.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Pomfret, W. P.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, F. S.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, right hon. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, B.
Roe, T.
Rollit, Sir A. K.
Round, J.
Rowlands, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Salt, T.
Samuelson, G. B.
Selwin-Ibbetson, rt. hon. Sir H. J.
Selwyn, Capt. C. W.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.

Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stephens, H. C.
Stepney - Cowell, Sir A. K.
Stuart, J.
Summers, W.
Sykes, C.
Tapling, T. K.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Trotter, Colonel H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vincent, Col. C. E. H.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Warmington, C. M.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Watson, J.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wiggin, H.
Williams, A. J.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Winn, hon. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Woodall, W.
Woodhead, J.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.
Bradlaugh, C.
Maple, J. B.

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 3rd May, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Universities (Scotland) (47).
Committee—Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, Amendment * (68-88).
Committee—Report—Westminster Abbey * (57); Customs (Isle of Man) * (60).
Report—Copyhold Acts Amendment * (77-89).

THE EARL OF CARNARVON AND MR. PARNELL.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: I wish, my Lords, to ask your indulgence for a few minutes while I speak of a matter which is personal to myself. During a considerable absence from this country I find that my name has been very frequently used, and allusions made to matters which passed between me and another person on a particular point. I might have thought it necessary to dispense altogether with a full notice of these attacks, as I must consider them, because about two years ago I laid before your Lordships a very clear statement of what occurred on that particular occasion. But, upon the whole I think I am bound to make an answer, and it shall be a short one. First, I must observe that it is hardly consistent with the usual laws of Parliamentary fairness to wait until a person against whom the attack is made is in such a position as to render it absolutely impossible for him to reply to it. If these allegations which have been made with regard to me were founded in truth, there was no earthly reason why they could not have been said during the whole course of last Summer, when I could have replied to them either in this place or elsewhere; but those who thought fit to make them waited until I had 13,000 miles of sea between me and this country, and then an old story was vamped up with very considerable additions and embellishments. Now, my Lords, I shall confine myself to two allegations which were made—first, because they are the most important, and, secondly, because they were made by one and the same important person. They are allegations which were made by Mr. Parnell now some five or six weeks ago, and they refer to two subjects—first, the Crossmaglen murder conspiracy in Ireland, and, secondly, certain things which I am alleged to have said to him in my conversation with him two years ago. With regard to the Crossmaglen case, your Lordships perhaps will remember that there was a gang of prisoners tried and convicted for, I think, conspiracy to murder, and sentenced to long periods of imprisonment. This occurred at the time when my noble Friend opposite (Earl Spencer) was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. My noble Friend had been repeatedly asked to reconsider his decision, but had always declined to depart from his original decision. I observe that Mr. Parnell stated, or is reported to have stated, with regard to myself that—

> "Shortly before the General Election in 1885 an hon. Friend came to me in Dublin, and told me that he had just been sent for by Lord Carnarvon, and that his Lordship evidently wished him to communicate what he had told to me, and it was to this effect—that Lord Carnarvon had investigated the cases of the Crossmaglen and the Barbavilla prisoners, and had come to the conclusion that the latter were justly convicted, and that he could not interfere, but that in the case of the Crossmaglen prisoners he did not think that there was sufficient evidence for a conviction, and that he intended to liberate them forthwith."

Now, my Lords, I hardly regret that

that statement was made, because there is just enough truth in it to give colour to it, and just enough misrepresentation in it to make it an excellent illustration of the nature of some of these allegations which have been made with regard to myself. The real story is simply this. The case of these prisoners, like all others, came before me in the natural course of business. I was pressed by many persons to reprieve the prisoners or to vary their sentences. I was pressed in one particular case by a gentleman, who is now dead, in my own drawing-room after dinner, and I told him that I had considered that case with care, and that in my opinion there was one prisoner out of the whole gang against whom, so far as I could see, there was not sufficient evidence to warrant his detention, and I said that I should certainly consider the evidence carefully in respect of that particular individual. I did do so; I considered the case so carefully that I brought it under the special consideration of the noble Lord the Lord Chancellor of Ireland and of the learned Judge who tried the case and of the Law Officers of the Crown, and it was only after they had sifted and re-sifted the matter that I came to the conclusion that my own opinion, which was only that of a layman, could not be set up in opposition to those of the law authorities, which were conclusive upon the point; and if anyone will refer to the official records of the time he will find my account of the matter to be absolutely correct. Therefore, this is really what this precious story comes to —that I had undertaken to consider the case of one prisoner, feeling very doubtful whether there was sufficient evidence against him, and that is construed into a distinct promise that I would liberate every one of the gang who were then imprisoned. That is the first point. I observe that Mr. Parnell refers also to the Maamtrasna and the Barbavilla cases, and, with regard to them, I can only say that I undoubtedly refused to reopen them. I was bound as a matter of courtesy, and of official duty, to look into any memorial relating to the matters which was brought before me, but I never gave any hope whatever that I would vary the sentences which had been awarded or alter the decision which my noble Friend opposite had come to. If Mr. Parnell, in his place in the House of Commons, gave a contradictory account of the matter, I can only say that such an account is absolutely contrary to the fact. Now I come to the second allegation, which is, after all, the more important of the two. Mr. Parnell came to me and entered into conversation with me, and his statement of what occured at that interview was this—

> "Lord Carnarvon expressed to me the strongest belief that only by the concession of an Irish Parliament could the Irish question be settled, and that it was to be a Parliament, and that it was to be called a Parliament, that it was to have most extensive powers, even going as far as the right of protecting Irish industries by the imposition of protective tariffs. . . Lord Carnarvon's views, as conveyed to me, or rather as we exchanged them in our interview, were absolutely identical."

Now, my Lords, it is perfectly true that all Mr. Parnell said with regard to an Irish Parliament was said in that conversation, but it was said, not by me, but by Mr. Parnell; and as regards even my concurrence in what he said, Mr. Parnell has allowed his imagination to run away with him, both in his conversation and in my replies. That conversation consisted in the main of questions on my part, and of answers and explanations on his part, and I never made any promise nor gave any assurance in the direction he has indicated. I repeatedly warned him that he came to me for the purpose of giving me information, that he was speaking to me and me alone for the sake of information, that I alone was responsible for that meeting, and that no responsibility in respect to it was to be attached to any of my Colleagues in the Cabinet. I could give a version of what Mr. Parnell said —a great deal passed which was no doubt intended to be confined within the four corners of the room. Mr. Parnell may forget that the conversation was private as between gentleman and gentleman. "As between gentleman and gentleman" was the formula I remember using, and he assented. A great deal of the conversation might have been interesting, and some of it amusing if repeated, but for my part, I should not repeat it. My right hon. Friend in the other House of Parliament was good enough to make a reply for me upon the subject, and I take this opportunity of expressing my obligations to him for that speech, which was a very manly, straightforward reply in many ways, and indeed was one which in some degree does away with the necessity for my making these observations to-night. Among other things, Mr. Balfour said—

> "'Lord Salisbury in 1886 said—'Lord Carnarvon treated me absolutely without reserve, and I know what passed at that interview with Mr. Parnell. The statement that he gave any ground to believe that the Conservative Government would favour the establishment of an Irish Legislature is absolutely without foundation,'"

I can confirm every syllable that Mr. Balfour uttered on that occasion. I should have been wanting in my duty if I had failed to inform my noble Friend at the head of the Government of my intention of holding that meeting with Mr. Parnell, and still more should I have failed in my duty if I had not acquainted him with what had passed between us at the interview at the earliest possible moment. Accordingly, both by writing and by words, I gave the noble Marquess as careful and as accurate a statement as possible of what had occurred within 24 hours after the meeting, and my noble Friend was good enough to say that I had conducted that conversation with perfect discretion. Your Lordships will consider whether it was likely that I should have made such preposterous statements as those which have been charged against me. I think, my Lords, that I have now disposed of this unfounded and ridiculous story. My opinions have been frequently alluded to during the past few months, but I do not think it necessary to go into them at the present time. I have already indicated more than once in this House what my opinions are, and when the opportunity arises I shall be perfectly willing to do so again. Nor do I think it necessary to justify the meeting I had with Mr. Parnell, as I have justified it on a former occasion. I can see no reason whatever for thinking that I was guilty of imprudence or unwisdom in the matter. Looking at the circumstances of that time, it was common sense to ascertain the opinion of the most important person in Ireland, and therefore I did not, when I went to that country, shut my ears to information that could be obtained from any person who was entitled to give it. It would have been absurd if I had consented to hear only subordinates and had refused to listen to the leader of the most important Party in Ireland. There might have been, as I have been sometimes told there was, an error of judgment on my part, but if there was such an error of judgment it consisted in my accepting such a meeting without the presence of witnesses.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(*The Marquess of Lothian.*)

(NO. 47.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (The Marquess of LOTHIAN), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it had no direct bearing on any educational matter in England, but he thought he should have the attention, at any rate, of those Members of their Lordships' House who were connected with Scotland, and who, if their experience during the last few weeks in any way resembled his, had been forced to take an almost painful interest in the Bill. It would, perhaps, conduce to a better understanding of the Bill if he referred very shortly to the history of legislation with regard to the Universities of Scotland. He would not go further back than the Commission of 1831, which was presided over by a Predecessor of the noble Earl (the Earl of Rosebery). There were other Commissions in 1837, 1839, 1843, and 1845, which were appointed to inquire into individual Universities, and a Bill, founded on these Reports, was introduced and passed in 1858. That was the Bill under which the government of the Universities of Scotland as it now existed was appointed. A Commission was appointed to carry out the provisions of that Bill, and that Commission reported in 1863. But educational interests had so changed during the interval that another Royal Commission was appointed in 1876, and it reported in 1878. Parliamentary action had been taken on the Report of that Commission on several occasions, but no Bill had ever passed through Parliament. Year after year, Session after Session, in 1883, 1884, 1885, and last year, Bills dealing with the Universities of Scotland had been presented to Parliament, but they had all shared the same fate. He earnestly hoped that the Bill which the Government had introduced this Session might fare better, because he could conceive nothing more inimical to the interests of higher education in Scotland than that this transitional state of things, which made it impossible that any definite arrangements, either with regard to educational or financial matters, should go on year after year. He would ask their Lordships to look upon the Universities of Scotland as differing essentially from those of England. The oldest Universities of Scotland had been founded generally upon the same principles as those of England, but in consequence of progress in every direction the Universities of England had diverged very largely from their original foundations, while those of Scotland, although they had altered also, remained more nearly what they were when founded. The Universities of England were generally resorted to by what might be called the higher classes, whereas the Universities of Scotland were attended by all classes of the community. Nothing could be a greater test of the difference in the way Universities were looked upon in Scotland and in England than the single fact that while the proportion of the population of England that attended the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge was about one in 5,000, in Scotland the proportion that attended the Universities was about one in 600. There were other differences. In Scotland there were no resident students, and the Universities had no control whatever over the students unless when they were within their walls. The system of teaching, too, was different, being given in class-rooms, which were often overcrowded and insufficient to accommodate the numbers attending. Another point of difference was that in Scotland the attendance was compulsory, no degree being granted without the required attendance, and the payment of the fees necessary for such attendance. There was no doubt whatever that the system of the Scottish Universities was very much cheaper than in England. He would not be far wrong if he said that an annual sum of about 10 guineas might cover the whole of the fees exacted in Scotland to enable a student to qualify for a degree. The constitution of the Universities as it existed under the Act of 1858, and which it was now proposed to alter, consisted of three bodies—the University Court, the Senatus Academicus, and the General Council. Among the points on which the Royal Commission of 1878 reported were the constitution and powers of the University Court; the course of studies in arts, medicine, law, and divinity; the expediency of introducing any new fellowship or degrees; extra-mural teaching, and the conditions under which it should be recognized. With regard to the constitution of the University Court, it was composed, generally speaking, of six members—of the rector, the principal, and assessors nominated by the Chancellor, the rector, and General Council, and the Senatus Academicus. In the case of the University of Glasgow, there was one additional member—the Dean of Faculty—which made seven; and in the case of Edinburgh there was added the Lord Provost, and an assessor nominated by the Town Council. That made the largest Court, consisting of eight members. Under this Bill it was proposed largely to increase the numbers of the University Court. He was aware that one of the objections to this proposal was that a small body was more capable of dealing with financial and educational details than a very much larger body. But he had considered that in making new constitutions for the Universities it was exceedingly desirable to admit others beyond the limited number which constituted the Board under the Bill of 1858. Further powers and duties were given to the Court, and it was proposed to give a place on the Board for the first time to those who represented the public interest, and from whom they hoped so much improvement in the future. That was the only new element imported. Whereas in the Court as now constituted there was one assessor representing the General Council and one representing the Senatus Academicus, it was proposed to multiply that representation by four. In the Report of the Royal Commission of 1878 it was proposed that the Senatus Academicus should have one more assessor on the University Court, and that the General Council should have two more. He had not thought it advisable to give effect to that proposal, but he had increased the number of the assessors of both these bodies in equal proportions. There was one clause which had given rise to a great deal of discussion, and that was Clause 5, subsection 1, relating to the admission of heads of Colleges. He would not, however, refer to this point until he came to the clause dealing with the powers of the Commissioners with regard to affiliation of other Colleges. In reference to those powers, he wished to direct attention more particularly to those special clauses which provide for the future extension of the Universities of Scotland. Formely those powers of extension were represented by the solitary case of St. Andrew's. In the present Bill power was given to the Commissioners in the first instance, and after the expiration of their powers to the University Court, with the consent of Her Majesty in Council, to extend the existing area of the Universities, and to add to them, by any suitable means of union which they might consider desirable, any existing Colleges, or any Colleges which private generosity might in future establish. He thought the necessity for extending University education in Scotland could not be denied. Every year the number of students was increasing, every year the demand for higher education and for new facilities was becoming stronger. At present the classes of some of the Professors were filled to overflowing, and already rival institutions were rising up in the great centres of population. They must either give facilities under just conditions for these rising institutions to amalgamate with the ancient seats of learning—namely, the Universities—or they would have to meet the irresistible argument of those other Colleges which were asking for University privileges, and were rising up as competitors to the existing Universities. He thought if foundations were started and large endowments were given to new Colleges, that it would be a great misfortune if there were no means of uniting these Colleges to the existing Universities of Scotland, because it would create competition between these Colleges and the Universities, which could have only one result—namely, a depreciation in the value of the degrees conferred by the Universities. But he had rather anticipated what he had to say about the affiliation clauses, which should have properly been dealt with in referring to Clause 14. By the first sub-section of Clause 6 it was proposed to transfer to the new University Court the administration and management of the whole funds and property of the University, and power was given to administer, not only the funds and endowments and revenues of existing Colleges, but also the endowments and funds of any College which might be in any way united with the Universities. The Commission which sat in 1831 recommended the establishment of a University Court, and that recommendation directly pointed to this, that in the opinion of the Commission the control of the property and funds of the College should not be committed to the Senatus Academicus, because they said a University Court should be appointed in order that it might exercise a control over the funds and property of the University. At present it had nominally the control, because the dealings of the Senatus Academicus in regard to money matters was to be subject to the University Court, but the control was only a nominal one. He believed the transfer of the management of the funds to the University Courts would be a very great convenience, and it seemed very desirable that this relief should be given to the Senatus Academicus. There was another point in Clause 6 which had created a good deal of opposition. That was Sub-section 3, which gave power to the University Court to review any decision which the Senatus Academicus might come to in the exercise of their powers under Section 7, sub-section 1. If it should appear to their Lordships desirable that some alteration should be made in the clause, he should be prepared to consider the matter in Committee, in order, if possible, to meet the strong objections of those who were opposed to the sub-section. What he had just said would apply also to Clause 7, sub-section 1, which was in much the same position. With regard to the powers proposed to be given to the Commissioners, there was some question as to the transfer of the patronage which was now vested in private bodies. In deference to the strong feeling in Edinburgh, with which he concurred, he proposed to introduce words safeguarding the patronage of the curatorial Court. He would now return to the "affiliation" clauses, about which doubtless there was a great difference of opinion. It had been said that no proper definition had been given of the words "affiliation," "incorporation," and "union." He would venture to interpret the word "affiliation" as meaning a union in a subordinate degree with the power of dissolving that union should circumstances require that such union should be dissolved. The term "incorporation" might be defined as union on an equal and permanent footing; and "union" was meant to cover any other form of union which might seem desirable to the Commissioners. These words had simply been introduced in order to give the Commissioners ample power to unite with other Colleges if it might appear to them desirable. The whole object of the clause was to give opportunity for the extension and elasticity of University teaching. Those who were best acquainted with the University system in Scotland would not deny that such an opportunity was desirable, and that it was important to give powers to the Commissioners to make such regulations as should ensure elasticity of teaching in the Universities of Scotland. It was claimed that this power already existed, but it only existed to a certain extent. It existed in Edinburgh chiefly by giving Professors of extra-mural classes the right for graduation in the University. In Edinburgh affiliation extended far beyond Edinburgh itself. Edinburgh had affiliated Professors in Aberystwith, Bangor, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Dublin, and Dundee. That affiliation gave the power to all those who attended the classes in those different places to obtain University degrees at Edinburgh. But would it not be very much better that the Commissioners should have power to lay down rules, regulations, and ordinances with regard to the manner in which these Colleges or extra-mural classes should be affiliated with the University of Edinburgh and other Universities? Under this Bill there was every kind of safeguard given for the protection of the Universities. But, although the conditions in the Bill were stringent enough, there was nothing in the Bill to prevent the Commissioners from making such rules as they might think right to make those conditions more effective. Unless some such powers as were sought were given, he was afraid that the extension and growth of the University system of Scotland, which it was the object of the Bill to foster and promote, would not really take place; and if progress was impossible, and things came to a standstill, he was afraid they would never in the future get the benefit of large endowments for the establishment of Colleges in connection with the Scottish Universities. This was not a new principle, nor against the principle of the University system in Scotland. Their original principle was very much the same as that of Oxford and Cambridge. The original title of Edinburgh University was "the College of King James in the University of Edinburgh," and the Principal of Glasgow University was, until quite lately, called the Principal of the College of Glasgow in the University of Glasgow. But the real difficulty which had caused all this feeling about an affiliation of new Colleges, especially in connection with the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, was the fact that the existing Colleges had become so intimately united with the Universities that there was no possible division between them, and the fear was that if new Colleges were actually united to the central College, they would have control not only over the University funds, but over the funds and administration of the Colleges, which now practically constituted the University. That was a point of difficulty, and had not now arisen for the first time. It had been fully gone into on a former occasion, and an attempt was made to separate the Colleges from the Universities, and give the Colleges power and control over their own administration and funds as apart from the Universities. That was found to be alike impossible and undesirable, and this Bill made no attempt whatever to deal with the matter in that way; and he would ask their Lordships to believe that in the proposals the Government now made they had had one single idea—namely, what was really for the good of the Scottish Universities. This had been called a crude measure. That was rather a harsh word; but he would only say that the result would have ended in disaster if the Bill had attempted to define exactly the relations and position of the Colleges. Again, it was said that some of these provisions were proposed in consequence of the noisy clamour of persons unconnected with the Universities. He protested against such language. He believed that every one of those who had made representations were, like himself, actuated by but one motive—namely, to do that which was best for the future of the Universities. He did not wish to adhere exactly to the words of some of those clauses, and if Amendments could be suggested in their Lordships' wisdom that would be for the benefit of the interests of the Scottish Universities, he would be willing to consider them. He did not think he need go into many other of the provisions of the Bill. They were chiefly technical; but, perhaps, he might refer to the proposal to transfer the Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh from the Town Council to the University. He understood that there was considerable opposition to that proposal; but in connection with that, it was owing to an understanding on that subject come to with a former Government that this clause was inserted. But as there was no doubt considerable objection to that proposal, he would consult those who were the proper authorities in the matter, and see if some arrangement could not be arrived at, by which the gardens could be transferred in such a manner as to meet the views of those who were now objecting to the change. The only other point was the question of finance, which it was, perhaps, hardly proper for him to take up in this House. He had now shortly—perhaps too shortly—laid before their Lordships the main provisions of this Bill. It was one which had created in Scotland, where the interests of the Universities were much more closely interwoven with the national life—owing partly to the more general feeling in regard to education, and more still to the larger number from whom the ranks of the students were recruited—an amount of interest which might seem, perhaps, to their Lordships to be out of proportion to the subject itself. However that might be, it had been his great object—the object of Her Majesty's Government—to lay before their Lordships a Bill which, though, as he would be the first to acknowledge, it might in some ways be usefully amended by the experience and knowledge of their Lordships, was a sincere attempt to settle this long-pending question. He had, with that view, desired to give every opportunity for remark, criticism, and discussion. He purposely gave as long an interval as possible between the first and second reading, so that, before the subject came before their Lordships, there might be every opportunity for considering all the provisions of the Bill, affecting, as it did, the interests of many. From a strategic point of view, possibly this was not his best course, as it had, of course, given every opportunity to those who objected to the provisions to get up opposition. But his action had at least shown that he desired nothing more than that the Bill should be one which should give satisfaction. Indeed, he thought he might fairly say that it was so recognized. Even those who were now opposed to different points cordially express their desire that the Bill should become law. He therefore now left this—speaking as a Scotsman—most important measure in their Lordships' hands, only earnestly impressing upon them this, that no action would be more injurious, no such alteration in the Bill as it was now presented could be more harmful, to the interests of the Universities than that any change should be insisted on which might endanger or prevent the passing of this measure of University reform, and leave those who were most interested and who were most concerned in the welfare of Scottish Universities to the unhappy conclusion that, after so many Bills had been presented, so many earnest attempts had failed, Parliament itself was practically unable to cope with the difficulties attending this great and vital question.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a." (*The Marquess of Lothian.*)

Lord WATSON said, he thought that the great bulk of the clauses of the Bill would be accepted by the people of Scotland, who took a deep interest in the extension and welfare of the Universities. He therefore echoed the noble Marquess's wish that the Bill should pass this Session. But if, unhappily, it should fail to do so, the fault would in some measure lie with the noble Marquess, because along with clauses which met with general acceptance there were others about which the people of Scotland entertained great doubt, both as to their meaning and effect; and with respect to which there had not been sufficient inquiry and consideration. The subject had been before Parliament for several years, and many of the questions had been so thoroughly discussed that he believed that although there were still differences of opinion, yet, on the whole, a fair compromise of disputed points had been arrived at in the Bill. There were, again, some clauses full of promise to the eye providing for the institution of new professorships, scholarships, and lectureships. If all this could be done and adequate endowments provided, the heart of every Scotchman would indeed be gladdened. He was bound to say that, although the Scottish Universities stood in need of aid and amendment, there was no amendment and no aid which they more urgently required than an addition to the funds in their exchequer. Of course, how far the financial arrangements would prove satisfactory depended on the manner in which the clause dealing therewith might be filled up in "another place." Upon that the practical value of the measure would mainly depend. The new clauses of the Bill might be divided into two parts. In the first place, there were those which dealt with the transfer of financial administration from the Senatus to the University Court. It was not suggested that the administration of University funds by the Senatus had been anything but honest, fair, and efficient; and he had no doubt the same result would follow upon the transfer. But he regretted that the Bill omitted to direct the Commissioners to make some adequate pecuniary provision out of the funds of the University for the purpose of enabling the Senatus to pay the expenses necessarily incurred in the discharge of their duty. The absence of such a direction might lead to misapprehension. But by far the most important matter for consideration was the question of affiliation, union, or incorporation. He regretted to say that the able speech of the noble Marquess had left his mind as much a blank as to what those words meant as it was before he commenced. That feeling was shared by the very bodies to whom the noble Marquess appealed as the persons who were desirous of having this part of the Bill. In support of that statement he would refer only to the resolutions come to by the General Councils, which were composed of all graduates of the University in meeting assembled, upon this part of the measure. It had not been discussed until very recently as a practical measure before Parliament. There had been little time to discuss it, and there was little knowledge of its actual meaning and effect. The noble Marquess assured them that they were all as much informed as he was himself, but he ventured to say that there were very few people who knew anything about these Colleges which were said to be springing up, and which in a short time would ask for incorporation. The General Council of the University of Edinburgh was of opinion that these powers as to affiliation were too vague, that they should be defined, and that they should be restricted to affiliation. The Glasgow Council, which, he believed, numbered amongst its members some of the strongest advocates of the clauses the noble Marquess had introduced, was of opinion that it was absolutely necessary that the terms of affiliation and incorporation should be defined, and that due regard should be had to the interests of the Universities. In Aberdeen the Council came to a resolution that a more judicious proceeding would be to make it an instruction to the Committee to inquire and report in regard to the subject-matter of affiliation. He could quite understand what affiliation meant; it was affiliation for the purpose of graduation only. Reference was made by the noble Marquess to the case of extramural teachers and outdoor teachers who were accepted by the University. Now, the only effect of recognizing extramural professors or outdoor teachers was this, that their teaching was accepted as qualifying for examination for a degree, and under proper conditions he did not see any reason why, in the case of the Universities of Scotland, as well as of Oxford and Cambridge, such a connection between the University and the other teaching bodies ought not to be permitted. Affiliation in the English University was on condition that the union should not be effected without the consent of the University, and that it should be dissoluble at the will of either of the parties to it. In such a case it was absolutely essential that some provision should be made for dissolving. The University, in the case of affiliation, had no control whatever over the funds of the affiliated body, over the patronage of its teaching staff, and manifestly the University ought not to be compelled to continue to accept its teaching for a single moment after it became the opinion of the University Authorities ineffective. He did not know what incorporation meant in this Bill. He knew very well what in Scotch law and Scotch vernacular incorporation meant. Out of this Bill it meant that the thing incorporated became an integral part and portion of that with which it was incorporated, and if the incorporation of a small College of half-a-dozen professors was completed, its teachers would be as much a part of the University and of the Senatus as any of its present professors. The noble Marquess said it would be impossible—at all events inexpedient—to lay down any lines for the guidance of the Commission upon this point of affiliation—to make, in other words, the Bill more explicit. That was not the opinion of the Universities as expressed in their General Councils, nor, he thought, was it the opinion of many who had studied this Bill. It did lay down hard-and-fast lines enough in some cases, but not in a very good direction. It did lay down a hard and fast line, because it made it a statutory necessity that in future every University Court should contain as one of its members the head of each College presently existing in or hereafter to be affiliated or incorporated with the University. The effect would be that, whether the Commissioners desired it or not, whether they thought it proper or not, whenever an institution was affiliated for the purpose of graduation, the Principal of that institution would sit in the University Court, direct the teaching of the University, administer the funds of the University, and appoint the Professors to the University, while the University Court, representing the University itself, would not have the slightest control over the teaching or the appointments of that institution, or over the mode in which they administered their funds. It humbly appeared to him that if it was possible to lay down hard and fast lines like that, it would be possible to lay down a great many better lines than these. He had objections to many matters of detail, but would not speak to them now. He had simply indicated the objections he had to this new part of the scheme; but there was one thing of which he felt perfectly satisfied, that, without taking evidence and a very extensive inquiry, it was impossible to say what were the lines under which affiliation or union ought to be carried out. He thought it a great misfortune that powers of this kind should be placed in the hands of Commissioners without guidance, to allow them first to make the law and then to administer it, instead of laying down some broad and distinct lines within which action might be taken. He trusted that the noble Marquess would consider the suggestions he had thrown out, because he would find on inquiry that the feeling as to the necessity for making the measure much more definite, and limiting it to affiliation pure and simple for graduating purposes, was much more widely entertained in the Universities themselves and elsewhere in Scotland than he seemed to suppose.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, he did not rise to make any detailed comments on the Bill which the noble Marquess had introduced; but he must be allowed, on the part of those who sat near him, to express his cordial satisfaction with the Bill in its main provisions and principle. He was a little surprised that his noble Friend, in his description of the course of University legislation previous to this year, broke off with some suddenness, as he thought, without explaining the Bill which was laid before Parliament in August last year, because this Bill differed so materially in its main principles and policy from that Bill that it would have been a matter of some interest to their Lordships on the Opposition side of the House to know what had been the grounds for the change of policy disclosed. There were one or two points which appeared to him to be new, and which he thought were questionable to some extent, and, at any rate, which were worthy of some explanation at the noble Marquess's hands. In the first place, the Bill was going to transfer the administration of the property of the Universities from the Senatus of those Universities to the University Courts. Against that proposition he had nothing whatever to say, but he thought that that change and other provisions of the Bill made the constitution of those University Courts a matter of even greater importance than it was supposed to be. He thought, besides, that it had swollen those University Courts to an undue size. He would take the first University Court mentioned in the Bill, the University Court of St. Andrew's. This Court at the lowest computation would be larger than the Senatus of St. Andrew's, and that, he ventured to say, was a position never before occupied by a University Court of any University in Scotland. He would further submit to the noble Marquess in charge of the Bill that it was not wise to hand over the administration of property, and, at the same time, to increase very largely the numbers of the body by which that property was to be administered. He did not think there was any necessity for this increase in numbers. He saw that two assessors nominated by the Crown were to make their appearance in this body. He should greatly like to know what was the presumed utility of those assessors to be nominated by the Crown, and why it was thought necessary to increase by their presence a body which would be already sufficiently large. There was another point in connection with the constitution of the Court with regard to the University of Edinburgh. At present the University of Edinburgh had, he thought, a quarter of the whole representation of the University Court. The position of the City of Edinburgh with reference to the University was one of a very exceptional nature. It was a position cherished not only in the University itself but in Scotland at large, and he should witness with great distress anything which appeared to him to influence that connection, but under this Bill that connection would be very greatly reduced. The very utmost that the Lord Provost and the magistrates of Edinburgh would have on the revised University Court was a representation of one-eighth, and when affiliation had run its full course it was possible that the Provost and magistrates, where previously they were the governing body of the University, might sink and become a very insignificant fraction of that body. He should like to say a word on a clause which was new to him. It was the clause where the Rector in making a choice of assessor had to take the assistance of the Students' Representative Council. But that Council was not, he thought, an expression which was defined in the Act. The clause itself was of an absolutely novel character, and he thought his noble Friend in making further observations with reference to the Bill would do well to give some explanation of that clause. He must honestly say that he thought in so large a proposition as this no clause so vague and so absolutely destitute of guidance had ever been submitted to Parliament. His noble Friend said that it would not be possible to give guidance to the Commissioners, that it would not be possible to lay down in a Bill what the conditions of affiliation should be; that was to say it would be perfectly impossible for the Government to lay down these, but that nothing was so easy as for the Commissioners to do so. They did not know the names of the Commissioners, and therefore they could not say in what consisted that superiority to the Government which was implied by the defence of his noble Friend. But he ventured to say that, whether the Government were unequal to defining all the conditions under which affiliation should take place or not, they at least ought to make some endeavour in this direction. After all, in the majority of cases the Universities and the Colleges of Scotland were synonymous. But the Government were going to add to those ancient corporations a vague and indeterminate and undescribed condition of educational establishment at the whim of unknown Commissioners on conditions which were absolutely kept in the dark. It was the sort of thing that was done by revolutionary Governments—the sort of Administration to which he belonged. But he confessed that it was not the sort of proposition which he expected from Her Majesty's Government. He was very far from denouncing in the slightest degree the general principles of affiliation. He thought the arguments of the noble Marquess were, so far as they went, conclusive. There were cases of affiliation which, to use a French expression, "jumped to one's eyes," such as the cases of Dundee and St. Andrew's—but he could not understand why, when they had laid hold of a broad principle they should find it absolutely impossible to give any example or definition in practice. He would give one instance in which guidance was afforded by the University of Oxford. This University had not found itself in the impotence of Her Majesty's Government with regard to defining those conditions. As far as they knew the Bill, it provided for a representation on the University Court of these new bodies; but the University of Oxford, with which the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) was not altogether unconnected took exactly the opposite view. Oxford said that the University should be represented on the governing body with the affiliated bodies. It gave some control, where it was possible, to the University over the affiliated bodies placed without its sanction under its direction; but the noble Marquess did not go that length. He left the whole relative position of the Universities as regarded Colleges with which they might be affiliated absolutely in the hands of certain gentlemen of great weight, esteemable, he had no doubt, but who were absolutely unknown to their Lordships, and could not be the meet subjects of a blind confidence on the part of their Lordships. With reference to the question of the Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh, the noble Marquess said that the condition imposing those gardens on the University was in the Bill for which he (the Earl of Rosebery) had the main responsibility in 1883. His noble Friend would know no doubt from experience that Bills which had a financial tendency were not entirely in the control of the Minister who introduced them, and he was afraid that his noble Friend had shared his experience on that question and found that the Treasury, while melting its heart to the extent of a handsome sum, imposed extensive and onerous conditions with regard to that gift. One of those conditions in 1883 was the Botanic Gardens, and he was sorry to see that five years of persuasion had failed to alter that condition. The noble Marquess had some hopes that he might accomplish that which he had hitherto failed to manage. He (the Earl of Rosebery) was very glad to hear it, but he was not sure that he shared his expectation. There was no doubt whatever that the Botanic Gardens ought to be connected with the City and not with the University of Edinburgh. The Botanic Gardens were one of the air spaces of Edinburgh, one of the recreation grounds, and while they were kept and maintained by the University for the purposes of study and analysis, they would not be open to the public in a degree to which they thought they were entitled. That was a double disadvantage. In the first place it debarred the public from that to which they thought they were entitled; and, what was really more important, it kept up a permanent cause of dissension and grievance between those two great constituent bodies — the Town Council and the University. He had only one word more to say. The Bill, whether it had the Botanic Gardens taken away from it, or clauses added to it defining certain matters in which they were interested—whether they added to it or took away from it—consisted mainly in one point, and that was the character of the Commissioners whom they were going to appoint. He ventured to tell the noble Marquess that, great as was the interest both of the House of Commons and of the people of Scotland in the fate and fortunes of this Bill, that interest was largely mixed up with the question of who the Commission was to consist of. It depended largely on those Commissioners whether the Bill was to be a great blessing to the Universities and to the nation of Scotland, or whether it should be as abortive as some measures which had preceded it. He hoped the noble Marquess would at the earliest opportunity let them know the names of the Commissioners.

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND GORDON said, that after the very clear statements of the noble Lord on his right and of the noble Lord opposite, he did not intend to detain their Lordships at any great length on this subject. Representing as he did the feeling of the University of Aberdeen, he was desirous, however, of expressing his views with regard to this measure. He had no objection to a great portion of the Bill, which he believed would be hailed with satisfaction by the authorities of the Universities of Scotland, but he had the greatest objection to that portion of the measure which dealt with the subject of affiliation. He ventured to say that this was a matter connected with Scotch education which was entirely new, and he thought on a matter of such extreme importance they ought to have had the whole subject of affiliation inquired into. He was not objecting to it if after inquiry it was thought to be right and proper, but he objected to the question relating to affiliation being inserted in the Bill without having the subject thoroughly and clearly investigated before it was made part of the Bill. He could see no reason why this matter concerning affiliation should not be inquired into by the Commissioners who were to be appointed under the Bill, and then, having made their investigation, they could recommend to Her Majesty in Council the views they entertained on the matter. The question of affiliation had evidently been rather a difficult one to those who had drawn the Bill, because by the very means by which affiliation was to be accomplished they upset the whole equilibrium of the University Courts. The Bill proposed to enact that, in the first place, those University Courts should consist of a certain number of members; but if the Colleges were to be affiliated, the persons connected with those Colleges to be affiliated would be added to the Courts in large numbers, and thus the balance of power sought to be secured would be destroyed. A second objection he had to the proposed system of affiliation was that it had never really been asked for. He did not know that there had been any authority in Scotland that had applied for such a provision as that contained in the Bill. The noble Marquess had referred to the large number of rising Scotch educational institutions which had applied for the powers which it was proposed to give them under the provisions of this Bill, but he should like to have a list of the names of all such institutions in Scotland that were now crying out for affiliation with the Universities. For his own part, he confessed that he was at a loss to know where such institutions were to be found. They knew what extra-mural teaching meant. There were a certain number of gentlemen who set up as Professors outside the University, and who became qualified as Professors. These gentlemen would expect to be added to the governing bodies of the Universities of Scotland. He looked with considerable dismay to the union of those gentlemen with the governing bodies of the Universities. It was a remarkable fact that the Universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen were all opposed to the principle of the Bill which dealt with affiliation, and these were authorities whose opinions on such a subject as this ought not to be lightly passed over. No doubt the Bill might be amended in Committee, but he could assure the noble Marquess that if the proposals relating to affiliation were allowed to remain in the measure the Bill would meet with determined and earnest opposition both in that and the other House of Parliament, if he had any influence there, in the hope that those who were opposed to affiliation might succeed in getting these dangerous and improper provisions struck out of the measure.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, that his excuse for taking part in this debate upon a question connected with Scotch Education was that it was one in which the whole republic of letters was concerned. All the Universities of the United Kingdom were interested in the manner in which this question was dealt with in Scotland. He had been entrusted by the Senatus Academicus of the University of Edinburgh with the presentation of a Petition with regard to this Bill; and he believed he represented on this particular subject of affiliation the opinions of the Scottish Universities in general, not excepting the University of St. Andrew's, because, although it was true that the University of St. Andrew's did desire affiliation or incorporation of some kind with the College of Dundee, yet that matter was in the Bill as it stood expressly and specially dealt with, so that it was taken out of the consideration of the general question altogether. If there was any subject which they were all agreed should be looked at dispassionately, and without any other view than that of doing the best they could for the interests concerned, it surely was the question of University Education. Their Lordships must appreciate, not only the ability with which the Bill had been brought forward, but the excellence of the greater part of its provisions, and they hoped and believed that it would be passed in as perfect a form as possible. The point which had been raised involved the question whether it was wise to adopt the proposals as to affiliation which were contained in the Bill. The word affiliation was known in England and in Scotland, and it represented a subordinate relation of bodies who gave instructions elsewhere, and whose students, on certain terms, might be admitted to graduate at the Universities. He did not know whether the noble Marquess expected or intended that all Colleges which had in that sense been affiliated, or which were to be affiliated, were to be brought within the Affiliation Clauses of the Bill. If not, the objection occurred to him that they would be putting in an inferior position to that in which they stood at present all Bodies who were not of the class on whom it would be fit to confer the definite privileges conferred by the Bill. By the provisions of the Bill they might altogether alter the proportions of the Governing Bodies. Under the Bill as it stood, the Court of the University of Edinburgh was to consist of 16 persons, representing what might be termed the domestic elements. But into these Courts an external element was to be introduced to an absolutely unlimited extent. It was provided that there should be upon the University Courts—

> "The head of each College presently existing in, or which may hereafter be affiliated to or incorporated with, the University;"

and also—

> "such number of the Governing Body of any College affiliated to, or incorporated with, the University as the Commissioners, and after the expiration of their powers the Universities' Committee, may determine."

By that means the domestic element on the University Courts might be altogether swamped by the external. The representatives of external Bodies might have influence to get other external Bodies brought in, until at length the University would be to an indefinite extent controlled by the external element. This was a point which he hoped the noble Marquess would consider. He did not believe, if this matter had been made the subject of previous inquiry, that the provision would now have appeared in the Bill, and he hoped, before the Committee stage, it would be seriously considered.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, he trusted that the Bill would become law this Session. A part of it was very good, and as the subject had been examined and well considered in Scotland, he did not see how any delay would bring advantage either to the Universities or to any other set of persons in Scotland. He hoped, however, that when the Bill was in "another place" the Members representing Scotland would endeavour to get a little more money from the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the Scotch Universities. The truth was they were too moderate in Scotland. They did things so cheaply, so well, and so quietly, that, so far as they were concerned, the heart of the Chancellor was always hardened, and he would not give them anything. As to the constitution of the University Court, he could not quite agree with the noble Earl (the Earl of Rosebery) that its membership was too numerous. After all, it was only to consist of 16 members, and the quorum was to be seven; and to that Court were entrusted very large functions as to the discipline, teaching, and revenue of the University. It was perfectly reasonable and right that the Court should manage the revenues of the University; but the noble Marquess stated that the Court would manage the revenues not only of the University, but of the College or Colleges thereof. He wondered whether that view of the case had ever been put before the rising Colleges of which he had spoken. He knew that the College of Dundee would be very much disinclined to surrender its revenues entirely to the management of the University of St. Andrew's, which would follow if it were actually incorporated, and incorporation was the process which the noble Marquess seemed to contemplate. A very material point on which he should like to be informed was whether the University Court had power to review *ex propria motu* or otherwise any decision at which the Senatus Academicus might arrive. Was this University Court, which would be composed to a considerable extent of persons who had nothing to do with the teaching of the University, the right body to which everything relating to the teaching and discipline of the University should be entrusted? The Commission of 1878 said it would not be right to give to the University Court any power of that kind. He hoped the noble Marquess would tell their Lordships which was the Body to whom he intended to give, under the Bill, the right of regulating the discipline and the teaching of the University, for there obviously could not be two Bodies exercising that power, and, as the Bill stood, it seemed to him to be impossible to gather whether the University Court or the Senate was to manage the discipline. There was another remark which he wished to make with regard to the Commissioners. Under this Bill ample powers would be conferred upon them, and he thought that that course was a perfectly right one. They must necessarily entrust the Commissioners with very large powers in matters of this sort; and, as the noble Lord had observed just now, much would depend upon how the Commissioners were chosen. His only advice to the noble Marquess on this point was to take as long a time as he could and to make every possible inquiry with regard to the Commissioners, for, no doubt, very much would depend upon the choice which he ultimately made. There was no power given to appeal against them to Parliament similar to the power which was given in the Acts relating to the English Universities. In the latter Universities there was really a double appeal; first, to the Universities' Committee, and, afterwards, if the appellant could persuade either House of Parliament that the Statute was wrong, it would be disproved. He thought he understood why this power was not in the Bill—it was not in the Act of 1858; but apparently the noble Marquess had had the matter in contemplation, for Clause 18 of this Bill said that these Ordinances, after they had been laid before Parliament, were to be submitted to the approval of Her Majesty in Council. But what was the use of laying Ordinances on the Table of Parliament if Parliament did not possess the power of presenting an Address to Her Majesty on the subject? He hoped the noble Marquess would see his way to insert a clause similar to that contained in the English Act. As to affiliation, he would make a suggestion to the noble Marquess. After all, affiliation must be voluntary, either by the University which affiliated or by the College which was affiliated. As the Bill stood, however, the Commissioners would have unlimited power to join any College to any University against the will either of the College or of the University. He did not say that that would happen, but he could conceive cases arising in which a proposal might be made by the Commissioners to affiliate to a University Colleges which the University did not wish to receive. It was true that under the Bill there were two safeguards. In the first place, the College must be duly endowed, and, secondly, the Ordinance of the Commissioners might be appealed against, and must be approved by Her Majesty in Council. But he did not think that those safeguards were sufficient, or that either the Colleges on the Universities would be making an unreasonable demand if they asked that in the one case the consent of the Governing Body of the College and in the other case the consent of the University Court should be given before the Commissioners were empowered to affiliate. They must remember that the new University Court would be a very different Court from the present one. The new Court would represent what was called the extra-mural popular element. The General Council would be much more largely represented than hitherto, and, therefore, if the consent of the University Court were given, he thought it might be assumed that the University generally was in favour of the affiliation taken place. He might make some further remarks, but as they had reference to details he would reserve them for the Committee stage. All the suggestions which had been made were made in the most friendly spirit towards the Bill, although some of them might seem to be of a strong character. In fact, their Lordships would all be glad to amend the Bill, which was perhaps the best yet presented on the subject, so as to make it as suitable as possible to the Universities in Scotland.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, he had the honour to be the President of the Association of the General Council of the University of Edinburgh. In that capacity it had recently been his duty to introduce to his noble Friend a deputation from the General Councils of Edinburgh and Glasgow a short time before his noble Friend introduced his Bill. On that occasion his noble Friend gave them his assurance that the Bill would probably meet in a great measure the views of those associations. Well, he was bound to say that the Bill had done so, and that they looked upon the Bill as a very honest and bold attempt on the part of his noble Friend to deal with the difficult question which was vital to the interests of Scotland and of learning in that country. The main objects which those associations had in view were three in number. They wanted greater representation on the University Court than the General Council had. The General Council had only one assessor on the University Court. They wanted more, and he was glad to say that the Bill would meet the views of the associations in that respect, as it gave them four members instead of one member. They desired, further, that the Court should have some control over the funds of the University, which under the Act of 1858 and subsequent statutes were entirely confined to the control of the Senatus. That very important question had been dealt with fully by his noble Friend. The only question, as it struck him, was whether he had not dealt too fully with it. It was said that the transfer of authority over the Funds was done so completely that the Senatus would be left without any fund allocated to them for the ordinary wear and tear of the University. This was manifestly an oversight which in Committee might be remedied by his noble Friend. Lastly, the third point which these associations were anxious to see in any measure of University reform was a greater recognition than existed of what was called extra-mural teaching. Well, the University Courts, under the provisions of this Bill, were empowered to give greater recognition to such teaching. Here, again, he thought the Bill was somewhat vague, like the affiliation proposals; and that it was desirable that some principles or some lines should be laid down for this recognized extra-mural teaching. On all these most important and vital points the Bill went fully as far as, and even further, than the greatest friends of University reform could have expected. Then there was the question of the Botanical Gardens, which was somewhat of a white elephant to the University. But there was one point which had not been touched upon at all, and that was the question of how the Bill would affect certain Professors in the Universities. It was well known that some of the most distinguished scholars from Universities in the South had crossed the Tweed to engage in teaching in the Scottish Universities; and they had done so in the belief that they had a statutory right to a pension. Well, in some cases, he was informed, the Bill would take away the right; and he believed there would be a strong feeling on the part of the few who were affected by that part of the Bill. He did not like to say that gross injustice had been done, but that reasonable expectation was disappointed. The only two real blots of the Bill had been touched upon. One was the transfer of all the teaching from the Senatus, which had hitherto so admirably conducted the instruction of the University, and all the rules for graduation, to the University Court. He strongly objected to this transfer. Under the Act of 1858, the Senatus had control of teaching and discipline; under the present Bill, the former was transferred and the discipline left to the Senatus. He understood, however, from his noble Friend that he would amend the Bill so as to make no change in this respect. In any case, that was a point that ought to be considered, because it was better that those who were thoroughly conversant with the teaching, subject always to the review of the University Court, should have the control of the arrangements rather than that control should be handed over to this large and vague Body—the new University Court—many of whose members might not be conversant with educational matters. The other blot in the Bill was the proposal regarding affiliation; and he thought it impossible that the Bill could pass with that proposal in it as it now stood. It was surely out of the question that the heads of various Colleges which might not now be in existence, but might afterwards be created, should have the control of the Universities themselves, while, on the other hand, the Universities had no share of the control of these Colleges. Such a proposition would not hold water for a single moment, and he was certain that the noble Marquess would have to alter that provision in his Bill. The principles which regulated affiliation with Oxford were widely different. The College seeking to be affiliated was required to have a Royal Charter, to have a member of the University on its Governing Body, and to allow the University to take part in its examinations. The connection was also made terminable at the will of either party. On the whole subject he would strongly impress their Lordships with the necessity of proceeding with extreme caution. It was not as if they were dealing with defective or failing institutions. The success of the Scotch Universities was proverbial. They were prosperous and progressive. Three years ago Edinburgh celebrated its tercentenary, and wise men came from the East and all parts of the world to take part in the celebration. In 1858, the funds belonging to the University amounted to £51,000 a-year. In 1886, it was £300,000. The general fund was then £40,000, but now it was £60,000. It was obvious that great care and caution were required in dealing with such institutions as the Scotch University; and he hoped that the Bill would contribute to their growth and efficiency to the advancement of learning and the good of Scotland.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN, in reply, said he was gratified with the manner in which the Bill had been received. He was not sorry to hear criticisms on the question of affiliation. In fact, the main difficulty seemed to have been in regard to the affiliation clause, and on that point he still held by the definition he had given of the term affiliation—namely, that it meant, generally speaking, a union in a subordinate degree, with power of disunion, or disjunction, or separation, or whatever it might be, if that union was found not to be advantageous to both. Noble Lords seemed to suppose that that affiliation would take place under the orders of the Commissioners; but he could not believe that the Commissioners under this Bill would do anything so extraordinary as unite two bodies that did not want to be united. The union would have to be with the consent of both parties—of both the University Court and the College. As to the constitution of the Commission, he agreed that the whole question of whether the Bill in the end would prove satisfactory or not depended upon the constitution of that Commission, and on that point he would simply say that the reason why he had been unable to put the names of the Commissioners into the Bill had been the great difficulty he had had in finding those who would accept a post which would require from them a great amount of labour and time and of knowledge of the subject. His great desire and his only object was to appoint such a Commission as would, by its constitution, give full confidence to all those who were interested; that the questions submitted to them would be justly, fairly, and intelligently dealt with; and in appointing that Commission he would allow no question either of personal feeling or of Party politics to interfere with the selection of gentlemen who would be best qualified to discharge the duties and would be most likely to give satisfaction. He hoped before the Committee stage to be in a position to give the names of the Commissioners to the House. Going back to the provisions with regard to the affiliation of Colleges, he pointed out that there was no compulsion in the matter—that was to say, the Universities were not forced to accept any such Colleges; nevertheless, he would be prepared in Committee to propose such Amendments in this and other matters as would, he hoped, meet the reasonable objections which had been urged from various quarters. The question of the representation of the affiliated Colleges by their principals on the University Court was one which was dependant on the general question of affiliation. He would not now enter upon its discussion. Endowment would undoubtedly be necessary before affiliation, and it was their hope, looking to the experience of the past, that those who were possessed of means would devote them to the cause of education and the endowment of Colleges. The other details which had been referred to in the course of the debate would all come up for consideration in Committee. He was greatly gratified to find that there was so much approval of the general principles of the Bill, and he hoped nothing would happen in Committee to prevent its passing into law, or to make it likely to be less effective in its operation.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* the 14*th instant.*

House adjourned at half past Seven o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 3rd May, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Select Committees—Forest of Dean Turnpike Trust, *nominated;* East India (Hyderabad Deccan Mining Company), *appointed* and *nominated.*

Public Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — National Defence * [235].

Select Committee—Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) * [118], *nominated.*

Committee—Local Government (England and Wales) (Electors) [181]—R.P.

Considered as amended—Customs and Inland Revenue * [202].

Considered as amended—Third Reading—Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment [207], and *passed.*

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

QUESTIONS.

LAND COMMISSION COURTS (IRELAND) —JUDICIAL RENTS—ARREARS.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, How many cases of application for judicial rent were undisposed of in the Land Courts in Ireland on the 1st of May, 1887, and the 1st of May, 1888, respectively?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): Sir, the Land Commissioners state that on the 1st of May, 1887, the numbers of fair rent applications undisposed of were in the Land Commission Court 11,773, and in the Civil Bill Court 1,757; on the 1st of May, 1888, the numbers were 63,087 and 4,246 respectively.

LAND PURCHASE ACT, 1885—PAYMENT OF INSTALMENTS.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What amount of instalments of the purchase money under "The Land Purchase Act, 1885," which fell due on the 1st of November, 1887, remained unpaid on the 1st of May, 1888; and, what amount of instalments of purchase money fell due on the 1st of May, 1888, and what amount of this was not paid on that day?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The total amount of interest and instalments which accrued due in respect of advances under the Purchase of Land Act (Ireland), 1885, from the passing of the Act to the 1st of November, 1887, was £50,910, and of this amount there remained unpaid on the 1st of May, 1888, the sum of £1,281. The amount of interest and instalments which fell due on the 1st of May, 1888, was £39,720; but as these instalments have only just become due, and are collected by means of receivable orders payable through local banks, and not yet returnable, it is impossible to give any satisfactory answer to the hon. Member's second Question.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—JUDICIAL RENTS—RETURNS.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork City) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, having regard to the fact that the Returns of Judicial Rents fixed in Ireland are arranged according to counties, and by years ending in August, whereas in the order of the Land Commission varying judicial rents according to the Act of 1887 the areas chosen are Poor Law Unions, and the years commence with the 1st of January and end with the 31st of December, and that consequently, it is impossible to ascertain what the precise effect of the Rent varying Clause of the Land Act of 1887 has been, he will grant the Return standing in the name of the hon. Member for North Meath (Mr. Mahony) for Friday the 4th of May?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that the books of rents fixed by the Land Commission and Civil Bill Courts, as also the books in which originating declarations and agreements are entered, are kept according to counties, not Poor Law Unions. To prepare the Return asked for would, therefore, involve an inspection of each one of 94,469 agreements, and the division of the entire 194,132 judicial rents into Poor Law Unions, and subsequently making schedules, totals, and percentage calculations. They state that this could only be done by largely augmenting their staff for five or six months, entailing considerable expense, and causing a serious interruption to their regular business. In these circumstances, the Government cannot undertake to grant the Return in question.

LOTTERIES ACT—THE CHURCH CONSERVATIVE CLUB.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is now aware that the Church Conservative Club, some time last month, issued a list of 103 prizes, varying in value from £15 to 2*s.* actually drawn in the lottery previously advertised by that Club; whether the numbers of the tickets drawn include one numbered 281,879; whether he has received any Report from the Director of Public Prosecutions, or from the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, or from the Chief Constable, as to any action taken in the matter; and, whether he will lay the Correspondence upon the table?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, he had no specific information as to the facts contained in the first part of the Question; but he had that morning received a letter from the Chief Constable of Lancashire, stating that proceedings had been taken before the magistrates against the Church Conservative Club on a charge of drawing a lottery. He had already informed the House of the action taken by the Director of Public Prosecutions. The correspondence that had taken place contained confidential matter, and he must decline to place it on the Table.

REGISTRY AND INSPECTION OF LAND BOILERS—REPORT TO THE BOARD OF TRADE.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the Report of one of the Assistant Secretaries to the Board of Trade on the subject of Registry and Inspection of Land Boilers, and especially to the following paragraph on page 19:—

> "Although it was not deemed to be necessary to encumber the draft Boiler Registry and Inspection Bill with clauses on the subject, I think this question of properly qualified attendants may well be considered with those of inspection and registration of boilers. It would be well to secure, as far as possible, that the boilers are properly constructed and kept in good order; but if they are entrusted to careless and incompetent men disasters must happen. I must, however, in fairness, add that in most of the cases of explosion the boiler attendants have not been at fault;"

and, whether the Government will consider the recommendation of so great an authority with a view to legislation on the subject?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): I am aware of the Report relating to the Registry and Inspection of Land Boilers to which the hon. Member refers, and would call his attention to that part of his quotation which states that in most of the cases of explosion the attendants have not been at fault. The Government are not prepared to undertake legislation of the kind desired by the hon. Member.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—HYDE PARK CORNER.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether Her Majesty's Government have in contemplation any arrangement to supply the blank on the flat top of the Arch south of Hyde Park Corner caused by the deposition of the late Duke of Wellington; or, if not, whether they will restore the Duke?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): The Government do not intend to propose any Estimate for supplying the blank on the top of the Arch south of Hyde Park Corner. The House will probably remember that a Committee was formed some time ago under the presidency of the Prince of Wales, and a considerable sum was subscribed in answer to the appeal which His Royal Highness, acting with great public spirit, had made for the purpose of ornamenting the vacant spaces created by the improvements at Hyde Park Corner. Under the direction of this Committee, the new statue of the Duke of Wellington by Mr. Boehm, with a handsome pedestal, will be placed opposite Apsley House in the course of the Autumn of this year; and the remainder of the money subscribed for the purpose will be applied to further beautifying the open spaces. But the funds at present at the disposal of His Royal Highness do not admit of his undertaking to place a suitable work of art on the summit of the Arch, involving probably an outlay of more than £20,000. As to the suggestion of the hon. Member that the old statue of the Duke should be restored, I am afraid it cannot be entertained; it stands at present at Aldershot on a very appropriate site. It cost over £3,000 to take it there, and I am not prepared to pay as much more for getting it back.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to give Notice that on an early day I will call attention to the distressing results that followed the rash removal of an old landmark dear to the inhabitants of London.

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—GALWAY HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS.

MR. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) (for Mr. PINKERTON) (Galway) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Why the Secretary of the Board of Works has refused to sanction the payment of accounts presented by Messrs. Lydon, Brothers, of Galway, for iron work done for the Galway Harbour Commissioners, although the accounts were passed by the Engineer and Chairman; and, why no reply was given to letters demanding payment?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I am informed that this claim was only received yesterday at the Board of Works from the Secretary to the Harbour Commissioners, and will be dealt with in due course. The Board, as receiver over the harbour, cannot discharge any such claim except upon the certificate of the Harbour Commissioners.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)— —— WRIGHT, A CONVICT IN PORTSMOUTH PRISON.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, For what offence a convict, named Wright, confined in Portsmouth Prison, was in irons at the time when, as alleged, he recently assaulted Chief Warder George; upon how many occasions, and during what number of hours in the aggregate, has Wright been in irons since the 1st of January last; and, what other punishments (if any) have been inflicted on Wright since that date?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): This convict was in irons for having made a savage attack with a knife upon another convict. This is the only occasion on which he has been in irons since the 1st of January. He has been in irons since the 21st of March—that is, 42 days, or 1,008 hours. Since the same date he has been twice punished by dietary punishment, and once by close confinement for three days.

BOARD OF TRADE—WORKING OF RAILWAYS.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he will be prepared, on the 8th of May, on the occasion of the Motion of the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire (Mr. Channing), on the subject of the safe working of railways, or sooner, to inform the House whether the smaller and branch railways have yet been called upon to adopt, or have adopted, the same automatic brake as is in use by the leading trunk lines of this country, and whether such brake is capable of universal coupling with any other rolling stock, so as to insure safe interchange of traffic with all other railways; and, whether he has, or can obtain, any Reports of the results of the working of automatic brakes on the Indian Railways?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade have no power to call upon the Railway Companies to adopt any particular brake; but the Circular of the 30th of August, 1877, setting out the conditions which, in the opinion of the Board of Trade, brakes should fulfil, was sent to the small as well as to the great Companies. And the half-yearly Return presented to Parliament in accordance with the Act of 1878 deals with the brakes of all the Companies. The Board of Trade have no information as regards the working of automatic brakes in India, but will communicate with the India Office. I am, however, informed that such brakes are only used in India to a very limited extent.

COMMONS (METROPOLIS) — WANDSWORTH COMMON—THE PATRIOTIC FUND COMMISSIONERS.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, as representing the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether the Board have received and considered a letter from the Wandsworth Common Protection Association, respecting the damage now being done to the Common by the vehicular traffic of the carman and contractor tenant of the Patriotic Fund Commissioners, and with what result; is the action at law still pending between the Board, as Conservators of the Common, and the Commissioners, at what stage is it at this moment, and what are the actual issues to be tried in it; is there any way which the Board can devise for settling this dispute, and terminating the damage, otherwise than by litigation, between two Public Bodies both using public funds; and, is it a fact that, if the Patriotic Fund Commissioners succeed in the litigation, the effect will be that 19½ acres of land of the Common, which are admitted by the Commissioners not to be required for the purposes of their Trust, may remain a market garden for 42 years, and be a means of perpetuating the damage to the Common and annoyance and deprivation to the public using the Common?

MR. TATTON-EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford), in reply, said, that the Metropolitan Board of Works had received, and were considering, a letter from the Wandsworth Common Protection Society on the subject referred to, and the writer had been informed that it would receive due consideration. The action, it was hoped, might be averted if the negotiations were brought to a satisfactory conclusion. As to the last paragraph of the Question, the Metropolitan Board of Works were not in possession of the terms of the agreement between the Patriotic Fund Commissioners and their tenant.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Commissioners have not granted any lease in the case in question for a period exceeding 21 years, nor do they stand committed to any renewal of the lease at its expiry. It is understood that the tenant is managing Director of a Company which carries on the work of carmen; but such a position has no connection with his tenancy of ground belonging to the Commissioners, nor could he, under the terms of his tenancy, make his land or farm buildings available for such purpose. Communications are at present taking place in a friendly spirit between the Commissioners and the Metropolitan Board of Works relative to a question of right of way on Wandsworth Common. Matters of such a character are managed by the Executive and Finance Committee of the Fund under the orders of the Commissioners.

ADMIRALTY — No. 35 FIRST CLASS TORPEDO BOAT.

SIR HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, In what condition No. 35 First Class Torpedo Boat was allowed to leave Portsmouth; whether extensive leaks manifested themselves, as stated in *The Times* of the 23rd of April, in the wake of the crew's living compartment, and also in the condenser and collision compartments, eight inches of water being made in one night; whether hand pumps, through defects, ceased to operate, and the steam ejector was obliged to be used, with deleterious results to the boilers; whether, if these statements are correct, he can give any explanation as to who was responsible for such a state of affairs, and what steps will be taken to prevent their occurrence in the future; and, whether similar weakness exists in other service torpedo boats unfitting them to withstand the strains of their engines and the force of the sea?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): No. 35 Torpedo Boat was perfectly sound when she left England. She had been carefully examined on the slip before launching, and neither on launching, or during the steam trials to which she was subjected before leaving, did she show any signs of leaking or any weakness. Two days after leaving Devonport she developed a leak, and it was ascertained that one rivet had gone, and that 11 others were leaking. The fact that she had been perfectly tight up to this time points to the conclusion that some special circumstance, such as an unusually heavy blow from the sea when being driven in the Bay of Biscay or collision with some floating material, must have caused the leakage. The hand pump did not work satisfactorily, and the steam ejector had to be used; but without, so far as has been ascertained, any injurious effect on the boiler. Everything was done at the Dockyard to secure that the boats were in all respects complete and fit for sea. There is no reason to suppose that the service torpedo boats are weak or unfit to perform the service for which they were constructed.

ADMIRALTY (SHIPS)—SPECIAL TESTS OF SPEED.

Sir HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, What experiments have been made since his reply on the subject last year in the direction of continuous steaming for lengthened periods with vessels of different classes in Her Majesty's Navy; and with what results?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The continuous steaming trials referred to by the hon. Gentleman, and which are ordered to be carried out in all ships after commissioning, have taken place in 10 ships of various classes, the result in all cases being quite satisfactory.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE TYRONE MILITIA.

Mr. LEAHY (Kildare, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware the training of the Tyrone Militia will begin on the 6th of June, and last for 27 days; and, whether Colonel L. M. Buchanan and Major R. A. Miller of that regiment are also respectively Clerk of the Peace and Registrar of the County Court, which will be sitting at Dungannon on the 19th of June, Strabane 26th of June, Clogher 29th of June, Omagh 2nd of July, and how do they propose discharging their civil duties for three Divisions of the county, and also attend to their military responsibility during the time of training?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he understood that on this occasion Colonel Buchanan would exercise his statutory right of getting his duties discharged by deputy. Major Miller purposed to apply for military leave for a few days, on the ground that his duties as Registrar would clash with his regimental duties.

INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX—EXEMPTION OF CHARITABLE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

Mr. LOCKWOOD (York) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If his attention has been called to the action of the Income Tax Commissioners, who have refused to allow exemption in the payment of Income Tax to certain Charitable Educational Institutions, which Institutions have formerly been allowed such exemption; whether such alteration is in accordance with the opinion of the Legal Advisers of the Department; and, whether, having regard to the fact that Public Schools, such as Eton, are exempted from the payment of Income Tax, he is prepared to recommend to the Income Tax Commissioners that the exemption formerly allowed to all Charitable Educational Institutions be continued, and thus accord the same privilege to the Schools or Colleges of the poorer classes as is enjoyed by those of the richer?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The action of the Special Commissioners of Income Tax in refusing to allow the exemption in question is in accordance, not only with the opinion of the Legal Advisers of the Department, but also with a recent judicial decision. The statutory exemption granted to public schools under Schedule A of the Income Tax Acts is not restricted to the schools of the richer classes, but is enjoyed by all public schools of all classes alike.

ARMY (INDIA)—AGREEMENT AS TO HOME EFFECTIVE CHARGES.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether an agreement has yet been arrived at between the War Office and the India Office as to the basis on which the Indian Government should pay for Home effective charges, or whether it is the fact that no definite arrangement on this point exists as to the future, and that even the accounts of the last six years remain open and without any decision having been come to on this subject?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle), in reply, said, an agreement had not yet been arrived at on the extremely difficult subject of the payment of Home Charges by India; but an early settlement was anticipated by the Committee under the Presidency of the Earl of Northbrook. The main charge has been agreed upon up to the 31st of March, 1885; but the payment of deferred pay for the three years then ending had still to be adjusted. The special claims now under consideration were those for exceptional years during which large reinforcements were sent to India.

MR. HANBURY gave Notice that on the Motion to into Committee on the Indian Budget he would call attention to the extravagant nature of many of the Indian Home Charges.

WAR OFFICE—MAJOR TEMPLER.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, On whose advice and responsibility it was decided not to hold a preliminary inquiry in the case of Major Templer; who is responsible for the employment of Detective Straid, who is stated in sworn affidavits to have endeavoured to collect evidence as to identity by bribes, and generally for the manner in which evidence was collected; who presented the evidence so collected to the Deputy Judge Advocate General for his opinion as to a *primâ facie* case; who is responsible for the General Regulations dealing with the admission of foreigners and other privileged persons to inspect Government arsenals and works, and for the Special Regulations or Orders, if any, under which the balloon arrangements were shown to Italian officers in Egypt by Major Whistler Smith, and at Chatham by Major Elsdale; what is the post to which Major Elsdale has been transferred; out of what moneys is the compensation to Major Templer to be paid; and, whether any portion of it is to be paid by those officials responsible for the blunder?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): A preliminary inquiry was held to ascertain if there were *primâ facie* grounds for further proceedings. A formal Court of Inquiry was, from the circumstances, considered useless; and the only inquiry which could be satisfactory to the Department, and to the accused officer at the same time, was held to be a court martial, taking evidence on oath. Detective Straid was employed under the orders of the Director of Criminal Prosecutions, and the evidence generally was collected by the Legal Department of the Treasury. All the correspondence on the subject, with the statements of witnesses who were prepared to testify, was referred to the Deputy Judge Advocate General by the Adjutant General's Department at the War Office. The Secretary of State is responsible generally for the Rules under which foreigners are admitted to Government works. There were not any Special Regulations under which the Italian officers were admitted to view military balloons. Major Elsdale has been transferred to ordinary corps duty. With reference to the last two paragraphs of the Question, it is not contemplated to pay compensation to Major Templer; but his costs will be paid, and the money will be provided in Votes 3 and 10.

MR. HANBURY: May I ask what the right hon. Gentleman means by the Secretary of State being responsible generally for these Regulations?

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he meant that when Regulations for the admission of foreigners were made by a Government Department they were submitted for the approval of the Secretary of State.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked, by whom the preliminary inquiry was held; and whether, before any arrest was ordered, any communication was made to Major Templer by the War Office or any other Department asking him to explain the circumstances of the charge against him?

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he would rather that Notice was given of the Question. Of course, the preliminary inquiry was made by the Military Authorities at the War Office.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE ARMAGH MILITIA.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the intention of the War Office Authorities to send the Armagh Militia to Holywood, County Down, for training and rifle practice in May next; whether the cost of conveyance, &c., will be about £500; or, if not, how much; and, whether the Armagh Town Commissioners have offered to provide, and have actually secured, a suitable rifle range at Armagh at a cost of £80; and, if so, will the War Office Authorities reconsider their decision, in view of the saving to be effected by allowing the Militia to remain in Armagh for training, &c. as usual?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Armagh Militia will proceed to Holywood for training and musketry, at a cost of £258 for conveyance both ways. The Armagh Town Commissioners are in negotiation for a plot of ground which would be suitable for the purpose, but it is not understood that the matter is settled; and, in any case, the land could not be got ready for the present training.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—SEC. 7 —NOTICES OF EVICTION BY REGISTERED LETTER.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that landlords in Ireland are using the power given them as to notices of eviction by registered letter, under the 7th section of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," for the purpose of compelling their tenants to purchase their holdings at extravagant prices; whether he can state if it is a fact that two tenants, named Peter Marron and Owen Byrne, of Tully parish and County of Louth, on the estate of Mr. Arthur J. Hamill, were upwards of six months sued by ejectment process and decreed for non-payment of arrears of old rent; whether these tenants, with others on same estate, had fair rents fixed by the Court, and the old rents were reduced from 40 to 50 per cent; whether notices of eviction were served in the above two cases, and the six months having elapsed, and the tenants having been unable to pay the old exorbitant rents and costs claimed in the notices, the landlord has obliged them to enter into agreements for purchase of their holdings at 25 years' purchase; and, whether the Land Commission will in such cases sanction sales so brought about?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am not aware that landlords in Ireland are acting as alleged in the first paragraph of this Question. The Land Commissioners inform me that Marron had a fair rent fixed in May last, at a reduction of nearly 50 per cent, but that Byrne's application to have a fair rent fixed still awaits a hearing. They further state that no application has been received from either of these men under the Land Purchase Act. The Commissioners have repeatedly intimated that, having to administer an Act whose operations are founded on the free contracts of the parties, they would be wholly opposed to any coercion being exercised to induce either tenants or landlords to enter into such contracts.

POST OFFICE EMPLOYES MUTUAL GUARANTEE ASSOCIATION (LIMITED).

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the Post Office Employés Mutual Guarantee Association (Limited) is conducted upon compulsory or voluntary principles; if Mr. Freeling Lawrence, a chief clerk in the Secretary's Department, is correctly reported to have said at the annual meeting, in praise of the Local Postmasters, that they were putting not only their clerks and telegraphists, but also their postmen, under bond; if so, whether this is a fact, and how far such Postmasters are justified in requiring safeguards from officers of the Established Staff not required at the outset of their official career; and, whether a clerk taking temporary charge of an office in the Metropolitan District has to pay the full amount required from the permanent holder of the post, or whether the latter's payment covers the responsibility of his substitute; and, if not, what is the reason?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The Association to which the hon. Member refers, and which has been formed by the staff solely for their own advantage, is conducted on voluntary principles. I understand that the words attributed to the Chairman of the Association are substantially correct. In some cases it may be necessary to take security from postmen, and such has been the practice to a limited extent for some years. Each case must, however, be decided on its merits. I have no wish or intention to extend the practice unnecessarily; and it is open to any postman who is asked to give security to appeal, through his superior officer, to me, when I should investigate the case. No such appeal has been made to me. I have recently sanctioned an arrangement which will meet the point raised in the last paragraph of the hon. Member's Question, without hardship to clerks taking temporary charge of offices, and which will fully protect the Revenue.

LAW AND POLICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—SALE OF INDECENT LITERATURE.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to an article in *The British Weekly*, of the 16th of March, wherein it is stated that—

> "There is a grossly indecent literature published in London, but this, as a rule, is very expensive, and only within the reach of wealthy sensualists. A *5s.* magazine was till recently published monthly, in which was one coloured picture and vilely indecent letterpress. . . . . What is alarming under this head is the portentous development of translations from French novels. . . . . The most respectable journals have inserted, and still insert, advertisements of these books. . . . . When these books first appeared, in a somewhat expensive form, some well-known City bookshops practically did business for a time in nothing else. Now they are being reprinted in cheap forms, and in a little time, we have no doubt, they will be universally circulated over Britain. . . : . It is significant that they are to be had in the most respectable booksellers' shops;"

and, whether he is prepared to take adequate steps for the suppression of the sale of such indecent and corrupting literature?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, he had consulted the Commissioner of the City Police, and was informed by him that since July last, when the hon. Member asked a similar Question, he had been unable to discover any new publication, or any circulation, that could legitimately be the subject of prosecution. The police of the City and of the Metropolis were fully alive to their duty in this respect; and, under the existing law, they had obtained convictions in a considerable number of cases. If the hon. Member would direct his (Mr. Matthews') attention to any particular case he would do all in his power to secure an enforcement of the law.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — THE LICENSING CLAUSES—COMPENSATION.

Mr. BONSOR (Surrey, Wimbledon) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, instead of making the compensation of licence-holders a charge upon the County Rates, he will accept an Amendment to the Local Government Bill authorizing the County Council to allocate to a fund to be used exclusively for the purpose of compensating licence-holders, who are deprived of their licences under Clause 13, the additions which may be made to the existing Licence Duties?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The suggestion as to the allocation of the increased Licence Duties which may be levied is one which deserves consideration; and if an Amendment is moved to the effect referred to, I will undertake that it shall be fully considered by the Government.

ARMY (INDIA)—LICENSING OF IMMORALITY.

Mr. S. WILLIAMSON (Kilmarnock, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he has yet received the further information regarding licensed prostitution, which he promised to obtain; whether his attention has been called to further details of the working of the Government system of licensed prostitution recently published by Mr. Dyer; whether, in view of the fact that these statements are substantiated by the publication of official documents, the Government has sufficient evidence to warrant its immediate suppression, as indicated by the Under Secretary; and, whether the Government will undertake that no alternative system shall be permitted to be carried out "regimentally," or otherwise, under evasive Regulations, as suggested by the Quartermaster General of India's Circular Memorandum of the 17th of June, 1886?

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester) asked, whether the hon. Gentleman is aware that Commanding

Officers, in accordance with "a Circular Memorandum, dated from the Office of Quartermaster General in India, No. 21, 17th June, 1886, addressed to General Officers commanding Divisions and Districts," and signed E. F. Chapman, Major General, have from time to time sent requisitions, addressed to Cantonment Magistrates, for the supply of "young and attractive women," to serve as licensed prostitutes in the military camps of India; whether Her Majesty's Government is prepared to relieve British Magistrates from the obligation of complying with such requisitions; whether it is a fact that venereal disease among the troops has increased under the existing system; and, whether the Government will promise to take steps to at once free this country and the Government of India from complicity in a system so opposed to the spirit of recent legislation adopted by this House?

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the hon. Gentleman, whether his attention has been called to a paper, purporting to be a copy of a Memorandum issued from the Office of the Quartermaster General in India, relating to the subject of prostitution; and, whether he is in a position to state if such a document, or any document substantially of that character, has been issued from that or any other Government Office?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The Secretary of State has not received, and has not had time to receive, an answer from the Government of India. He has nothing to add at present to the statement on this subject already made several times to the House—namely, that the Secretary of State is causing full inquiry to be made into these allegations, and that he has taken measures that if such practices as those described exist they shall be stopped forthwith.

Mr. STANSFELD (Halifax) asked, when the hon. Gentleman would be able to state the intentions of the Government on the subject of carrying out in India the Resolution of the House of Commons of some Sessions ago against the compulsory examination of women?

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM asked, whether, in "another place," an answer had not been given that the result of the inquiries made was at present in the hands of the Governor General of India; and, if that were not so, the hon. Gentleman would not think it worth while to telegraph to India to know whether so serious an allegation were true or false?

Sir JOHN GORST: I think hon. Members will see that after the statement I have made it would be highly unbecoming to make any further statements to-night.

Mr. STANSFELD: I do not ask the hon. Gentleman to make the statement to-night; but when he will be prepared to state the intentions of the Government.

Mr. S. WILLIAMSON said, that the first Question he put on this disagreeable subject was on the 24th of February. A long time had elapsed since then, and on ordinary matters of business they could get an answer from India in six hours. He sincerely hoped that before the Whitsuntide Holidays they would get an answer.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

STATE OF IRELAND—WEXFORD QUARTER SESSIONS.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true, as reported in the newspapers, that at the recent Wexford Quarter Sessions, Judge Darley was presented by the Sub-Sheriff with a pair of white gloves, there being no criminal business to go before him, and that the Judge congratulated the Grand Jury on the peaceable state of the county, and stated that in other parts of the county he had also received white gloves for the same reason; whether the districts referred to are districts in which the National League has been suppressed, or which have been proclaimed by the Lord Lieutenant; and, if so, whether he will consider the propriety of withdrawing the proclamations of these districts; and whether he will cause a Return to be presented to Parliament, showing the number of cases during the past year and a-half in which Judges have been so presented with white gloves on account of the absence of crime?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): It is not the case that Judge Darley was presented with white gloves at the recent Wexford Quarter Sessions. As a matter of fact, there were criminal cases to be tried. It appears that at New Ross, the County Court Judge was presented with white gloves, and he congratulated the Grand Jury on the then peaceable state of the county. The hon. Member seems to exaggerate the significance of this event; since the number of criminal cases tried at Quarter Sessions depends not merely on the amount of crime in the district, but also on the number of cases which fall to be tried by other tribunals.

MR. CONYBEARE: The right hon. Gentleman has not replied to the Question whether the district is proclaimed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Wexford is proclaimed under certain sections of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act.

TREATY OF BERLIN—ARTICLE LXI.—ARMENIA.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the telegrams from Constantinople which appeared in the newspapers on Monday the 30th of April, summarizing the remonstrances addressed by the Armenian Patriarch to the Ottoman Porte, on the subject of various acts of oppression and persecution committed on the Armenian subjects of the Sultan and violations of the privileges hitherto enjoyed by the Armenian churches; and, whether, if these remonstrances are correctly reported, and there is reason to believe that the acts complained of have been committed, Her Majesty's Government will, considering the serious consequences which may follow from prolonged irritation on the part of the Armenian Church and people, and having regard to the obligations undertaken in Article LXI. of the Treaty of Berlin, use their influence with the Porte to obtain a redress of these grievances, and a discontinuance of the persecutions practised on the Armenian Christians?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government are aware of the reports of grievances complained of by Armenian subjects of the Imperial Ottoman Government, but they are not at present in a position to judge of the accuracy of the statements referred to. They have no rights in respect to this matter under the Treaty of Berlin, except in conjunction with the other Signatory Powers. But their influence will be constantly used to procure the redress of any ascertained grievances, under whatever conditions of time and opportunity shall seem to our agents on the spot to promise the best prospect of success.

MR. BRYCE asked, whether the Government would take steps to ascertain if the facts were as stated?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON said, Her Majesty's Representatives would, no doubt, report on the subject.

MR. BRYCE said, he would repeat the Question.

INLAND REVENUE—A STAMPING OFFICE IN GLASGOW.

MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether arrangements can be made for the establishment of an Inland Revenue Stamping Office in Glasgow, so that the stamping of marine and life policies of insurance, mercantile bills of exchange, and share transfers may be effected there, instead of its being necessary, as at present, to send the papers to Edinburgh; or, whether, as an alternative, adhesive stamps may in future be used on the condition that the user is bound to deface them as in the case of receipt stamps?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): On the 1st of this month the Inland Revenue commenced the stamping of certain documents, including policies of insurance and share transfers, at Liverpool. By the experiment thus made the Board will be enabled, within a reasonable period, to judge whether these facilities should be extended to any other large towns, and Glasgow will be the first to be considered.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS—THE ROYAL COMMISSION—ATTENDANTS AT THE SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea) asked the hon. Baronet the Member for the Blackpool Division of Lancashire, as Chairman of the Royal Commission on the Civil Service Establishments, Whether, before the issue of its Second Report, the Commission will take evidence as to the alleged grievances of the attendants and messengers at the South Kensington Museum?

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY (Lancashire, N., Blackpool): We had hoped to be able to take up the Education and Science and Art Departments during this stage of our proceedings; and, though the remedy of grievances is not the main object of our inquiry, we should then have dealt, in accordance with our usual procedure, with the case of the classes referred to in my hon. Friend's Question. But I am afraid I must state that we have found it impossible to do so before the presentation of our now pending Report.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — THE SHERIFF OF DONEGAL — APPOINTMENT OF —— WASON.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that a man, named Wason, was, on the prosecution of Mr. Attorney General, last year convicted of extortion, in connection with the execution of decrees for rent, and sentenced to four months' imprisonment; whether the present Sheriff of Donegal has appointed this same man as his bailiff, to execute writs and decrees in the district of Dunfanaghy; and, whether the Government intend to allow it?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he found the facts were as stated in the Question. It was in the discretion of the Chairman of Quarter Sessions, under his statutable power, to make an order preventing a bailiff from acting in his district.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether the Government proposed to get rid of this bailiff?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the matter lay in the hands of the Chairman of Quarter Sessions.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—ARTIFICIAL REARING OF SEA FISH.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the attention of the Government has been called to the great success attending the hatching and rearing of sea fish by the Governments of the United States and Norway; whether the Government are prepared to recommend the establishment of hatching and rearing stations in Scotland, for the purpose of increasing by artificial means the supply of sea fish and lobsters; and, if so, whether he will consider the suitability of the Moray Firth or the Cromarty Firth for such an experiment station; would the cost of such a station, with all the necessary appliances, exceed £1,000, or some such sum; and will the Government recommend a Supplementary Vote for this purpose?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities), in reply, said, he was sorry again to ask the hon. Member to postpone the Question, as the information which he had applied for had not yet reached him.

In reply to a further inquiry by Mr. ANDERSON,

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, the hon. Member could not regret more than he did the delay in obtaining the information necessary to supply a satisfactory answer. He could not account for it at present. If his hon. Friend would put his Question down for Monday, he would undertake, by the most active means, to secure the information.

METROPOLIS—THE ROMAN WALL.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether his attention has been called to the discovery of a large fragment of the ancient Roman Wall of London on a piece of ground acquired by the Government for the purposes of the enlargement of the General Post Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand; and, whether, considering that this is believed to be the largest piece of the Roman Wall of London still in existence, and is in a good state of preservation, he will consider the propriety of preventing it from being either destroyed or so covered up by new buildings as to be no longer visible?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): In clearing the site for the new Post Office at St. Martin's-le-Grand we came upon what I believe is the best specimen yet discovered of the old Roman Wall of London. On one side its face is covered by a disused graveyard, now made into a recreation ground; the other face was laid bare by our workmen in preparing the foundations for the new Post Office buildings. Of course, we treated our discovery very carefully, and many parts of the wall (exposed altogether for a length of about 100 feet) are in an excellent state of preservation; in other parts we found that the old wall had in former times been much interfered with, large gaps having been cut through it and brickwork inserted. I have been inquiring how far it will be possible to preserve what remains of the Roman work; and I am glad to say that by a Report which I have to-day received it appears that this can be done by a very slight alteration of the plans of our new buildings, so that the whole of this part of the old Roman Wall shall remain undisturbed and complete as it is to-day, and exposed in sections visible for inspection and study by antiquaries. I shall submit this Report to my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General, and I have no doubt it will meet with his approval.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) ACT—VALUATION OF ANNUITIES.

Mr. KERANS (Lincoln) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, having regard to the fact that interest upon Consols New and Reduced Annuities has now been reduced to £2 15*s.* per cent, it will be necessary to introduce legislative measures dealing with the valuation of annuities under the Schedule to the Act entitled 16 & 17 *Vict.* c. 51?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): As the hon. Gentleman is doubtless aware, the valuation in the tables annexed to that Act is based upon a rate of interest of 4 per cent, so that there has always been a difference in favour of the annuitant between this rate and that at which the State can borrow. This difference has, of course, been increased by the recent reduction of interest on the National Debt, and it is a fair question whether the time has not come for diminishing it. This subject is engaging my attention, with many others arising out of the conversion; but the calculations involved in a revaluation of the annuities are so complicated that I cannot hope to be able to deal with it in the course of the present Session.

JOINT STOCK COMPANIES ACT, 1862—LIQUIDATIONS, &c.

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether a Return can be given showing the number of liquidations of Joint Stock Companies instituted or carried on in the Court of Chancery since the Act of 1862 came into operation; the amount of assets in each case, distinguishing between the property of the Company and calls made on contributories; the amount paid in dividends to creditors in each case; the amount paid in costs in each case, distinguishing the remuneration paid to the liquidator from other costs; and the number of such liquidations still unclosed?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): It would, I understand, be impossible, without very great expense and labour, to give the whole of the information asked for by the right hon. Gentleman. The Board of Trade are, however, in communication with the Lord Chancellor, with a view to ascertaining whether it would be possible to supply a portion of the information required.

WAR OFFICE—ARMY QUARTERMASTERS AND RIDINGMASTERS.

Sir WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is his intention to make further inquiries, by means of a Departmental Committee or otherwise, as to any disadvantages under which Army Quartermasters and Ridingmasters consider that they labour?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): In 1886 the alleged grievances of the Ridingmasters and Quartermasters were very carefully considered by a small Departmental Committee. This Committee came to the conclusion that several of the points put forward as grievances were not grievances at all, and they were unable, in consequence, to recommend any change concerning them. But they also made certain recommendations in favour of these officers. All these latter recommendations were adopted, and have had the effect of distinctly improving the conditions of service of Quartermasters and Ridingmasters. Since the Warrant on this subject was published, in 1886, these officers have carried on what appears little less than an organized agitation, by means of letters to papers, printed circulars to Members of Parliament, and the like, for these concessions, which the Committee reported they had no ground for claiming. This agitation appears to me to speak very badly for the discipline of those by whom it is promoted. I have only to say that I think it would be most detrimental to the Army if applications which had been refused on their merits were granted to outside pressure. I can hold out no hope of this taking place in the present instance.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—IMPRISONMENT OF MRS. MARIA DAVIES FOR CONTEMPT.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the case, as reported in *The Daily News* of the 30th of April, of Mrs. Maria Davies, who, having been sent to prison 16 months ago by Baron Huddleston and Mr. Justice Manisty because she disobeyed an injunction of the Court, was on Saturday again brought up before the Court, and committed again to gaol for an indefinite period for contempt of Court; whether it is the fact that such alleged contempt consisted in the prisoner declaring that she must bring her action to try her right to what she considered her home; whether the Judges ordered that the process of contempt must go on, for how long they could not state; and, whether, as one of the Judges said the prisoner's conduct amounted to a misdemeanour, and the other stated that her punishment had been certainly adequate to a serious misdemeanour, the Government will advise the Crown to exercise the prerogative of mercy in this case, as the prisoner appears to have been already sufficiently punished by her prolonged imprisonment?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, he had seen a newspaper report of the case, from which it appeared that the alleged contempt consisted in refusing to abstain from attempts to take forcible possession of property which had been legally decided to belong to another. Mrs. Davies had only to purge her contempt of Court, and abstain from unlawful molestation of innocent parties, and she became free. The Secretary of State would not advise the exercise of the prerogative of mercy in this case, even presuming that it fell within that prerogative.

Mr. CONYBEARE: What I want to know is, whether the prisoner is to be kept in prison for the rest of her days?

[No reply.]

CIVIL SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS — — THE ROYAL COMMISSION — PROTECTION OF WITNESSES.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the hon. Baronet the Member for the Blackpool Division of Lancashire, Whether he is aware of representations having been made to the Secretary of the Civil Establishments Commission by a writer in the Customs Department, who recently appeared as a witness before the Commission, to the effect that he has since been called to account by the Customs Authorities in respect of his evidence; whether he actually received notice of discharge from the Service; and, whether the Commission are in a position to protect the witnesses who may come before them?

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY (Lancashire, N., Blackpool): Yes, Sir; representations were made to our Secretary by a writer in the Customs Department that he had got into difficulties with the Board, and that those difficulties had some connection with evidence which he had given before the Commission. I understand that he did receive notice of discharge. I am glad, however, to be able to state that the difficulties in question have been removed, and that the notice of discharge did not take effect. As to whether the Commission are in a position to protect the witnesses who may come before them, I am happy to be able to assure the hon. Member and the Service generally that no occasion for such protection has arisen during the course of our inquiry, nor did this particular case reach the stage of intervention by the Commission. Unquestionably, however, it is our recognized duty to protect all witnesses in the free expression of their opinions; and we shall do all that is in our power in this direction if, unhappily, the necessity should arise.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the First Lord of the Treasury, whether to members of the Civil Service who might offer evidence, and thus expose themselves to severe punishment for a trivial official delinquency, he would guarantee an appeal to the Treasury for protection?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I can assure the hon. Member that Civil servants will always find in the Treasury an authority capable of sustaining any rights they may possess.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: And willing?

LIGHTHOUSES AND LIGHTSHIPS — TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION—TORY ISLAND.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN (Hythe) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the Government intend to introduce, without delay, a measure enabling "Lloyd's," or any other Incorporated Body, to connect lighthouses and lightships with the mainland by submarine telegraphs, at the cost of any such Body and under Regulations to be sanctioned by the Board of Trade, and for such purposes to incorporate or extend the powers, for compulsory user or purchase of lands, of the Lands Clauses Acts; and, what steps are being taken to connect the improved lights on Tory Island (on the extreme north-west corner of Ireland) with signal stations on the mainland of Ireland?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): A Bill to confer powers on Lloyd's to take lands for signal stations and to maintain telegraphic communication with such stations was introduced in the other House on Tuesday last. I received information last week from Lloyd's that the question of connecting their signal station on Tory Island with the mainland by telegraphic cable is now being seriously considered by them.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE CART AND WHEEL TAX.

MR. ERNEST SPENCER (West Bromwich) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether steam rollers, watering carts, and other vehicles owned by a Corporation, and used solely for public purposes, will be exempted from the proposed tax upon carts and wheels?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): It is assumed that the steam rollers, watering carts, and other vehicles referred to in the Question will be used solely for local public purposes. There is no specific exemption of such vehicles in the Bill; but they will not be regarded as subject to charge.

ISLANDS OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC —SAMOA—CONVENTION OF 1881.

MR. W. A. M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Convention of 1881 between Great Britain, Germany, and the United States of America with regard to Samoa has ceased to exist; if so, what has taken its place; and, whether the Government intend to recognize Tamasese as King of Samoa?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): There was no such Convention contracted in 1881. A Convention was concluded in 1879 between Great Britain and Samoa, to which Germany and the United States subsequently became parties, providing for good order in the district of Apia, and for the maintenance of neutrality in case of internal disturbances; and a further Convention between the same Powers in 1883 continuing the last. The German Government have announced their withdrawal from that Convention; and Her Majesty's Government have assented to the district of Apia being replaced under the control of the Samoan Government, subject to the rights of the Treaty Powers.

HIS HOLINESS THE POPE—THE JUBILEE MISSION OF THE DUKE OF NORFOLK.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any communications, direct or indirect, written or oral, have been interchanged between Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Duke of Norfolk, either immediately before or during or after the Jubilee Mission of the latter to His Holiness the Pope in regard to the relations of the Holy See with Ireland, or with any other portion of the United Kingdom; and, whether any communications, direct or indirect, written or oral, have been interchanged between Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and any Catholic Bishop or Bishops upon the same subject within the last 12 months?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): No official communications on any political subject connected with Ireland have passed between the Foreign Office and the Duke of Norfolk or any Catholic Bishop.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The right hon. Gentleman will excuse me in saying that that is not exactly what I asked. I asked whether there had been any communications, direct or indirect, written or oral, interchanged between Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Duke of Norfolk? I perhaps may be allowed to say I called it Secretary of State; but I will add, "in his capacity as Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs." That is quite a different Question.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: If the hon. Member asks me whether any private communications have passed—[Mr. LABOUCHERE: I did not say private.]—between Lord Salisbury and the Duke of Norfolk, all I can say is that I believe they are on terms of private friendship, and it is probable that they have often talked together about Ireland; but I have no information upon that subject.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Do I understand that Lord Salisbury and the Duke of Norfolk have had many private communications upon the subject which I have stated in the Question?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: No, Sir; I have no information on the point at all.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): Does the right hon. Gentleman know whether any unofficial communications of a political character took place between Her Majesty's Government and the Pope?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: I must ask for Notice of Questions of this kind.

BANK ACT, 1844—ISSUE OF NOTES BY SCOTCH BANKS.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the case that, owing to the separation of the Issue Department from the Banking Department of the Bank of England, under the Bank Act of 1844, there is held in trust for the repayment of the bank notes issued, Government Debt, other securities, gold coin and bullion to the value of the bank notes so issued, thus securing the holders of these notes against possible loss; whilst, in Scotland, owing to the want of separation of the Issue Department from the Banking Department, the holder of bank notes, in the event of bankruptcy of a Scotch bank, has no better security for repayment than any ordinary creditor of the bank?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, he believed the matter was correctly stated in the Question; and he believed that what the hon. Member stated with regard to the Scotch banks was common knowledge as to the law on the subject.

INDIA—THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether a suggestion of an offer from the Nizam of Hyderabad of 60 lakhs of rupees for the frontier defences of India was brought under the notice of Her Majesty's Government, or of any Member of Her Majesty's Government, by Abdul Huk, when in London in the summer of 1887 as Jubilee Commissioner of H.H. the Nizam; whether any reply, verbal or in writing, was made to this suggestion; whether he is aware that Abdul Huk, on his return from London to Hyderabad, forwarded a draft letter containing the offer to Colonel Marshall, the British Private Secretary of the Nizam, and that he (Abdul Huk) stated that this draft had been written by a British Cabinet Minister; whether Colonel Marshall urged Sir Arman Jah, the Prime Minister of the Nizam, to adopt the proposal, and to submit it as his own to the Nizam; whether Sir Arman Jah, after some protest, presented the draft letter to His Highness, and at the same time intimated to him that the present was not the time for making the offer; whether eventually the draft letter was signed by His Highness, and Colonel Marshall took it to the Viceroy of India, together with a cheque signed by Abdul Huk, but unsigned by Sir Arman Jah, for 20 lakhs of rupees (the first yearly instalment) on the London and Provincial Bank; whether Sir Arman Jah, upon hearing of this cheque, protested that Abdul Huk had no right to give a cheque on property belonging to His Highness's Government, and deposited with the National Provincial Bank; whether the cheque was declined by the Viceroy, and the offer reserved for consideration; whether, if the Under Secretary of State for India is not sufficiently in possession of what took place in respect to this offer of His Highness to reply to these Questions, he will make inquiry in regard to them; whether any Despatches have been received from India in regard to the contemplated gift of the Nizam; and, if so, if he will lay them upon the Table of the House; whether he can state what are the functions of Colonel Marshall at Hyderabad, and if it is open to the Nizam to relieve him of those functions should His Highness deem it expedient to do so; and, whether he can inform the House if any decision has been arrived at in respect to the Nizam's offer?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): Paragraphs 1 and 2.—The suggestion in these Questions is absolutely devoid of foundation; paragraphs 3 to 9 relate to matters as to which the Secretary of State has no information or concern, and respecting which he thinks it unnecessary to ask for information. Paragraph 10.—No. Paragraph 11.—I described Colonel Marshall's position in an answer on April 26. As the Nizam asked for the loan of his services, his dismissal without reference to the Viceroy would be an act of discourtesy, of which it is inconceivable the Nizam would be guilty. Paragraph 12.—No.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—THE NEW LOAN.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the £E150,000 of the New Egyptian Loan, which £E450,000 it is stated is to provide for the continuation of the exchange of pensions against public lands or Domain lands, is to be issued at once; and, if so, what will become of this money, upon which the Egyptian Government will have to pay above 4½ per cent until such changes are made, or in the event of their never being made; whether the words—

> "The proceeds of the direct and indirect taxes of the City of Cairo, collected by the Daira Baladiek, which are hypothecated to the payment of interest on the loan,"

include local taxes for municipal purposes, as well as Imperial taxes; and, whether, in view of the fact that the loan is for £2,330,000, and is estimated to produce at the price of issue £2,186,050, whilst the proceeds of the loan to be handed over to the Egyptian Government are only £E2,000,000, he will state what is contemplated to be done with the difference, and to whom it is to go?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have not sufficient information to reply to the first two Questions of the hon. Member. With regard to the third Question, we have not been informed of the exact terms on which the loan has been finally contracted for; but it appears by the Decree that two coupons of interest were to be deducted, which would account for £90,000, and bring up the net amount to about £2,150,000.

IMPERIAL DEFENCE—COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AND HOME MERCANTILE PORTS.

Captain COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Committee appointed to consider with him the plans proposed for the fortifications and armament of the Military and Home Mercantile Ports inquired into the strength and composition of the war fleets and distribution of the military ports of the Continental Powers; and into the sufficiency of our war Fleet to carry out now, in the event of war, the traditional naval policy of England by the prompt assertion on the outbreak of war, and the maintenance during war, of naval superiority off an enemy's port on the most effectual and certain means of securing the safety of our own; and, whether he will communicate to the House the terms of Reference or Instructions to this Committee, the titles of all documents, plans, and charts submitted for examination; the names and occupations of all persons who gave evidence; and, also a statement showing the number and duration of the sittings of the Committee?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle):

The Committee, which rendered me such invaluable assistance in considering the defences of our ports, did inquire into the nature of the armament carried on board the ships of Foreign Powers, the object being to ascertain what defences were required against any probable attacks. They obtained evidence from many distinguished naval officers as to the dangers to be apprehended; but they had nothing whatever to do with any questions affecting our Fleet. If my hon. Friend will read the Report, he will find the terms of Reference to the Committee and the names of the most important witnesses examined. The Committee sat for more than 20 days.

CAPTAIN COLOMB asked, whether the Committee had any information before them as to the number of the war-ships of Foreign Powers?

MR. E. STANHOPE replied that the number of foreign war-ships was not an essential part of the information placed before the Committee; but that they had before them some information upon the subject.

METROPOLITAN POLICE—INTERFERENCE WITH STALL-KEEPERS, &c.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether instructions have been given to the police not to interfere further with the stall-keepers in Crisp Street, Poplar, and other places in the East of London?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): It is not the practice of the police to interfere with stall-keepers unless there is grave obstruction and inconvenience to the public, and then proceedings are only by way of summons. The Commissioner of Police has informed the Vestry to this effect. So far as my memory serves me, the police interfered in this case because there was serious obstruction.

MR. BUXTON: Are they going to interfere further in the matter?

MR. MATTHEWS: They are going to abide by the old practice they have always followed.

LAW AND POLICE (METROPOLIS)—POLICE COURT FOR ST. PANCRAS.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the police magistrate for Marylebone frequently has 60 summonses to his Court in an afternoon; whether, on the average of cases heard during the time he sits, he can give more than three minutes to each case; whether these hours are from 3 to 5 p.m.; whether some persons have to come three miles from their homes to attend the Court; if he is aware that there is a widespread demand in St. Pancras for a separate Court; and, if, taking all the circumstances into consideration, he is prepared to give this borough, having a population of about 250,000, a Police Court for the transaction of its business?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the magistrate of the Marylebone Court that it is a very unusual occurrence to have 60 summonses in a day. The hours for hearing summonses are from 2 to 5. The most distant part of the district in St. Pancras is about three miles from the Court. I have no knowledge of any widespread demand for a separate Court in St. Pancras. The Court is a hard-worked one; but the magistrates tell me that they have had no difficulty in disposing of the business. I am not prepared to advise the establishment of a separate Police Court for St. Pancras.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—ELECTORAL DIVISIONS, &c. (LANCASHIRE AND DEVONSHIRE).

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he will present to the House, before going into Commmittee on the Local Government Bill, a Return showing the Electoral Divisions, County Districts, Licensing Divisions, and particulars respecting all the other Divisions into which Lancashire will be distributed if the Bill passes in its present shape, and showing the areas, divisions, localities, and populations; and, whether he will consent to a similar Return in the case of Devonshire?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, that, looking to the fact that the County Councils had to settle the matter, and not the Local Government Board, it would be obvious that it was impossible for him to give a sketch model of any value whatever. The Electoral Divisions, except in the case of boroughs, would be determined by the Court of Quarter Sessions, and the Licensing Divisions would depend upon the Electoral Divisions.

RAILWAYS — ACCIDENTS ON RAILWAYS, 1887—THE GENERAL REPORT.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, When the General Report upon the Accidents on the Railways of the United Kingdom during 1887, and the Returns of Accident and Casualties by the Railway Companies in the United Kingdom during 1887, with Reports of Inspecting Officers of the Railway Department, will be printed and issued to Members of this House?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The Return of Accidents and Casualties by the Railway Companies for 1887 has been presented, and is in the hands of the printers. The General Report is in an advanced state of preparation. But the Returns of the numbers of passengers conveyed, which are necessary to the comparison between the numbers of persons conveyed and the numbers of those injured, have not yet been fully received.

GOLD DISCOVERIES IN WALES.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionthshire) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he can state approximately the amount of money spent by the Woods, Forests, and Land Revenue Commissioners in the discovery and working of gold in Wales, and of the amount of royalties derived from gold mining by private enterprize?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): No money has been spent by the Commissioners of Woods in the discovery and working of gold in Wales.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) (for Mr. WATT) (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is now prepared to state what steps the Government propose to take with reference to recent discoveries of gold in Wales, so as to encourage the development of a new industry, and at the same time create what may become a considerable source of revenue to the nation?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The steps which it is proposed to take, and which, in fact, have been taken, with a view to the development of gold mining in Wales, are to grant licences to such persons as may be desirous to obtain them. The question as to the proportion or amount of the royalty is under the consideration of the Government; and they will do everything in their power to develop the resources of the mines.

MR. HOWELL asked, whether the action of the Executive in the matter of royalties was not determined by statute? Had the Executive power to vary the statute?

MR. W. H. SMITH remarked, that that was a question of law to which he could give no answer on the moment.

MR. T. E. ELLIS asked, whether it would not be well to appoint a Committee to inquire into the working of the statute as it affected gold mining?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the Government would take all the steps in the matter that might appear to them to be necessary.

INDIA—ARMY RESERVE.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been drawn to the advisability of enrolling, as a reserve for Indian employment, those British soldiers who have completed their term of service in India and have subsequently determined to settle in Australia?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): Nothing on this subject has reached the Secretary of State for India.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE—THE LAW LORDS.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether, in view of the very small number of days in the year that the Law Lords sit, he could provide for their being employed (when they are not sitting to hear Appeals in the House of Lords) in relieving the great accumulation of business in the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice; and, whether he is aware that other Peers sit as frequently as the Law Lords for hearing Appeals in the House of Lords, without receiving any salary at all?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): In reply to my hon. and learned Friend, I cannot agree that the Lords of Appeal sit a very small number of days in the year. On the contrary, having regard to the appeals in the House of Lords and Privy Council—in both of which tribunals the Lords of Appeal sit—it would, in my opinion, be impossible, as well as inexpedient, that they should undertake any part of the business of the High Court of Justice. It is not the fact that any Peers sit as frequently as the Lords of Appeal to hear appeals without receiving any salary at all.

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE JURY SYSTEM IN CIVIL CASES.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he will this Session introduce a Bill for taking, in Civil Cases, a verdict by the majority of the jurors, to put an end to the great dissatisfaction that is felt by the public at long and protracted legal proceedings so frequently terminating without any verdict being arrived at by the jury?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): I cannot undertake to introduce a Bill to deal with the subject during the present Session.

METROPOLIS LOCAL MANAGEMENT ACT—THE ST. JAMES'S VESTRY.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been called to a Resolution of St. James's Vestry, determining to expend the rates of that parish in publishing remarks on the administration and expenditure of the London School Board; and, whether any statutory authority exists in the Metropolis Local Management Act for such expenditure of rates by a Vestry?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): In answer to the hon. Member's Question, I beg to say that my attention has been called to the Resolution in question; and that, so far as I am at present aware, there does not exist in the Metropolis Local Management Act statutory authority for such an expenditure of the rates.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACT, 1885—RETURN OF PROCEEDINGS.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government will consent to the distribution among Members of the Return of Proceedings under "The Land Purchase (Ireland) Act, 1885," ordered on the Motion, in "another place," of Lord Fitzgerald?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): If the hon. Member will move for the Return it will be granted.

INDIA—RAILWAYS—DOCK AND HARBOUR DUES—EXEMPTION.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON (Lancashire, Rossendale) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the Government have come to any determination which he can communicate to the House with respect to the exemption from the payment of Dock and Harbour Dues, now claimed by the Government of India, on shipments of material intended for the construction, maintenance, or use of railways in India?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Secretary of State in Council for India has come to the determination that, in future, exemption from dock and harbour dues be not claimed on the following classes of goods shipped from Great Britain, or for ships carrying them, on account of the Government of India:—1, coal; 2, all rolling stock for railways; 3, permanent way for railways; 4, all goods manufactured in this country for use on railways, or being of such a nature that they cannot be used except for railway purposes.

MR. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) asked, whether the word "dues" was intended to include rates, and whether "coal" included coke?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have read from the text of the Resolution passed in the Indian Council; and I have no doubt whatever that "coal" would include "coke," and that "dues" would include "rates."

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. A. E. PEASE (York) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he could give the House any information as to when the Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill would be taken?

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would consider the possibility of fixing that Bill as the first Order of the Day on which it was put down?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I have already stated that I will never undertake that a particular Bill shall be placed as the first Order on the Paper. I am not able to say when the Bill will be taken, possibly on Monday; but Notice of the arrangement will be given. I wish to take this opportunity of giving Notice that no Bill which stands on the Paper for Monday will be taken on that day, as it is essential that the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill and the Local Government (Electors) Bill shall be passed before other measures are proceeded with.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): What will the Business on Monday be? Perhaps, too, the right hon. Gentleman will now be able to give us some information with respect to the Whitsuntide Recess.

MR. W. H. SMITH: The Whitsuntide Recess, I think, must depend in some measure on the progress of Business. I should prefer not to make any statement with regard to the holidays until we can look a little more into the future with regard to Business. The course I propose to take is this—I propose to ask the House to consider the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill this evening, to proceed then to the Committee on the Local Government (Electors) Bill, and if that be not finished to-night to take it up on Monday. There is other Business on the Paper for Monday—the Criminal Evidence Bill, which will follow the Local Government (Electors) Bill. I think that is as much information as I can give to the House at present.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: When will the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill be read a third time?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I propose that it should be read a third time to-morrow.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: There is no opportunity of generally discussing the Bill on the Report stage. If the third reading is taken to-morrow it ought to be fixed at some hour when a discussion can take place.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I was not aware that there was any desire for a general discussion on the third reading, as a general discussion has already taken place on the second reading, and it is not, I think, very usual that a discussion should be taken on the third reading. I shall endeavour, however, to arrange that the Bill shall be taken at an hour which will allow of a discussion. The right hon. Gentleman must be aware of the importance of getting the third reading of the Bill as soon as possible, having due regard to the desire of hon. Members to express their views upon it. He is also aware that the Bill can be taken at any time; and, therefore, if unfortunately the discussion on going into Committee of Supply should be prolonged, it may be necessary to take the Bill at a later hour.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE said, he could not quite let those words pass without challenge. It appeared that one discussion on the Taxing Act of the year was to content the House, and that anything beyond that was to be considered entirely out of the common course. While recognizing the desire of the right hon. Gentleman that the Bill should be got through as soon as possible, he thought that it would be a perfectly fair request to make if they asked the right hon. Gentleman to give some facilities for a discussion.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that he would endeavour to use every influence he possessed in order to meet the views of the right hon. Gentleman.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—MR. JOHN ROCHE, OF WOODFORD.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) wished to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question of which he had given him private Notice—namely, Whether it was a fact, as stated in that day's papers, that Mr. Roche, of Woodford, now imprisoned under the Coercion Act, was seriously ill, suffering from acute lung disease; and, whether he could state that proper means were being, or would be, taken to prevent this gentleman being tortured to death?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, he had not seen the report referred to.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WINE TAX — COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the communications with the French Government with regard to the proposed duty on bottled wines were now closed; and, if so, whether he would communicate the result to the House?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, that Notice would be required of the Question, and that it ought to be addressed to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

CRIMINAL CASES (INCREASE OF SENTENCES ON APPEAL)—MR. BLANE, M.P.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is now able to lay before the House the record of the convictions of Mr. Blane, M.P., which he said he would inquire into?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I believe I can give a fairly full account to the House. It appears that the Resident Magistrates did not condemn Mr. Blane to hard labour. It appears there was a distinction drawn in the record of the sentences by which it was put down with regard to Father M'Fadden that he was not condemned to hard labour; and it is that circumstance, and that difference in the statement of the two sentences—which appeared to be identical in their character—which, I presume, led to the fact that it was reported in the first instance as being a sentence of hard labour; and throughout the recent trial of the appeal it was treated by counsel for the prosecution, and by the prisoner and those who advised him, as being a sentence of hard labour. The mistake is rather a remarkable one.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): Does the right hon. Gentleman now admit that there was an increase of sentence?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, I admit there was an increase of sentence. I have now given the House the information which reached me for the first time to-day, and, of course, I now admit that, with regard to Mr. Blane, there was an increase of sentence, but not with regard to Father M'Fadden.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): As the increase of sentence on Mr. Blane was accompanied, in the mind of the magistrates, by a decrease of its severity, and as it appears not to have taken place, will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to rectify it?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: As I understand the matter, the County Court Judge gave the sentence, on the re-hearing of the case, which he thought befitting the offence that had been committed; and if that was the view it was perfectly irrelevant whether an error was committed as to the sentence or not.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman now withdraw the word "modification" of the sentence which he used the other night?

[No reply.]

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY (Lancashire, N., Blackpool) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the second reading of this Bill would be taken before Whitsuntide?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Yes, Sir.

MOTION.

NATIONAL DEFENCE BILL.

LEAVE. FIRST READING.

The SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle), in moving for leave to bring in a Bill to make better provision respecting National Defence, said, that, as the subject was of a somewhat technical character, he had circulated a Memorandum which would clearly explain it.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill to make better provision respecting National Defence, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Secretary Stanhope and Mr. Brodrick.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 235.]

NATIONAL DEFENCE BILL.

MEMORANDUM.

The object of this Bill is to facilitate in case of emergency—

(1) the calling out of the yeomanry and volunteers;
(2) the calling out of the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers;
(3) the use of railways for naval and military purposes;
(4) the provision of horses and carriages;

As respects (1)—

At present a corps of yeomanry can be called out for actual military service in case of actual invasion or appearance of an enemy in force on the coast of Great Britain, or of rebellion or insurrection arising or existing within the same on the appearance of any enemy in force on the coast, or during any invasion.

A corps of volunteers can at present be called out for actual military service in case of actual or apprehended invasion of any part of the United Kingdom.

The yeomanry and volunteers, when called out, are required to serve in any part of Great Britain, subject, possibly, in the case of yeomanry, to certain exceptions.

The militia, on the other hand, can be embodied in case of imminent national danger or great emergency, and are required to serve in any part of the United Kingdom, and when the militia is embodied Parliament is required to meet within ten days after the order for the embodiment.

The object of the Bill is to authorise the yeomanry and volunteers to be called out for actual military service whenever the militia is embodied; but it is not proposed to impose any additional liability on existing men without their consent.

As respects (2)—

At present Royal Naval Coast Volunteers raised under 16 & 17 Vict. c. 73. s. 4. from seafaring men and others deemed suitable (s. 4.) can be called out "in case of imminent national danger or of great emergency" by proclamation specifying the cause.

The Royal Naval Volunteers raised under 22 & 23 Vict. c. 40. from seafaring men and others deemed suitable can be called out "on such occasions as Her Majesty shall deem fit."

The Naval Artillery Volunteers raised under 36 & 37 Vict. c. 77. can (s. 16.) be called out in case of actual or apprehended invasion of any part of the United Kingdom.

The object of the Bill is to authorise the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers to be called out for actual service whenever the Naval Reserve is called out, but it is not proposed to impose any additional liability on existing men without their consent.

(34 & 35 Vict. c. 86.)

As respects railways, the Regulation of the Forces Act, 1871, provides that when the Queen by Order in Council declares that an emergency has arisen in which it is expedient for the public service that Her Majesty's Government should have control over the railways in the United Kingdom, the Secretary of State may empower any person to take possession of a railway, and compensation is to be paid, which is to be ascertained, in case of difference, by arbitration under the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845.

The object of the Bill is to enable the Queen, whenever the militia is ordered to be embodied, to order that naval or military traffic shall have precedence over other traffic on a railway without the Secretary of State being obliged to take the extreme step of taking possession of the railway.

As respects carriages and horses, s. 115 of the Army Act, 1881, provides that the Queen by order, stating that a case of emergency exists, and signified by a Secretary of State, may authorise any general or field officer commanding Her Majesty's regular forces in any place in the United Kingdom to issue a requisition of emergency.

On production of the requisition by an officer of Her Majesty's forces mentioned in the requisition, or by an officer authorised by a Secretary of State, a justice must issue his warrant to constables to provide such carriages and animals, and such vessels used on a canal or river, as may be required.

The Secretary of State is to cause due payment to be made for the carriages, animals, or vessels furnished, and in case of difference, the amount is to be determined by a county court judge.

The section is considered not to be sufficiently definite, as it mightbe held to apply only to hiring. The object of the Bill is to clearly extend it to the provision of carriages, animals, and vessels for the purpose of being purchased as well as hired by the Secretary of State, but this extension is to exist only when the militia have been ordered to be embodied.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.—[BILL 202.]

(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

MR. SLAGG (Burnley), in moving, as an Amendment, in page 2, after Clause 3, to insert the following clause:—

> "That, on and after the passing of this Act, or at such other date subsequent thereto as Her Majesty may fix, by an order made with the advice of Her Privy Council, the Excise Duty now payable on plate of silver and gold made or wrought in Great Britain, or in Ireland, shall cease and determine; and that the Duty of Customs now payable under the Customs Tariff Acts on imports of plate of silver gilt or ungilt, and on plate of gold, shall also, on the same date, cease to be charged, and all drawbacks now payable on plate of silver or gold on being exported from Great Britain or Ireland shall cease to be paid,"

said, in doing so he was happy to inform the House that it would not be necessary to trespass upon the attention of hon. Members at any considerable length. It seemed to him that he had very few persons to convince in regard to the important question he was about to bring forward. Indeed, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was almost the only individual it was necessary to address specially, other hon. Members having already been converted to his proposition, and the right hon. Gentleman himself having, in fact, been his principal guide and tutor in the matter. The right hon. Gentleman would not dispute the fact that a few years ago he had deliberately condemned the imposition of a duty upon plate, and upon that occasion it was understood that upon the very first opportunity the Government would consider the duty upon gold and silver plate in connection with the subject of hall-marking. It would be out of Order for him to propose formally the amendment of that system, by which the duty on gold and silver plate was now levied. He should, therefore, be obliged to confine his remarks to the necessity of abolishing the duty at the earliest possible moment in the general interest of the country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Budget, had imposed several new duties, some of which were more or less oppressive to the trade of the country. He (Mr. Slagg) confessed that it would be very acceptable to him and to others connected with the industries of the country to see some relief given to trade, and he knew no better way in which it could be done than by abolishing those duties on gold and silver plate, which were now antiquated and absolutely barbarous. Personally, he was amazed that the present system of taxing an important and growing industry of the country had remained so long. The amount raised from the duty was really so trivial that he should have thought on the very first opportunity the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have taken means to get rid of the system. The system itself was some centuries old, and it appeared to be supported only by a small clique of persons who were connected with the trade in London and elsewhere, and who were not the most enterprizing persons of their class. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had not hesitated to attack other classes. Why did he hesitate to attack this monstrous and inadequate monopoly? He believed that the reason for this backwardness on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to be found in the restraint placed upon him by the action of the Goldsmiths' Company in London. Possibly, in anticipation of action to be taken in that House, that worthy, august, and ancient Corporation had made haste to incorporate among the Company a number of right hon. Gentlemen who had seats on the Front Bench, in order, he presumed, to dine down any proclivities they might have in the direction of interfering with these duties. He thought nothing more was needed to point out the undesirableness of continuing these duties than to show what their effect was. The trade in silver plate was decreasing seriously, both in quantity and in quality. In 1857, duty was paid on 1,930,000 ounces; in 1868, upon 780,000 ounces; in 1877, on 786,000 ounces; and in 1886 on only 690,000 ounces; or 1,000,000 ounces less than in 1825, notwithstanding the increase of population which had taken place in the interim. Those figures spoke for themselves, and proved the important fact that not only was the industry oppressed by the present system of taxation derived from hall-marking, but that it was in such a languishing state that before long it would inevitably expire. But, further, there was another fatal defect in these duties; they crushed out any enlargement of the trade in the direction of artistic development, as any hon. Member could see for himself, if he would look into a silversmith's shop. In the meantime, what were foreign countries doing? While our trade was languishing, that of America was improving by leaps and bounds. There was no such system there of hall-marks and duty, and the result was a large development of the trade. While we were harking back to the days of Queen Anne and George III. for our artistic designs, other countries were striking out new designs altogether, and were producing articles which beat ours and secured the customers who we formerly supplied. At present we were resting quietly under this competition which we had ourselves raised, and we were allowing a country like America not only to take away the whole of our trade, but to absorb the whole of our workmen and take them over to their factories. There were two large firms in America which alone made more artistic silver plate than the whole of our firms put together. On these grounds he made a strong appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to pay some consideration to the question. The right hon. Gentleman—and with justice perhaps—pleaded that it was now too late in the day to make such alterations in his Bill as would meet these grievances; but the right hon. Gentleman must be convinced of the importance of the subject, and he hoped he would at least give them an assurance that he would take an early opportunity of dealing with it, and, if possible, of setting it right. He thought that if the House could only be made aware of the loss of employment and the destitution of artistic application caused by the operation of these taxes, there would be a general demand for their removal. There was only one further part of the question upon which he would trouble the House with a very few words—namely, the effect of these duties in India. In India the silversmith's art was a very ancient one, and many of the inhabitants of that country were specially skilled in producing silver articles of great beauty and design. While, however, we professed in this country to be making every possible effort to foster the Native art of India, we were really doing all we could to stifle it and crush it out, by meeting it with a virtual prohibition at our Custom Houses, owing to the fact that it could not pass our hall-marking process, seeing that the silver rupee was a little below the standard of our own silver. Thus we absolutely denied to our own Dependencies the advantages which might be derived from a trade of this sort with the Mother Country. He thought that hon. Members who took an interest in the welfare of India would support his proposal. It was utterly impossible that they could extend trade as it ought to be extended until the imports to which he was objecting were done away with. He had no hesitation in expressing his full condemnation of the present system of hall-marking. But that was not the point which he desired to raise on that occasion. What he wished was to give to those who were in favour of abolishing the duty the opportunity of voting with him if they possibly could. There could be no doubt that hall-marking was a very great burden and tax upon the art of the country. He had made appeals to various Chancellors of the Exchequer, and the answer which he had invariably received was—"Oh, yes; we agree that it is a barbarous and antiquated state of things; but we are held and bound fast by the difficulty of dealing with the question of drawbacks." He was surprised, after the steps which had been taken by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget, that he should flinch from facing the question. He (Mr. Slagg), as a Free Trader, would have no hesitation whatever in removing the duty without considering the question of drawback at all. It had been done in other cases, and he did not see why they should stand shivering on the brink. To meet the difficulty, however, he would propose to compromise these drawbacks. He knew that the suggestion he was about to make could not be acted upon now; but he threw it out for the consideration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—namely, to give, as had been given in former instances, one year's drawback on the whole stock of silver plate. The amount of gold plate was so small that he thought it might be left out of the question, being simply confined to wedding rings. Taking the average for the last three years, he estimated one year's duty at £50,000, and this sum he would apply to the extinction of all plate duties. He ventured to think that the sum of £50,000 would liberally cover all demands of the trade. In the last few years about £150,000 had been paid in the shape of drawbacks, and two-thirds of that sum had gone in consumption, so that there was only one-third remaining upon new and unused silver plate. That sum would, therefore, be sufficient to pay all demands; and, although it was not a large sum, he believed it would satisfy the great bulk of the trade. The proposition would only be opposed by dealers in old plate, if only upon the ground of giving artistic employment to the working men of our large towns, and of removing an injustice to our fellow-subjects in India. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able to give some favourable reply to his proposal. He believed that hon. Members opposite, in voting for the Clause, would give satisfaction to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because the right hon. Gentleman himself desired to have some expression of opinion upon the justice of the case. He, therefore, hoped that hon. Members would support the clause he proposed, which would confer a lasting benefit upon the commerce of the country.

Clause (Silver and gold plate,)—(*Mr. Slagg,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he was unable to go the full length of his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Slagg). Although the sum involved was not a large one, he was very unwilling to withdraw the duty entirely, because the fact should not be overlooked that it was a tax upon luxury. He also doubted whether the removal of the customs upon imported plate would benefit the British trader; whereas such removal would give rise to a very severe competition from India. The real grievance was that the present regulations in regard to hall-marking had the effect of practically excluding Indian goods from the English Market. He agreed with the hon. Member that Indian artificers were highly skilled, and it was one of the industries with regard to which it might be said that India was in advance of this country. It seemed to him that there were two questions to be considered: in the first place, the duty; and, in the next, the question of hall-marking. He thought the regulations as to hall-marking ought to be altered, so as to give India fair play.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, the only Question before the House was the question of duty, and it would be out of Order to enter into the question of hall-marking.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he was simply about to suggest that a duty should be imposed, without any reference to the material upon which it was put. If a man chose to pay the duty he could do so.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, the hon. Member was going into a subject which was outside the scope of the Bill.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he thought it would be possible to discuss the matter without any reference to hall-marking at all. In his opinion, it was desirable that the duty should be retained, and that there should be a stamp of some kind, such as that which was placed upon patent medicines, and other articles that were subject to Imperial duty. That was the only suggestion he intended to make.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said, that he should have been quite prepared to support the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Slagg), if his clause had ended with the first part relating to the remission of the Excise Duty on gold and silver plate wrought within the United Kingdom; but he could not support the second part of the Motion, which proposed to abolish the duty on imported foreign plate. He did not see how the languishing home trade would be benefited by the Market being flooded with more base foreign goods. It was an important admission for the hon. Member for Burnley, who was well known to be an active Free Trader, to make—namely, that the foreign trade was growing by leaps and bounds, whereas our trade was declining.

MR. SLAGG: I only referred to the trade in silver plate.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT said, that after the ruling of the Deputy Speaker he presumed it would be out of Order to follow the hon. Member into the question of hall-marking; but he could not resist the opportunity of saying that, in the opinion of a large number of artificers connected with the silver plate trade in Sheffield, that the present system of compulsory array was a great protection to them, and a guarantee of the good work of many honest but unknown small masters and artizans.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, the remarks of the hon. Member were not in Order.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT said, he would not pursue the matter further. He only hoped the hon. Member for Burnley would adopt the suggestion he had offered.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, that although he sympathized with many of the observations of his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Slagg), he could not entirely agree with him as to the causes which had led to the diminished consumption and use of plate in this country. There was a time when good plate was made in this country, before George IV. melted down his plate and had it reconstructed into extremely bad plate by Rundell and Bridge. From that time the trade had fallen off. The modern habit of not putting plate on the dinner table had led to a large diminution of the trade. He was old enough to remember when it was the fashion to cover the table with plate. It was now the fashion to cover it with flowers instead. He did not think the imposition of the duty had had much effect in reducing the trade. There was no dispute as to matters of taste; but he could not agree with the opinion which had been expressed that American plate was very superior to ours. With regard to Indian plate, some people admired it more than he did; but there was no doubt that Indian artificers showed great capacity. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer could see his way to dealing with Indian plate in some manner, so as to give it fairer play in the Market here, he should have great sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman. The tax, however, was a tax upon luxury, and it was not, therefore, one of the first taxes that pressed for removal, such as might be the case if it were a tax upon necessaries.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA (Monaghan, S.) said, he did not agree with the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Slagg) upon the question of the discontinuance of hall-marking; but he did agree with him as to the desirability of removing the duty upon silver plate. Among other disadvantages, it was open to the objection that it was an almost insurmountable obstacle to the adoption of a system of bi-metallism. If the tax were abolished, he believed that numbers of persons would engage in the manufacture of silver articles who were now prevented by the duty from doing so; and this would operate to restore silver to its true relative value and its primary function. The use of silver as money was a secondary one; the primary use of silver was in the manufacture of articles of luxury. In sacred history we read that the offerings of the Princes of Israel for the building of the Temple were not given as so many shekels of money, but in silver plate, chargers or dishes of silver, and gold spoons, valued in no other way than according to weight. That proved satisfactorily that in ancient times the primary use of gold and silver was in the manufacture of articles of luxury. The secondary use was for coinage which subsequently became the chief function of both the precious metals. The question of bi-metallism was being very much agitated at the present moment, he believed that this duty had acted very much as an obstacle to that system, because it prevented the application of silver to its primary use in art and commerce, and so lessened its value relatively to other things.

Mr. WIGGIN (Staffordshire, Handsworth) said, that he knew the plate manufacturers of Birmingham and Sheffield intimately, and he was satisfied that as a body they did not want any alteration in the matter. He had not received a single application on the subject from the manufacturers of Birmingham. It was quite certain that the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) had not paid a recent visit to Birmingham, or he would have seen that the articles he described did not altogether belong to the taste of the past. If the right hon. Gentleman would only pay a visit there, he would see that the trade was able to produce artistic articles of great beauty, and in the very best taste.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he thought that the question lay in a nutshell. He did not know whether what he had to say would satisfy the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Slagg); but he might state that if he could he should be glad to do so. Hon. Members were by no means unanimous as to whether the tax ought to continue or not, and it was curious to find how differently the same tax might be regarded even by two Members sitting on the same side, the one looking on it as a tax on industry, and the other wishing to maintain it as a tax on luxury. He confessed that his own sympathies were rather in the direction of the remission of that duty if it could be done. The hon. Member for Burnley had referred to the views of those whom he had called the monopolists; but the hon. Member would do him the justice to admit that there were some classes whom he had been obliged to touch by his Budget who were far more formidable than that particular industry, and no opposition coming from a small though opulent class would in the slightest degree affect the decision of the Government in such a matter. The hon. Member for Burnley had, he thought, to a certain extent exaggerated the effect of that tax, and he was inclined to agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) in the opinion that it was not the tax which had prevented an increase in the consumption of that class of manufacture. He could not dispose of the question of the drawback in the same light and airy manner as the hon. Member for Burnley. At the same time, he did not wish to state the question of the drawback too strongly; he desired to be very careful, as he might have to deal with it on other occasions, and therefore he would not enter into controversy with the hon. Member on the subject. It was not a question of opposition only—the opposition of the silversmiths in that House would be almost absolutely *nil*; but there was the question of equity as to dealing fairly with the class affected. They were in this position as regarded drawback—that while in respect to most articles—for example, tobacco and some others—the bulk of them was kept in bond, and a comparatively small stock of them was not in bond; whereas in the case of silver there was practically no manufactured silver in bond. The case of drawback in regard to silver would stand on a different footing, because the duty was paid in a different manner. The question of drawback had seriously embarrassed successive Chancellors of the Exchequer in dealing with that matter. The matter was one of a complicated character, requiring time and close examination for its satisfactory solution, with due regard to the interests of the public on the one hand, and to what was equitable towards the manufacturer on the other. If the hon. Member would withdraw his proposal, he would promise him that he would continue to give the subject his best attention. He could make no pledge as to the time when the matter should be dealt with, as it must depend on the condition of their finances and other circumstances; but his sympathies lay in the direction that he had indicated, and he was especially desirous of remedying the Indian grievance which had been pointed out.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred to the course adopted by his Predecessors on this question, he wished to add that it was perfectly true that they had endeavoured to deal with this question. In 1880 his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian proposed the gradual reduction and ultimate abolition of the tax on silver and gold plate, and it had also been his duty to make a proposal under which the duty would have been abolished. But he was obliged to point out that when the Liberal Government proposed the abolition of the duty according to these two plans, they were met by very considerable political opposition, which was strong enough to make it impossible in 1880 and 1883 to carry through the proposed abolition. Now, he could promise the Chancellor of the Exchequer that Gentlemen on that side of the House would not throw in their lot with a small discontented body of silversmiths, and use their political power to defeat a measure for the abolition of the duty. He was very glad to hear what had fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he made no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman would be able next year to apply a small portion of any surplus he might have to get rid of the tax altogether. On those terms, he would ask the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Slagg) not to press his proposal to a Division.

Mr. SLAGG said, he thanked the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen) very heartily for the manner in which he had met his Amendment, which he would now ask leave to withdraw.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. WARMINGTON (Monmouth, W.) said, that on a former occasion the principle of the Amendment in his name was put forward by the hon. Member for the Eifion Division of Carnarvonshire (Mr. Bryn Roberts), who gave reasons in support of it; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer suggested that it was a matter which excited so little interest that it required no answer. He (Mr. Warmington) believed that a study of the Division Lists of last week would show that the subject was one of wide interest. There were many small tradesmen and others who, although good men of business, were not able to put two sentences together, and who, when they appeared before men very well versed in these matters, were at a very great disadvantage in attempting to make good their case against the assessment. Small tradesmen desired that they might have an opportunity of being represented before the Commissioners by some skilled persons who would be able to put forward their claims for the revision of the assessments made upon them. In other classes of the community there were also many persons suffering from unjust assessment for Income Tax, because they found it better to submit to the injustice than to go to the trouble of appearing personally before the Commissioners. That was so, particularly with those who had the concerns and interests of people committed to their charge, and whose time was so valuable that it was impossible for them to sacrifice it by personally representing their case to the Commissioners. On these grounds he ventured to propose the Amendment in his name upon the Paper, which he thought was founded upon reason and good sense.

Amendment proposed,

In page 12, after Clause 22, to insert the following Clause:—"Any person appealing against an assessment of Income Tax shall be entitled to appear by solicitor."—(*Mr. Warmington.*)

Clause (Persons appealing may appear by solicitor,)—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, that many hon. Members, at the first blush, might think it desirable that solicitors should be allowed to appear before the Commissioners; but he would point out that the clause would give a totally different character to the proceedings which now took place. Dealing with these matters in a common-sense way was certainly equal to the advantage of having legal persons present. Of course, if a solicitor appeared on one side, it might be necessary to have a solicitor on the other side also; and the consequence might be that, instead of cases being rapidly disposed of by the exercise of common-sense on the part of impartial persons, there would be a long debate on each side. He felt certain that it was in the interests of persons who had to appeal that the process should be kept as simple and as commonplace as it could be. If people could not calculate upon the time at which their cases would be heard, it would be a great hardship. The Amendment would destroy the certainty which now existed. Experience had shown that upon the whole the present tribunal had given satisfaction, and it was not a tribunal before which it was desirable to introduce long legal arguments.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, he ventured respectfully to differ from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was quite indifferent whether it was a solicitor or any qualified agent who might be entitled to appear; but he could not believe that because such persons came before the Commissioners to state the case of a person who considered himself unduly assessed there would be any waste of time. It was generally found that the more perfectly a man knew his case, the more rapidly he was able to put it forward; on the other hand, it was, generally speaking, the person who was not a practised man, and could not put his facts together, that wasted time in stating his case. He many years ago had a client, a manufacturer, a very able mechanic, a genius at inventions, but bad at accounts. This gentleman was assessed for Income Tax at thrice the proper amount. He appealed, but could not present his case clearly, and gained nothing by his appeal. Next year he consulted him (Mr. Gedge), and he was somewhat irregularly allowed to go with him before the Commissioners. In a few minutes he put the matter clearly before them, and a reduction of two-thirds of the Income Tax followed. He thought that the proposal of the hon. Member opposite would facilitate matters rather than delay the proceedings. The Income Tax was a very unpopular tax. ["No, no!"] An hon. Gentleman said "No;" but if he were acquainted, as he (Mr. Gedge) himself was, with persons whose incomes were about £600 or £700 a-year, he would find that among that class the Income Tax was very unpopular indeed, and that it was particularly so with the class who came under Schedule D. He believed that if, instead of the present system, they could let the appeal be heard by the County Court Judge *in camerâ*, and allow the appellant to be represented by a qualified man of business, who understood accounts, and could put the matter clearly before the Commissioners, it would be of advantage. The Commissioners, of course, would not allow the representative to go into any legal arguments. The question would not be one of law, but simply of figures, and he believed that the proposal would lead to a great saving of time, and to much greater content on the part of the taxpayer, who would no longer feel that he had been treated unjustly.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, it would be a disadvantage if the representations to the Commissioners were turned into a legal argument; but he should be glad to know whether the grievances really existed which the hon. Member (Mr. Gedge) complained of? He believed that, under the present system, the Commissioners did not insist on personal attendance. As far as his experience went, a person could send anybody he liked to represent him; and, from his own observations, certainly it was not necessary for individuals to appear in the case of the valuation of houses for Income Tax. The owner might send any person he thought fit, and if that took place under one Schedule, he did not see why it should not also be allowed under another Schedule.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 166; Noes 214: Majority 48.—(Div. List, No. 89.)

MR. CRAIG (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he ventured to hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might see fit to agree to the Amendment which he had placed upon the Paper. Over and over again, in the course of the right hon. Gentleman's statement, he had declared that it was not his wish to strike at the lower classes of wine introduced into this country, for which they were so much indebted to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. The right hon. Gentleman said, further, that it was his wish that only high class and costly wines, especially champagne and expensive clarets, which were the luxury of the rich and seldom the luxury of the poor, should be subject to the increased duty. One of the disadvantages under which the House suffered in this discussion was that they had not been supplied by the Government with statistics showing the quantities of bottled wine from various countries which would be affected by this proposal. But in the course of the debate of last Thursday the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) had given some statistics which he thought furnished a clue to the quantity of French wines which would be affected by the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer if it became law. The right hon. Gentleman told the House that the British Consul at Bordeaux had reported that the quantity of wine exported from that port to the United Kingdom in bottle was 700,000 gallons. That was a very moderate estimate, although, if they took into account other French wines which were not sparkling, he thought that something like 300,000 gallons more would not be an erroneous estimate. The quantity of French wine in bottles other than champagne then affected would be not less than 1,000,000 gallons. That showed why it was that the French people might be said to be up in arms against a measure which so seriously affected their commerce; but the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs went further. He referred to some figures that were stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and he admitted that the quantity of wine bottled and exported from France was twice as large of champagne as of all other kinds. He said that there were 90,000 hectolitres of champagne as against 45,000 hectolitres of other kinds of wine, which showed that no less a quantity than 2,000,000 gallons of champagne were exported annually from France to this country. The tax proposed by the Bill was 2*s.* 6*d.* a-gallon, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer estimated that the tax would produce only £125,000 when taken on all classes of bottled wines brought to England, whether from France or other countries. The House would see, therefore, that the produce of the tax had been largely underestimated, and that on champagne alone the right hon. Gentleman might get twice as much as from all other kinds of wines taken together. He thought that some hon. Gentlemen had failed to perceive that, with regard to France, they were creating a sort of international animosity which might result in retaliatory measures. Retaliatory measures had been spoken of in France, and M. Goblet had had the greatest difficulty in prevailing on the Chamber not to propose retaliatory measures, the object of which would be to deprive us of the benefit of the Act of 1882, which extended to England the "Favoured Nation Clause." If the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consent to tax costly wines only, no harm would be done; but there would certainly be reprisals, if the wines which were drunk on middle-class tables were interfered with. But France was not alone concerned in this matter. There was a trade springing up between Portugal and this country, and which, strange to say, the Portuguese Government had taken measures to promote in this country by means of their Consul. He knew of one case where the Consul had endeavoured to make people acquainted with the fact that there were wines in Portugal as good as claret and Burgundy, and more than that, they had succeeded in supplying this wine in bottles at 16*s.* a-dozen, yet in this Bill they had a proposal to put on that wine a duty of 7*s.* per dozen bottles. Take the case of Spain also. Owing to the measure carried out with respect to the alcoholic scale of duties in 1886, trade was being brought back to this country. Then, again, there was Germany with her light Rhine wines, hock and Moselle, and there was Italy also trying to introduce its wines into this country; and the same might be said of Greece. As might be imagined, England could not inflict a tax of this sort upon the industries of those countries without being met at every port with vexatious imposts upon our ships by way of retaliation for this tax. This question was of particular importance from the point of view of those interested in shipping, because there were constantly little imposts inflicted upon that class of property abroad which ate away all profit that might otherwise accrue from the voyage, and really left nothing for the owners. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer would limit this excessive surtax to expensive classes of wine, he would lose nothing of the amount which the charge had been estimated to produce, and, while that alteration would not injure our trade, it would preserve to us the advantages we had enjoyed in our friendly relations with France and other countries. For these reasons he begged to move the Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 1, after the word "bottles," to insert the words "and of a greater value at the port of entry than thirty shillings per dozen bottles."—(*Mr. Craig.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he had an Amendment on the Paper embodying the same principle as that of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. Craig)—the difference between the two Amendments being, that his hon. Friend's Amendment seemed to have been suggested by way of compromise. He (Sir George Campbell) could not vote against a proposal of the Government to place a special tax on luxuries; but, at the same time, it seemed to him an enormity that Scotch whisky, worth perhaps 10*s.*, should be charged 20*s.*

a-dozen duty, while the rich man's champagne, worth perhaps 100*s*., was only charged 2*s*. a-dozen. It was contrary to all principle to enact that the rich man's articles of consumption should be charged less duty than the poor man's, and he would like altogether to reverse that principle. But although he very much doubted the expediency of the form in which the special tax had been laid upon champagne, yet, as he had said, he was totally unable to vote against the proposal of the Government. He thought they ought to spread their net wider to tax luxuries. As regards wine the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) ought to have put his proposal into a more discriminating shape; he should not tax all wines equally, but make a distinction between the high class wines and the comparatively poor wines. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) had stated, a few days ago, in reply to the hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow (Mr. Provand), that it was better to keep out of the country champagne which, was sold at 20*s*. a-dozen; but he (Sir George Campbell) thought that there was a fallacy in the reasoning of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and that the result would be to encourage British champagnes. It was well known that at Hamburg they could supply the finest brand at 12*s*. a-dozen; and he thought that the British people were wanting in science if, with a Protective Duty of 7*s*., they could not produce an excellent bottled wine of the character of champagne. It seemed to him, therefore, that the result of taxing these cheap wines would be not to keep out low wines, but to promote the manufacture of wine in this country. He agreed that if they carried too far the taxation of wine from France it would be at the risk of irritating the French people, with whom, above all, it was most desirable to keep on good terms. He hoped the Government would be able to see their way to make some compromise in this matter, and he thought that the Amendment of his hon. Friend was a reasonable compromise to propose. He knew that it was the practice of the British Custom House Authorities to assert that it was impossible to discriminate with regard to the value of tea or wine and other things; they said they could not discriminate whether an article was fine or inferior, and that, therefore, all classes must be taxed alike. But that was not true of other countries, in all of which something in the nature of *ad valorem* duties were to be found. He remembered in Calcutta there were *ad valorem* duties, and he could affirm that he had not found the insuperable difficulties which the British Custom House officials spoke of. Therefore, he could see no insuperable difficulty in the way of carrying out the principle here. In dealing with the Wine Duties, the English Government had first offended Spain, and now they were trying to impose a duty on bottled wine from France, and were very likely to offend that country also. He doubted whether the argument about Commercial Treaties was a sufficient reason for entering into this course of treating foreign countries; and he thought it neither right nor fair that alcohol in foreign wines should be taxed much more lightly than the alcohol in home produce. He thought his hon. Friend's Amendment was framed in fair terms, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would favourably consider it.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, that the House was aware that it was the wish and the intention of the Government to levy this tax only upon the more expensive wines. He had shown on former occasions that the tax would not be paid by the cheap wines, because they could and would be imported in casks and not in bottles. The wines of Spain and Portugal would certainly come in casks. The House generally, he understood, did not object so much to the taxing of the higher classes of wines, but to the taxing of the cheaper wines. A large portion of these cheaper wines could be imported in casks, but there was some portion of them that could not. Her Majesty's Government would like to find means to relieve these wines, but the difficulty was as to the method of doing so. They should also be glad if by such means they removed any feelings of irritation that had been aroused abroad, for though they had pointed out that they could not adapt their fiscal system in every point to foreign susceptibilities, yet it would be very satisfactory if these were not aroused. The hon. Member, by his Amendment, proposed that wines under a certain value should be exempt from this tax. But here was the difficulty. How was the value of the wine to be tested at the port of entry—by its intrinsic value or the hopes of the seller? How could the wine be tested, except by drinking or tasting it? How could they ascertain whether it was worth 30*s*. a-dozen or not? He should be quite prepared to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member if any method could be discovered whereby it was possible that the value of 30*s*. per dozen could be arrived at without giving rise to fraud, friction, and irritation of every kind. The principle of the Amendment he accepted, but the difficulty was in its application. So far the Custom House Authorities had not been able to devise any satisfactory means of ascertaining the value of any particular class of wines, sugar, tobacco, and tea, and other products, the value of which varied in an extraordinary manner. It had been attempted to tax tea on the *ad valorem* principle by tasting it, but the experiment led to every kind of difficulty, and proved to be a great impediment to trade. The *ad valorem* theory was excellent in principle but most difficult to carry out in practice. There had been tea-tasters and there might be wine-tasters, but that was not a satisfactory system. It was suggested that the article should be taken by the Customs Authorities at the value declared. But this involved the wines being subsequently sold by auction and sacrificed. These were the difficulties that had to be faced; but he was quite prepared to promise that he would continue to consider this question with the Custom House Authorities, and that if practical means were found of determining the value of wines, he would be willing to accept the limit of exemption suggested by the hon. Member. It would not, he thought, be advisable to put into the Bill a clause in regard to which they could not at present see how it could be worked. But if the House were disposed to accept the Amendment, he would suggest that it should be modified to the following form:—

> "Provided that, from a day to be fixed by an Order in Council, this section shall not apply to wines imported in bottles after that day if of a value, as determined by regulations made by the Commissioners of Customs, not exceeding 30*s*. per dozen bottles."

The objection, however, was that it would give very considerable power to the Treasury and to the Customs; and, though he made the suggestion, still he thought the more preferable course would be to pass the Bill as it stood, upon the pledge—which he was willing to give the House—that he would pursue the consideration of the subject in concert with the Custom House Authorities, with a view of ultimately bringing in a Bill which would show the manner in which the value might be arrived at, and enable the House to judge better as to whether the exemption was based upon proper principles.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the House could not but feel satisfied with the tone in which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had met the Amendment. He (Sir William Harcourt) agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that it would be an undesirable precedent to pass a Bill containing a clause giving the Treasury a sort of roving commission in the shape of the discretionary power such as had been suggested. He should, however, much prefer to rely on the promise of the right hon. Gentleman to bring in a separate Bill dealing with the subject. If the right hon. Gentleman undertook that, in the course of the present Session, he would introduce some legislation which, under the authority of Parliament, would carry out the principle of relieving the lower-class wines, that would be most satisfactory. But he must remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that though he and his Friends were satisfied with the attitude taken by the Government in that particular instance, they objected to the tax as a whole; not on account of its character, but because of the effect it would have upon our commercial relations with France. The right hon. Gentleman had not touched upon that point, although it was a point raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and the objection made to the tax was not merely that it was imposed on the cheaper wines, but that the tax was calculated to affect our commercial relations with France. The House had been given to understand that Her Majesty's Government had been in communication with the Government of France on the subject, and he thought that they had a right to ask that, before the Bill went finally out of their hands, hon. Members should be informed how the Chancellor of the Exchequer exactly stood in reference to the French Government in regard to the question. He hoped that some arrangement had been arrived at between the two countries, which would remove the grave apprehensions which there was some reason to think had been entertained; for, certainly, it seemed exceedingly ill-advised to risk serious consequences to a trade of £20,000,000 for the sake of so small a sum as this tax could produce.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) must be aware that if the proposed plan were adopted, a large portion of the French grievance would be removed, because that grievance had been largely founded on the amount of wine that would be taxed. He should have thought it would have facilitated an amicable discussion with France, if the House would wait to see the effect of the proposal now made with regard to the cheaper wines. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the bulk of our trade with France. Her Majesty's Government also had a very great principle at stake, and that was whether, in regard to their fiscal policy, they were not perfectly justified in maintaining their rights. The French Government, he thought, would not contest that for a moment. He deprecated the continuance of the debate at that moment with regard to the relations between France and England as to these questions, and did not think it would produce so amicable a settlement as they could desire. At the same time, he felt that he had no right to deprecate it in strong terms, if hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite thought it should take place, as he fully admitted their right to bring such an important matter before the House if they wished to do so.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he recognized the fact that Her Majesty's Government were with regard to this matter placed in a very difficult position, even more difficult than was shown by the words of the right hon. Gentleman. As the right hon. Gentleman considered it best that the clause should remain, as at present he thought the House might be satisfied if he would give an assurance that after obtaining further information the Government would bring in a Bill, not at the end of the Session, but at an early date, to secure that low wines should pay a reduced duty. He felt that full confidence would be had in the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman; but the matter was not one which would bear much longer delay, and he trusted that no time would be lost in framing a Bill under which wines of a lower class would pay a lower rate of duty. No one, it was true, liked to go back to the system of *ad valorem* duties, after their distinct repudiation by this country; but matters could not be left in their present state. It was unfortunate that the proposal as to wine in bottle should have been made; but, it having been made, and approved by this House, he thought it best to accept the view now taken by his right hon. Friend.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he wished, with the indulgence of the House, to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer why, if there was to be another Bill brought in dealing with these cheap wines and the method of raising duties upon them, that Bill should not include the whole of the wine question, so that there might be time for the right hon. Gentleman not only to consult with the Custom House Authorities, but also with the French Government? He thought that would facilitate matters considerably, and he did not see that the course presented any insuperable difficulty.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said he quite agreed that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had shown a disposition to get out of a difficulty which he thought had been gratuitously created. The right hon. Gentleman insisted that this House should have absolute liberty to control its own fiscal arrangements. There was no doubt that we could preserve our fiscal liberty. So could the French Government; and nothing was truer than that if we took this course, the liberty which the French Government possessed would very soon be exercised. [An hon. Member: No, no!] He could not make an appeal to Gentlemen who did not regard the benefit of Free Trade as between the two countries. He believed he should be supported by everyone in the House when he said there was no policy which had benefited this country and the world at large more than the existing commercial arrangements between this and other countries. It was quite possible that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer might satisfy the French Government that he intended to act in good faith under the assurance given to the House that evening, and that he would endeavour to free the cheaper wines coming into this country from the enormous surtax proposed. But this was not the whole difficulty; they might assure the French Government of this, but could they assure the French people that their wines were not to be charged at this excessive rate? He would be sorry if the House should assent to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman as he at first submitted it. It seemed to him that the amount was so small that it was not worth while for £125,000 to run the enormous risk of a disturbance of the trade relations between England and France as well as other countries. The cheap wines of those countries would be largely on the increase in future years, and it was of the first importance that no difficulty should be thrown in their way. He ventured to enforce upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer the enormous necessity of the course suggested by his right hon. Friend—namely, to withdraw from the present proposal with regard to the wine tax. In making this appeal, he would ask what was the inference drawn from the proposal of the Government? It was that for the paltry sum of £125,000 it was proposed again to disturb almost in perpetuity our commercial relations with every country; and those Governments which wished to extend Free Trade with us would have additional trouble thrown upon their hands to restrain those who wished to act upon contrary principles. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had yet measured the difficulties which underlay these proposals. The right hon. Gentleman said he would be doing a service to the bottling trade of the country.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he did not say that. It was not his intention to do so. He said it would not injure the proposal—that it would, perhaps, have that effect. The instance he gave was simply by way of illustration.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER pointed out to the hon. Gentleman that the Question before the House was the restriction of the duty on wine.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he sincerely hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would make a fuller and truer estimate of the injurious effects inseparable from his proposals as they now stood; and he suggested that the plan of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) was far sounder—namely, to suspend the matter until the further proposals of the right hon. Gentleman were laid before the House.

Mr. GOSCHEN asked, whether he understood that the right hon. Gentleman Sir William Harcourt had suggested that there should be a withdrawal of the whole duties?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT [*who was met with loud Ministerial cries of* "Order!"] said, he had been asked a question by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he desired to reply to it. [*Renewed cries of* "Order!"] He appealed to Mr. Deputy Speaker whether he could not reply to the question?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, this was extremely irregular, and asked the Mover of the Amendment whether he persisted in it.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT [across the Table to the Chancellor of the Exchequer]: I regret that I cannot answer your question.

Mr. CRAIG said, after the assurance given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer he would ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he would now move the omission of the clause, which, he understood, would enable the House to discuss the whole question of the Wine Duties. He did not wish to speak again on the matter at any length; but he did wish, on his own part, to enter his protest against the plan of the Government as it now stood. He had to complain that the House at present had received no information as to the situation in which the Government stood with reference to the French negotiations; but, of course, if the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said it was not convenient to make a statement at the present moment, he should not press for it. All they desired was that no difficulty should arise between this country and France in regard to the subject. They had no desire to hinder or embarrass Her Majesty's Government; but they saw a great danger which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not fully recognized. They, on that (the Opposition) side of the House, did not deny that each country had the right to settle its own fiscal system or that the right hon. Gentleman had the right to impose the tax, but the question was as to the prudence of such a proposal as was made by Her Majesty's Government. The French Government and people might be perfectly unreasonable; but they often had to deal with unreasonable people; and if they were prudent they would not offer unnecessary provocation, especially when large interests were at stake. A more retaliatory speech than that which was made by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the other night he had never heard. They must protest to the last, and leave on record their objections to this unnecessary raising of the duty on bottled wines, the amount to be obtained from which would have been raised with less difficulty had it taken the form of an increased duty on cigars. They must, however, leave the whole responsibility of the difficulty that would be created between this country and France to Her Majesty's Government. [*Ironical Ministerial Cheers.*] Yes; he was aware that some hon. Gentlemen opposite who now were cheering would cheer as much, or even more, at a declaration of war, because their doctrine was that of retaliation. [*Cries of* "Oh," *and* "Hear, hear!"] Those hon. Gentlemen differed from the Chancellor of the Exchequer because that was not his doctrine, and it was because he (Sir William Harcourt) knew what was the policy of the Supporters of the Government that he recorded his protest against it. He gave credit fully to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for not proposing the new duty on any such ground; but, at the same time, in view of the fact that it might lead to a considerable amount of misunderstanding and angry feeling in France, they regarded it as likely to lead to very prejudicial consequences. He begged to move the omission of the clause.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Clause 3.—(*Sir William Harcourt.*)

Question proposed, "That Clause 3 stand part of the Bill."

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he did not think he could add much to what he had already stated. But he must protest in the strongest manner against the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman when he said that he and his hon. Friends were going to divide against this clause because it was a provocation to France. He disclaimed in the strongest possible manner the suggestion that it was a provocation.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he did not say there was intentional provocation—[*Cheers*]—intentional, no doubt, in the sense of those hon. Gentleman who cheered, but not intentional provocation in the sense of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He said it would have the effect of provocation.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he was afraid the right hon. Gentleman in stirring up a cheer had really gone a little too far. Surely, it was injudicious that a Gentleman in his position should tell the people of France that they on that side of the House cheered the words "provocation to France." The right hon. Gentleman really must have said that in joke. He hoped it would be so taken elsewhere. To say that even a declaration of war would be cheered by hon. Gentlemen on that side might be good as a rhetorical retort, but he was sure that no one would seriously wish to irritate the feeling of Members in any quarter of the House. He only hoped that the right hon. Gentleman by his words had not done as much to disturb public feeling in France as he believed the Government had done by the proposal of this tax. He was always ready to meet the right hon. Gentleman, if possible, but he was anxious to bring the discussion to a termination, because in a matter of this kind it was so desirable that difficulties should not be increased by indiscreet utterances in that House. The Government would go to a Division on this question, because simply on fiscal grounds they considered it expedient to place a higher duty upon the dearer classes of wines, but without the slightest intention of impairing the commercial relations of this country and France.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to think that he had somewhat misapprehended the meaning of a statement made on the introduction of the Budget. He happened to have in his hand, however, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, of the 26th of March, who, in reference to the bottling trade, used these words—

> "I take note, in making this estimate, of the probable, nay certain, diminution of the amount of wine which may at present be imported in bottle, and which will in future be imported in casks. It is possible that the bottling trade in England may receive a certain impetus, but I cannot conceive that that is an objection to the plan."—(3 *Hansard* [324] 313.)

The right hon. Gentleman might have meant nothing by that observation, but if he meant nothing he wanted to know why it was introduced.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he did not say it was the intention to give an impetus to the bottling trade.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he had not said anything about intention. He wanted to know whether there was any meaning to be attached to the words of the right hon. Gentleman. He thought the proposal which had been made would in the long run prove to be eminently a trade proposal. The right hon. Gentleman would find it very difficult, indeed, by words used in that House to overthrow the feeling caused by his way of setting up this increased Wine Duty. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to bring in a measure to deal further with the question if he could find a satisfactory and workable plan, but he had led hon. Members to hope very little from his statement, because he prefaced it by saying that it was almost impossible to determine a fair *ad valorem* duty, so that there was little reason to anticipate an early mitigation of the tax now proposed. It was impossible that this question could remain over to the end of the Session, because then a great part of the mischief would have been done. It was not probable that the French Minister could restrain the Protectionist Party in France unless there was immediate action taken, in consequence of the difficulty which the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman had already raised, and he, therefore, hoped he would relieve the country at once from a danger which it would otherwise take years to overcome.

Mr. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) said, he was sorry that the Government had thought fit to interfere with a trade which had been going on now for 28 years, and which amounted to between £50,000,000 and £60,000,000 per annum, for the sake of gaining what was admittedly a small sum. It was not a trade with which we could afford to trifle, and there was considerable danger lest retaliatory measures should be adopted by France by the application of the "general tariff" to English goods. Grave apprehensions existed in the cotton manufacturing districts as to the probable results of the application of this tax. The fear of the "general tariff" being applied to cotton goods for France and Algiers had prevented a great deal of business taking place. With this tariff hanging over them, merchants were afraid to make contracts many months ahead. His constituents in Manchester felt the greatest anxiety. There was every fear that retaliatory measures would be adopted by the French nation, and that the trade which had grown so splendidly would decrease materially. For his own part it seemed to him that it was perfectly unnecessary to make this proposal. If the income tax had been reduced by ½*d.* instead of 1*d.*, it would have satisfied those who wished to see the taxes reduced, and there would have been no necessity for seeking new taxation of a very exasperating character.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 207; Noes 115: Majority 92.—(Div. List, No. 90.)

Clause 4 (Alteration of duties upon carriages).

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.), said, the object of his Amendment was to continue the Carriage Tax as affecting small four-wheeled carriages under 4 cwt. on the same footing as it had stood for the last 16 or 18 years. He could hardly think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could have fully considered the result of his proposals. In his Budget speech he said he wished to remove grievances, but he was creating a grievance. While the alteration of the duties relieved the heavier single-horse carriages of one guinea, the right hon. Gentleman proposed to increase by

40 per cent, or from 15*s.* to 21*s.* per annum, the tax on that large class of lighter carriages. These small carriages —the vast majority of them—were used by people of small means in country districts. They were very largely in the hands of poor parsons—and all parsons were poor enough now—Dissenting ministers, small farmers, tradesmen, and ladies of limited means. He thought the remission of half the duty on the heavier carriages was just, and would have a good effect on the carriage building trade. But he wished to ask why should people of small means who had pony traps and small four-wheeled dog-carts, which now paid a tax of 15*s.*, be called upon to contribute an extra 6*s.* in order that the remission of a guinea should be given to wealthier people who kept a large brougham or victoria, or a single-horse carriage over 4 cwt? He must say, he wondered at the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, who was treating this as a laughing matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, that he did not know why the hon. Gentleman should say that. He denied that he had done anything to justify such an imputation.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 27, after the word "only," to insert the word "and shall weigh four hundred-weight."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, it was ridiculous for the hon. Member (Mr. Channing) to assert that the sole object of the simple proposal of the Government was to tax the poor man in order to reduce the taxation on the rich. It was preposterous to treat that matter as if it were at all a question between the rich and the poor, and he strongly deprecated that view being introduced in those discussions on every possible occasion. He greatly doubted whether people's carriages were small in proportion to their means, and it certainly had never entered the mind of the Government to attempt to make up for a loss of revenue on one portion of their proposals by raising the taxation of four-wheeled carriages that did not weigh 4 cwt.; and he could assure the House that that proposal was made, after the matter had been thoroughly discussed with all the various classes interested in it, solely with a view to simplification and to the relief of the owners of carriages themselves. It was also proposed with a view to get rid of the limited weight, which operated very prejudicially as regarded the construction of carriages.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester) said, that many of the small pony carriages now paying only 15*s.* belonged to a class of people who very often kept no other conveyance, and to whom they were a great convenience. Those people were to have an additional tax of 6*s.*, equal to no less than an additional 40 per cent, inflicted on them, and he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer not to raise the tax beyond the present rate of 15*s.* He regarded the Carriage Tax altogether as a mistake; but he hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, he would venture to remind, posed during the Edinburgh contest as an opponent of the tax, would at least yield so far as not to impose the extra 6*s.* in that particular case, which would cause a good deal of feeling, but would accept the present Amendment.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he considered that the effect of this increased tax would be to increase the number of two-wheeled traps, and therefore to increase the amount of danger to the women and children who used them. He would support the Amendment, which he held to be a very reasonable one.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 92; Noes 144: Majority 52.—(Div. List, No. 91.)

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Repeal of duties upon hawkers' licences).

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.), in moving an Amendment to the effect that the duty should be repealed altogether, said, he would point out that its imposition was a hardship upon a poor class of traders, seeing that they had to pay the Cart Tax in addition. He hoped that the Government would carry out their original intention of abolishing the duty.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 19, to leave out all the words after the word "shall," to the words "annual licence," inclusive, and insert the words "cease to be payable."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

MR. QUILTER (Suffolk, S.) said, he hoped the House would not endorse the views of the hon. Gentleman. There ought to have been no reduction in the charge for the licences of hawkers, who were generally regarded as nuisances, injuring crops, breaking hedges for fuel, and acting in some cases as purveyors of stolen goods. Certainly, they were not a class to be exempted from taxation as against small traders in towns, who could be called to account if they sold inferior goods, while hawkers could sell them with impunity. The facilities of improved communication between towns had almost rendered hawkers unnecessary.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he had received communications from several parts of the House as to the inexpediency, and, to a certain extent, the injustice, of repealing the whole duty; but he thought that hawkers were entitled to some remission. He did not consider that the arguments were very strong one way or the other, and therefore he was prepared to stand by his second determination, which was to reduce the duty from £4 to £2.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had not adhered to his first proposal. It might be that hawkers in Suffolk were worse than elsewhere; but, on the whole, he believed they did not deserve the aspersions cast upon them. On the contrary, he knew they were of the greatest service to the poor in many parts of the country, and brought to them many articles of first necessity at moderate rates, as, for example, petroleum for lighting purposes.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause 14 (Duty on contract notes).

Amendment proposed,

In page 7, after sub-section (2), insert—"(3.) The amount of duty upon a contract note stamped in conformity with this section may be added to the charge for brokerage or agency."—(*Sir Robert Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

COLONEL LAURIE (Bath), in supporting the Amendment, said, that without it business would not be remunerative to the brokers.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, that, in this matter, the first thoughts of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were best. As the Bill was originally drawn, the duty would be paid by the broker's client, and that was plain and intelligible. He suggested that words should be inserted accordingly.

MR. WHITLEY (Liverpool, Everton) said, he must urge upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer to accept the Amendment.

MR. BARING (London) said, he should personally have preferred the original words of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but he had been told that if the clause were passed in that form, a broker, in neglecting to charge his client, either by accident or agreement, with the price of the stamp, might be committing an offence.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he had no objection to the insertion of the words suggested by his right hon. Friend.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 16 (Provisions as to the stamping of instruments).

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight), in moving to leave out, in Sub-section (*d*), "every person by whom the instrument has been or shall be signed or executed," in order to insert "as in that behalf specified in the 1st Schedule hereto," said, the object had been originally to secure that some persons should pay the Stamp Duty. The clause had given rise to some discussion, and the Government had communicated with gentlemen well acquainted with business affairs, with the result that this modification was now suggested.

Amendment proposed,

In page 8, lines 16 and 17, to leave out the words "every person by whom the instrument has been or shall be signed or executed," in order to insert the words "as in that behalf specified in the 1st Schedule hereto."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. WARMINGTON (Monmouth, W.) said, he thought the Amendment was ridiculous, until the Committee knew what words were to be inserted in the Schedule. This was really recasting one of the most important sections of the measure without Notice, and springing a new set of provisions on the Legal Profession and the public without warning. He protested against such a practice.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in explanation, said, that most legal Members in the House were aware that he had been in communication with authorities on the subject. The question had been thoroughly gone into with the view of satisfying the Legal Profession, and he was sorry that the hon. Gentleman had not had the same opportunity as other Members. The proposition had been thrashed out, and had obtained the assent of what might be called the representative bodies in the Profession.

Question, put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Further Amendments made.

Bill to be read the third time *Tomorrow.*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) ELECTORS BILL.—[Bill 181.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Mr. STANSFELD (Halifax), in rising to move an Instruction to the Committee, said, its object was to assimilate the electorate for the election of Poor Law Guardians to that for the election of the members of the County Council. This Bill and the Local Government Bill were closely bound up together, and he hoped he should not be out of Order if he took the present occasion to explain his proposal as a whole with regard to this question. Speaking generally, he should like to repeat what he said in opening the debate on the second reading of the Local Government Bill—namely, that he had no desire to do anything that could destroy the Bill or smother it with kindness. On the contrary, he positively desired that the scheme should become law. But he did reserve to himself the right of criticism and of bringing forward Amendments. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) would meet these Amendments with an open mind and judge them upon their merits. Some of them, if the right hon. Gentleman did not find them objectionable, might greatly facilitate the progress of the Bill. With regard to the question of the exclusion of the Poor Law administration from the jurisdiction of the County Councils, he admitted that the difficulties in the way were great, but he did not think they were insuperable. They merely required time, labour, and patience. He did not ask that the Poor Law system should be taken at once in and made one of the ordinary municipal duties of the County Council; but if it were contemplated that sooner or later the Poor Law system was to be taken into the county system, the way could be paved for that by assimilating the electorate. Certain functions of the Guardians of the Poor—those relating to sanitary matters—were to be taken from them by the Bill, while the administration of the Poor Law was to be left in their hands. The result would be that the least important branch of the duties of the Guardians would be performed by a new Body elected on a popular franchise, while the larger and more important functions would be discharged by a Body elected on an old antiquated system. He believed that the effect of refusing the popular franchise on the election of Poor Law Guardians would create a very unfavourable impression in the minds of rural communities, and would be a danger to the good administration of the Poor Law itself. He would point out that the workhouse test was not a perfect test, and that it weighed upon the minds of the working people of this country. It was, therefore, highly inadvisable to take any steps which might stimulate in the minds of the working classes a great distrust of the administration of the Poor Law, or which might lead to them to believe that the Government and Parliament would not allow them to choose their own representatives to administer the law. Having granted an extension of the Parliamentary franchise, and being about to extend the franchise for elections to the County Councils, they could not refuse to extend the franchise for Poor Law elections. If the right hon. Gentleman rejected his Amendment and the Bill went through the House without any such proposal being accepted, he would submit that the present state of things could not last, and if the change was inevitable the best plan would be to make it now. They all admitted the need of simplification of areas and of the functions of local government; but simplification was also required in the matter of registration. At the present time the system of registration was complex, difficult, uncertain, and expensive; but this Bill would add to the complexity and expense by creating a new register. What he proposed, on the other hand, was that there should be for all local government purposes, including Poor Law elections, one register, one franchise, and one method of voting.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee, that they have power to insert provisions in the Bill with a view to assimilate the qualification of electors of Guardians of the Poor, including the abolition of the plural vote, to the conditions prescribed in the Bill with regard to electors of county authorities,"—(*Mr Stansfeld.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, that the question which the right hon. Gentleman had raised was one which did not require any very large amount of discussion at the present stage of the Bill; and, no doubt, the desire of the right hon. Gentleman was to raise it with a view to future action. He (Mr. Ritchie) wished to take that opportunity of saying that on a previous occasion, in consequence of the limited time at his disposal, he was not able to notice many of the points which the right hon. Gentleman had raised in the debate to which he referred. He valued very much the criticisms of the right hon. Gentleman; but he felt that there would be ample opportunities afforded him for dealing with them when the Bill reached the Committee stage. The right hon. Gentleman had now alluded to many matters which formed points of discussion between himself and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain). Upon those matters the House would feel that it would be hardly desirable that he should enter. Of course, the main question which they had to deal with to-night was the Instruction of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stansfeld). The impression left upon his (Mr. Ritchie's) mind was that the numerous points of great delicacy and importance to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded were a sufficient justification of the Government in not attempting to overload their Bill with this particular subject of the Poor Law. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to deal with it in a somewhat peculiar manner. The mere fact that the right hon. Gentleman had to move an Instruction in order to carry out his proposal showed that what he proposed was quite outside the four corners of the Bill. In his speech on the second reading the right hon. Gentleman characterized as the great blot in the Bill the fact that the Government did not deal with the Poor Law. Indeed, he went further, and said that the new Councils were created side by side with the Boards of Guardians. But surely the right hon. Gentleman's proposal, instead of removing, would magnify, what he considered to be the great blot in the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman must perceive that, instead of removing any anomaly such as he contended would be created by the Bill, he would only be setting up another anomaly of a distinctly larger character. Now, the right hon. Gentleman, departing somewhat from his proposal, said—"If you are going to give municipal work to the new Body which you are about to create, why do you not give to it also the administration of the Poor Law?" His answer was that the municipal work and the Poor Law work had always been recognized as being clearly distinct from each other. The Government hesitated to transfer powers of so delicate and so important a character as those connected with the Poor Law to a Board which did not yet exist, and as to the constitution of which they had no certain means of expressing any very decided opinion. The Government thought it desirable that at some future period all these matters should be administered by one Local Authority; but that was not the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. His proposal was that, whereas property had hitherto possessed a very large voting power in the election of Boards of Guardians, it should now have no voting power whatever. At present an owner and occupier might have 12 votes, six for occupation and six for ownership; but the right hon. Gentleman proposed that in future he should have only one vote. That was an enormous change, fraught possibly with very grave and important consequences. The Government considered that the right mode of dealing with this question, if they felt it could be done at once, would be to transfer all local matters to one Local Body. He was glad to recognize that neither the right hon. Gentleman nor any other right hon. Gentleman opposite had charged the Government with a desire to increase by their proposals the stringency of the Poor Law administration, though it might be contended in some quarters that outdoor relief was given too lavishly. In Unions with which he was acquainted, where indoor relief was insisted upon to a large extent, the most philanthropic men were to be found serving on the Boards of Guardians. The view which those gentlemen took was that there was a point when outdoor relief was given where private charity ought to come in, and that where outdoor relief was given too lavishly it checked private benevolence. The burden of the rates would be almost intolerable if outdoor relief was given with too free a hand. But he recognized the force of the observation that the distribution of the contributions proposed by the Government might be an inducement to Boards of Guardians to administer the Poor Law in an unnecessarily harsh manner. The Government were now considering whether they might not make some proposal which would remove the objection and get rid of the difficulty. Nothing was further from their intention than unduly to press people into the workhouse. Though extremely unwilling to take up a strong attitude of resistance to any Amendments proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, he did not desire to conceal from the House what the effect of carrying this proposal would be. If the House were to accept it, the Government would be compelled to withdraw the Bill. It would not be possible for them to carry the Bill through if it were overweighted, as the Government considered it would be, by having to deal in this measure with the all-important question of Poor Law administration.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) said, he wished to say a few words in support of the Instruction which had been moved by his right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) from a Metropolitan point of view, as he did not think that had as yet been touched upon. He was perfectly certain that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) would admit that nowhere was the work of Poor Law administration more difficult, delicate, or complicated than it was in London, and that nowhere was it more important that the Poor Law Authority should be in touch with every class of the community. But they did not secure that in London more than they did anywhere else by the present system of election and representation. In London at the present time they had great difficulties in Poor Law administration—difficulties which were not only recurrent, but which were increasing every year—because those who were skilled and expert knew perfectly well, and frequently alleged in their Reports, that there was in London a growing class for which there was no room in the labour market, crowded as it was to repletion, even to congesion. The Board over which the right hon. Gentleman presided had specifically stated this in a letter written to the Local Authorities during the period the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) was at the head of the Department. The reason he pointed this out was because he considered it essential, in the interests of the economy and efficiency of Poor Law administration, that the Boards of Guardians should have at their back popular support. They should feel that they rested on a democratic basis. Their administration would be just as strong—nay, it would be all the better—if they had more confidence in what they were doing. He thought it was perfectly clear that the Poor Law Guardians in

London had, on the whole, done their work economically and faithfully; but they had had a great deal of pressure to bear, and that pressure was becoming greater every year. They saw from the papers how, when winter time came, it brought with it an increasing disorganization and misery, and how deputations, many of them of a tumultuous kind, were constantly waiting upon the Guardians urging them to relax the rules of Poor Law relief. And there was pressure from above as well as from below. In 1886 there was a Circular issued by the Local Government Board asking the Guardians to extend the outdoor relief system. Most of the Boards had expressed themselves satisfied with their existing powers; but he submitted that they would be all the more self-reliant if they could feel that they represented the community in whose interest they were entrusted with the management of these affairs. And that they could not do—it was not in the nature of things that they should—with a limited franchise and plural voting. Then, again, this matter was most important from the point of view of the applicants for relief. There were many poor people who would submit to almost any privation, and go to the verge of starvation, sooner than enter the workhouse or submit to the present labour test. What did these people see? Why, they saw a Body judging of their necessities upon which they themselves had no representation whatever. They saw that no voting power was given under a rating of £50. There was an anomalous state of things existing in London which was not found in other great towns—an anomaly which it was difficult to conceive could be allowed to exist when they were making democratic changes in their Local Government; this was the occasional presence at the Board of *ex officio* Guardians. They could see the force of the arguments used by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Stansfeld) just as much from the ratepayers' standpoint as from any other. It was said to the owners of property—"Suppose you have a profligate expenditure by a Poor Law Authority elected on the same franchise as the Local Authority of London, which is about to be entrusted with the many powers of the Metropolitan Board of Works, what will happen to you?" His answer was, that on no class did the onus of the poor rate fall so heavily as upon the very poor who were excluded from the present franchise. Rating under £50 did not give voting power.

Mr. RITCHIE: The hon. Member is quite wrong.

Mr. LAWSON said, what he meant was that there was only one vote for a rating under £50, and that the plural vote came in over that. He meant that the representation given to a person rated at a sum below £50 was very small indeed, compared with that given to the larger ratepayer which rose to six votes when over £250. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board need fear that by giving the mass of the community increased power there would be any tendency to increased expenditure. The likelihood was all the other way. He was convinced that those who depended on the Poor Law Authority would have reason to feel all the more dissatisfied when they saw a premium put upon indoor pauperism, as was proposed by the distribution already alluded to of the Probate Duty; and having that before their eyes, the Government ought to be all the more anxious to show these people that the class to which they belonged was adequately represented by those who had to administer the Poor Law. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board how he was able to show that by the Instruction moved by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Stansfeld) another anomaly would be created? The fact was, they would be doing away with an anomaly already existing. The Government were actually now going to give them one more franchise in London than they already possessed. London would possess five franchises under this Bill—namely, the Parliamentary, the County, the Board of Guardians, the Vestry, and the School Board. If the Instruction moved by his right hon. Friend were agreed to, this number would be diminished by one at least, and they would be so much better off. In the borough which he represented there were 27,000 ratings, the average of which was £47, and he should doubt very much whether, at an election for Poor Law Guardians, there were 10,000 votes recorded altogether. At an election they wanted life and reality. Well, he wished to know if the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board realized what the people of London would have to put up with under the Government Bill? There would be an accumulation of franchises and registers. The rate book held good for the Poor Law, the School Board, and the Vestry elections; but they were going, by this Bill, to set up a municipal register similar to that possessed by the municipal boroughs in the country. They were going to add one more. They would leave the Poor Law Guardians to be elected on the basis of the rate book, and were going to give a municipal register for County Council purposes. He (Mr. Lawson) imagined that that was the case—that the municipal register would only stand for County Council elections. What was wanted was cheapness with simplicity in their local elections; and, so far as that went, if the Bill were carried in its present form they would rather lose than gain. They would do away with the cheapness secured by the use of the rate book for all present purposes. The right hon. Gentleman had made one remark which was, he thought, singularly applicable to London. He had said—"You must draw a firm line between Municipal and Poor Law administration." The right hon. Gentleman knew very well that the Metropolitan Asylums Board was really a Sanitary, and not a Poor Law Authority. With regard to that Board, they would find it difficult to say how far it ought to remain a municipal, and how far a Poor Law Authority. But he had risen for the purpose of pointing out that in London what they most wanted in these matters was unity, and he distinctly believed that they would gain in that direction if this Instruction were agreed to to-night. As the Instruction was opposed by the Government, however, he supposed it would not be assented to by the House. If it were adopted they would do much more than secure unity and cheapness, because they would benefit the Poor Law Authority and strengthen popular confidence in them. He admitted that the Guardians had done their work well in the past, but the effect of adopting the present proposal would be to place them on firmer ground. When they were creating a new register in London it would be perfectly easy to adapt it for this purpose. He had thought it advisable to put this matter from a London point of view, because he thought the people of London were suffering more than the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board knew from the multiplication of registration authorities and registers.

Mr. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.) said, that when the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board first introduced his Bill he was inclined to think that he had made a serious mistake in not including in it any alteration in the Poor Law system; but when he (Mr. Llewellyn) began to remember what an alteration of the Poor Law system would involve, and had come to reflect on the fact that the administration of the law would have had to be placed in the hands of a new authority, he realized that this was not the time to make any alteration. He should not have ventured to say this much had it not been his advantage to have had in the country some experience of the Poor Law. He had been for 20 years a member and for 14 years Chairman of one of the largest Boards of Guardians in the West of England; and he could, therefore, say with some authority that to hand over to a new Body having no knowledge whatever of Poor Law affairs—the work of the present Boards of Guardians—would be to inflict on them a task which there could be no hope of their discharging with the efficiency and economy of the present Boards. There were many points connected with Poor Law administrations, which to touch on at all without affecting a thorough alteration would be a great mistake. There was the law of settlement and removal for instance. He did not mean to go into that subject more than to say that to hand over the duties of the Guardians in connection with the law of settlement and removal whilst the law remained in its present condition would be a great blunder. In addition to that, there was the difficult subject of the amalgamation of areas and workhouses to be dealt with, and the consequent economy which would be introduced. That matter had to be taken in hand when the question of the re-organization of the Poor Law was sought to be dealt with at all. Another question which had been touched on in several quarters during the second reading debate was as to the different assessments. They had in the country at this time an Income Tax assessment, a County Rating assessment, and a Union assessment—three distinct assessments. That in itself was a subject for a Bill, and if they went into it thoroughly it would take them a great deal of time to set it at rest. Well, those were his chief reasons for coming to the conclusion that the Government had done wisely in abstaining from dealing with the Poor Law question, and from handing over its administration to the new authorities. He himself had no fear as to the ability of the District Councils to deal with the question—no one who had had any experience of Poor Law work had any right to entertain such fear. Some hon. Members spoke as if they thought that the Government were inclined to shirk the question. An hon. Member who had spoken just now spoke in that strain—as if the Government were doubtful of the ability of the new Councils to undertake Poor Law work. He could not believe that such was the case, however. He believed they would have men elected to the new Councils capable of taking hold of and attending to these matters. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) seemed to think that perhaps one of the reasons why the Government did not hand over the administration of the Poor Law to these new District Councils was that they feared the new Boards would be too soft-hearted. Well, he did not believe that they would be so at all. It had been a charge against the Guardians in this House that they were too hard-hearted, and it was customary to ridicule them from the Benches opposite—especially to ridicule *ex officio* Guardians. Allow him to say—and in so doing he did not wish to be thought disrespectful to the hon. Members he alluded to—that it was a distinct disadvantage, so far as the understanding of this matter was concerned, to be associated altogether with towns; for hon. Members in that position, not having mixed with the Poor Law Authorities, were apt to think that there was a distinct line between the ordinary Guardians and the *ex officio* Guardians. He could only say that he had been associated as an *ex officio* Guardian in assessment work, and in matters affecting highways, sewers, drainage, and so on, and had never known any line to exist separating the elected Members from the *ex officio* Members. When once a gentleman having the leisure and the will to identify himself with this work took this work in hand as an *ex officio*, he seldom heard of the line separating him from his colleagues, and the line was altogether wiped out when he began to work with the elected members. He himself, during the years he had worked with the elected members of the Boards of Guardians, had altogether lost sight of the fact that there was any distinction whatever. He had thought it right to say this in vindication of the country Boards of Guardians. Where it was the custom for *ex officio* members who did not usually present themselves to attend meetings of the Boards whenever there was a job to be effected or an election taking place, or for any such like purpose, he thought it was very much to be resented. No one could deprecate and resent such conduct more than he did. Whenever they made a practice of taking part in the ordinary work of the Boards their ability was recognized, and they were on equal terms with their elected colleagues, but when they confined their attendance at Board meetings to such occasions as the election of officials, their appearance then was dishonourable. He should not have thought that the question of the distribution of outdoor relief would have formed part of this discussion; but the subject had been mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Instruction, and by others, and he thought he might be allowed to say this much—that whilst he considered the proposal of the Government in the shape of a capitation grant for indoor relief a wise one, still, he was bound to say, at the same time, that he had his fears that under certain circumstances, and in certain cases, it might lead to hardships on the part of the Guardians and have an evil effect on the poor. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board spoke just now of his experience in connection with the Metropolitan Unions. Well, he had no experience of the Metropolitan Poor Law arrangements at all, but he was given to understand that in the Metropolis outdoor relief was the exception, and indoor relief was the rule. That might be so, and that system would be carried out in the rural districts also if they had the advantage which they possessed in London. In London they had the Charity Organization Society, and other societies to assist them largely in bearing the burdens of outdoor relief. There were many persons who were able and willing to pay attention to outdoor cases, and so those hardships, which were entailed by the application of a too rigid work test, were avoided. In the country districts they had no such organization as that. One hon. Member had referred to the subject of the advantage of clubs to the poor, and had said that it was the fault of the poor that they were without resources in their old age when they had had the opportunity of joining benefit societies, and had neglected it. But he would point out to hon. Members who made use of that argument that we had not yet done with the generation which had not possessed the advantage of clubs, and a great many men who were now in receipt of outdoor relief were men who, in a great many cases, had subscribed to clubs which broke down just at the time they wanted assistance from them. He believed that to do away with the system of outdoor relief—but he saw he was getting out of Order by dealing with this subject, and, therefore, he would defer his remarks upon this point to another occasion. He had risen chiefly for the purpose of saying that the Government had acted with great wisdom in not including in their Bill the question of Poor Law relief. But if they had now put off dealing with the question, he hoped it was only with the intention of taking it up again on some future occasion and bringing about a re-organization of the system. He trusted that when finally the Poor Law system of the country was handed over to the District Councils, those Councils would be able to carry it out, as he believed the Guardians in the past had carried it out, not only to the satisfaction of the ratepayers, but to the satisfaction of those to whom it was applied.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he wished to express his great regret, not only for the fashion with which the Government had refused to accept this Instruction, but at the reasons they had given for such refusal. They at once rendered any discussion upon this Instruction utterly purposeless by saying that if it should be carried they would withdraw the Bill. That was, of course, an intimation to the whole of those who supported them on the Opposition side of the House that they were expected to vote against the Instruction, and to give a judgment upon the question without any discussion at all. But the reasons the Government had given were worse than this. The reasons with which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) had concluded were reasons which would prevent anyone from considering in the future that there was anything of a radical character connected with the proposals of Local Government reform, for he announced that to touch a man who, as owner and occupier, had 12 votes, and to reduce him to one vote, was something too awful for the occupants of the Treasury Bench to contemplate. Now, he (Mr. Bradlaugh) congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on that declaration, which was one which he (Mr. Bradlaugh) would take care, as far as he was able, to let the country understand as being the view of the Government in relation to the Poor Law question.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he was obliged to the hon. Member for giving him notice of what he was going to do in the country; but if he proposed to make in the country the statement which he had just made in the House, he (Mr. Ritchie) thought he would make a statement which was not at all correct. He (Mr. Ritchie) never said anything of the kind. In pointing out the nature of the change which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) proposed, he stated that that was one of the things which he (Mr. Stansfeld) proposed, and that it was at least an important one. Further than that he did not go.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he thought he heard the word "terrific."

Mr. RITCHIE: No, no!

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Or the word "terrible."

Mr. RITCHIE: No, no!

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he was sure he was mistaken; but, in any case, what he had said was his impression at the moment. At any rate, the manner of the right hon. Gentleman was terrifying when he was dealing with this question.

Mr. RITCHIE: No, no!

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that was the impression conveyed to him, but he was very glad to be set right. He understood now that the right hon. Gentleman referred to the reduction of the 12 votes to one vote, not as the most important reason for refusing this Instruction, not as one of the reasons for refusing it, not as a matter at all influencing him in any way, but as something so light that he desired to repudiate it, having tried to make an impression upon the House with it. Then, what was left? The great difficulty of introducing the Poor Law system into the Local Government reform at all. The whole scheme of reforming Local Government was difficult. Every one of the propositions in the Bill which had been debated for so long was difficult. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) had listened with admiration to the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and had marked the skill with which they had dealt with these intricate matters, and the only excuse for a measure of Local Government reform was that it should either be complete in itself at first, or that it should contain the possibilities within it of being made complete. But, by refusing the Instruction of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board proposed to perpetuate the difficulty, or, at any rate, if he did not propose to perpetuate the difficulty, he would succeed in doing it. The right hon. Gentleman intended to keep the method of election, which he repudiated in his Bill, of plurality of vote. He declared it to be bad by the method proposed in the Bill, but he intended to allow it to continue side by side with his new method. The right hon. Gentleman said he desired to get rid of it; but that desire, it seemed to him (Mr. Bradlaugh), would be better shown by action than in words. They had under their eyes at the present moment, and within a few yards of them, abundant illustration of the evils of this method of plural paper voting. There had been this week an illustration of the difficulty in distributing the papers to the voters entitled to take part in the election of Guardians, and they heard declarations, he would not say of fraud, but of gross abuse on the part of the police in distributing the papers. There were occasions over and over again, in which charges of tampering with the papers arose, which could not possibly be made if the election of the Guardians was put upon the same footing as the elections proposed upon the County Councils. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that possibly this might be a fresh mistake—that it was indefensible to propose to elect two Bodies—that was to say a Body to deal with Municipal affairs, and a Body to deal with the Poor Law system—on the same suffrage. Why was it absolutely indefensible, except that it was absolutely inconvenient to the present Government to undertake it? What other indefensibility was there about it?

Mr. RITCHIE said, he did not know whether the hon. Member was asking him a question, but he looked as if he was. The reason was: if it was desired to constitute two Bodies on the same suffrage, and the same franchise, to deal with two subjects, the better plan would be to entrust the one Body with both duties.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that in that he quite agreed, and he was sure the right hon. Gentleman who proposed this Instruction would much rather have one Body to deal with the whole matter than two. It was because they understood that the Government were not prepared to do right at once, but would continue doing some error, that they were endeavouring to put in their way a means of getting themselves right to some extent, instead of perpetuating their sin. He (Mr. Bradlaugh), however, would not occupy the time of the House by going any further in this matter. He desired, however, to emphasize the fact that when he addressed his constituents on this matter, he should notice that the present Government were not bringing forward a real and complete measure of Local Government reform; but that, under cover of being deterred by the difficulties of the subject, they were keeping alive side by side an old and a bad system and a new system, and preventing themselves from opening the door to a sound reform.

Mr. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) said, he was glad the hon. Member for

Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had emphasized so clearly the determination of the Government to wreck the whole of the Local Government scheme, which was the main scheme of the Session, rather than accept this Instruction. When the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board declared that he would withdraw the Bill if this Instruction were carried, he practically announced that he would prefer the wreck of the whole Legislative Business of the Session to the adoption of the principle of this Instruction. It was well that the country should understand that—that they should understand that rather than simplify the method of electing Boards of Guardians, and doing away with the present system of plural voting, the Government were prepared to sacrifice their principal measure of the Session. And yet the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had not said anything in defence of the existing system; and, as had been already pointed out, he was abolishing this old system of election in regard to Local Boards of Health, and was only retaining it in connection with the elections of Boards of Guardians. Hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House who supported the Government were not to be allowed to vote on the merits of the question before the House, but were to be subject to the penalty of wrecking the whole Local Government scheme which was now before the country. The right hon. Gentleman had said that no doubt their might be advantages in amalgamating the work of Boards of Guardians with that of the District Councils. He appeared afraid that it would create serious dangers; but, in spite of those dangers, he was looking forward ultimately to that arrangement. The right hon. Gentleman's speech went in that direction, or it pointed to nothing at all, because he was opposed to having separate Boards of Guardians elected by the new franchise that was being created in the Bill. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Somersetshire (Mr. Llewellyn) seemed still to regret that the Government were pursuing the course they were now taking, though he confessed that he had changed his mind on the subject. The hon. Member had told the House that, on mature reflection, he would not be willing to hand over the duties of the Poor Law Guardians to a Body without experience; but he went on to state that he did not fear for a moment either the ability or the knowledge of the District Councils. He distinctly said he was sure that the men elected to the District Councils would be men fully qualified to discharge the duties at present performed at the Boards of Guardians. It should be remembered that the hon. Member's objection would always apply, because whenever the Poor Law system was reformed and the method of election was altered it would be necessary to hand over the Poor Law administration to those who had not had thorough experience of the system. But he (Mr. M'Laren) thought that the main argument that they must rely upon was, in the first place, the thorough badness of the present system of election of Guardians, and the fact that it did not work well in experience. If it worked well in practice they would be much more disposed to put up with it than they were. But on its own merits it was indefensible. It had been said that a person might have 12 votes at an election of Boards of Guardians, six as owner and six as occupier; but, as a matter of fact, he might have 24; 12 for his business premises and 12 for his dwelling house. He himself had once had 13 votes; 12 for his business premises—for the firm with which he was connected, and one for his residence. Practically, if a man was only rich enough, and only had property enough, he might have 24 votes—a gigantic suffrage. But, in addition to that, there was the system of proxies. If a man did not care to exercise the vote himself he could give his proxy to some committee or club, and the vote would be tendered without any knowledge on his part. The present system of voting was extremely faulty; if the papers were accurately distributed by the policeman, it did not necessarily follow that they were accurately collected. In fact, there was every possible drawback to the present mode of electing Guardians. The method did not work well, and that was the chief argument against it. There was probably no set of representatives who did their work so badly as Boards of Guardians, who, in many cases, were corrupt and used their privileges for interested motives on behalf of themselves and their friends. For that reason, if for no other, the House ought to endeavour to give them the benefit of a more close intercourse with their constituents, and all hon. Members must regret that the Government hesitated to take the very wise step now proposed. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) told his constituents and the country some time ago that the motto of the Government was trust in the people; but that motto had been repudiated that night by the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie)—the right hon. Gentleman was not prepared to trust the people in regard to the election of Boards of Guardians, and he had given various reasons for that. He had said that the very delicate functions which Boards of Guardians discharged could not at present be safely entrusted to freely-elected Boards. In that he (Mr. M'Laren) disagreed with the right hon. Gentleman; he did not think that there ought to be any objection raised to the acceptance of the Instruction moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld). The Instruction would not encumber or overload the Bill; but it would simply abolish a method of election which was condemned by the whole of the country, and which must, before many years were over, be swept away.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, that the object aimed at in the Instruction was not to hand over to the new Councils the administration of the Poor Law, but merely to equalize and simplify the existing mode of voting. For his own part, he wanted to see plurality of voting abolished, because it was a relic of class legislation and class privilege, and he was disappointed at the refusal of the Government to discuss the question on its merits. That refusal would let daylight into the real intentions of the Government.

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Long) (Wilts, Devizes) said, that the complaint of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) that the Bill did not deal with plural voting showed that he had not read the Bill, because, if he had, he would have found that which he stated the Government regarded as too terrible to contemplate was included in the Bill at the present moment. The Government had dealt with the question of plurality of voting in connection with the Local Boards.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he had stated that he heard the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) say so, and although there might have been some confusion in his hearing his impression was still the same.

Mr. LONG said, that if the right hon. Gentleman said so—he was satisfied he did not—he must himself have been oblivious of one of the great merits of his own measure, because he had already done what he was charged with having left undone. A more serious charge was that the Bill not only was incomplete, but that it did not contain the possibilities of being made complete. That statement he altogether traversed. Nobody ever contended that the Bill was complete; but that it contained the possibilities of being made complete everybody would admit who did not look at the question from a mere Party point of view. There was every possibility of bringing within the purview of the Bill all the parts of Local Government, and the proposal before the House would not facilitate in any degree whatever the making more complete the reform of Local Government. The Government had nothing to fear from letting light in upon their proposals. They did not distrust the people; but they realized the vastness of the whole question of the administration of the Poor Law, and they held that the new Councils should have time allowed them to realize and understand the duties and responsibilities they were called upon to administer before overloading them with additional responsibilities. He hoped that, the Government having stated its intentions, the House would now be allowed to go into Committee.

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) said, he did not propose to detain the House for many minutes, but simply desired to answer something that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Long) had just said. The hon. Gentleman boasted that the Bill, as it now stood, was against a plurality of voting. He thoroughly agreed with the hon. Gentleman that there was a provision in the Bill which was against a plurality of voting in elections to District and County Councils; but the hon. Gentleman entirely forgot to state that the system of plurality voting was to exist in the case of the election of Boards of Guardians. He (Mr. Gardner) did the Government the justice to say his opinion was that, when they first contemplated this Bill, they certainly contemplated including the Union in their measure. It would be in the recollection of the House that during last Session the Government proposed a Boundary Commission to determine the very difficult question of areas, which pointed to the inclusion of Unions in the Bill; but that during the Session they had thought fit to throw over the Boundary Commission altogether, and not to present its Report to the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) had said that that had been done simply in accordance with the feelings of the counties; but some more severe critic of the right hon. Gentleman than himself might point out that the Government had thrown over the Boundary Commission, because they did not wish or intend to include the question of the Unions in the Bill now before the House. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Long) had said that the whole of this subject was to be left to the County Councils. That seemed to him (Mr. Gardner) to be rather a dangerous system than otherwise; it might be very good for a Nationality or a Province to form a Central Body first, and then leave it to work out its own scheme of Local Government; but in regard to so small an area as a county, he thought it could not be so good a measure. What the Government proposed to do was to constitute a County Council, and hand over to that Body the formation of the Local Government of the county over which it was to rule. That seemed to present a very serious difficulty——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member does not seem to be addressing his remarks to the Instruction moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax.

Mr. H. GARDNER said, that he was merely arguing that the mode of voting which was proposed by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Stansfeld) would simplify the companion measure of that which was now under consideration. If the Government would accept the simplification of voting now suggested, they would find it far easier to carry the greater Bill, and far easier to work that Bill when carried. At any rate, he must protest against the exclusion of the voting for Boards of Guardians. That exclusion would be deeply felt in the agricultural constituencies, and it was a matter which would detract much from the feeling of gratitude for the Bill which the people would undoubtedly otherwise have.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 128; Noes 214: Majority 86.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Glamorgan.)
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Asquith, H. H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Barbour, W. B.
Barran, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Bolton, J. C.
Bolton, T. D.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, Jacob
Broadhurst, H.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Bryce, J.
Burt, T.
Campbell, H.
Cavan, Earl of
Channing, F. A.
Childers, right hon. H. C. E.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cossham, H.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Craig, J.
Crilly, D.
Crossley, E.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Duff, R. W.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Flower, C.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Foster, Sir W. B.
Fowler, rt. hon. H. H.
Fry, T.
Gardner, H.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Graham, R. C.
Grey, Sir E.
Grove, Sir T. F.
Gully, W. C.
Harrington, E.
Hayden, L. P.
Healy, T. M.
Holden, I.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
James, hon. W. H.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kenny, C. S.
Kilbride, D.
Labouchere, H.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leake, R.
Lefevre, rt. hn. G. J. S.
Lewis, T. P.
Lockwood, F.
M'Donald, P.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Menzies, R. S.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Neville, R.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Keeffe, F. A.
O'Kelly, J.
Parnell, C. S.
Pease, A. E.
Pickard, B.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, R.
Price, T. P.
Provand, A. D.
Quinn, T.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Roberts, J. B.
Robinson, T.
Roe, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, J.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Samuelson, G. B.

Schwann, C. E.
Shaw, T.
Sheil, E.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, A.
Thomas, A.
Thomas, D. A.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Wallace, R.
Wardle, H.
Wayman, T.
Whitbread, S.
Will, J. S.
Williamson, J.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodall, W.
Woodhead, J.
Wright, C.

TELLERS.

Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Morley, A.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Allsopp, hon. G.
Allsopp, hon. P.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Barry, A. H. S.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Bazley-White, J.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beadel, W. J.
Beckett, W.
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bigwood, J.
Bolitho, T. B.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Collings, J.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Compton, F.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cross, H. S.
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Darling, C. J.
Davenport, H. T
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donkin, R. S.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Dugdale, J. S.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. J. F.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elton, C. I.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Fellowes, A. E.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fielden, T.
Finch, G. H.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. J. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Green, Sir E.
Grimston, Viscount
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hardcastle, F.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Havelock - Allan, Sir H. M.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Heneage, right hon. E.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hill, A. S.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Holloway, G.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacs, L. H.
Jackson, W. L.
James, rt. hon. Sir H.
Jarvis, A. W.
Jeffreys, A. F.
Jennings, L. J.
Kelly, J. R.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, L.
Kynoch, G.
Lafone, A.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lennox, Lord W. C. G.
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Lowther, J. W.
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
Madden, D. H.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mallock, R.
Marriott, right hon. W. T.
Matthews, rt. hn. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
More, R. J.
Morrison, W.
Moss, R.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T.
Newark, Viscount
Noble, W.
Norton, R.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, hon. F.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Powell, F. S.
Price, Captain G. E.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Richardson, T.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, B.
Ross, A. H.
Round, J.
Russell, T. W.
Selwyn, Capt. C. W.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Swetenham, E.
Tapling, T. K.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Thorburn, W.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Townsend, F.
Trotter, Col. H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
West, Colonel W. C.
Wharton, J. L.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Williams, J. Powell-
Wilson, Sir S.
Winn, hon. R.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Yerburgh, R. A.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

Motion made, and Question, "That Mr. Deputy Speaker do now leave the Chair," — (*Mr. Ritchie,*) — put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

PART I.

COUNTY COUNCILS.

Constitution of County Council.

Clause 1 (Establishment of county council).

Clause 2 (Composition and election of council and position of chairman).

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, he had put down an Amendment to except London from the operation of the clause. The Bill throughout was applicable to London, but had not, he thought, been drawn with much consideration for London. London was about to be created a county, and, of course, the operation of the Bill, as far as it affected a county, would affect London. Now, in a county at present, there was only one register—that was to say, the Parliamentary register; but in London there were two registers at present, one the Parliamentary register, and another, which was not printed, the rate book, upon which the voting for Vestries took place. That rate book, if London were treated as an ordinary borough, would practically be preserved as the register for county purposes; but London being treated as a county, the rate book would not be accepted under the Bill. It might be thought that the new register which this Bill provided for would be in London practically the same as the rate book or the register which applied to Vestry or parochial purposes, &c. but that would not be so. If the Bill, as it stood, became law, there would actually be three lists of voters in London—one for Parliamentary purposes, one for Vestry and parochial purposes, and a third for the sole purpose of the election of the County Council for London. The reason was this—that the Metropolitan Management Act, under which London Vestries were elected, dated from the year 1855, and it gave a different burgher's qualification—if he might so call it—in London from what there was generally in municipal boroughs. The burgher's qualification in London was, in fact, to some extent more generous than that in ordinary municipal boroughs. In the Act, under which London Vestries existed and were elected, the qualifications of voters were somewhat vaguely expressed; but they involved having been a ratepayer for the year immediately preceding the election, and having paid rates up to within six months of that election. No residential qualification whatever was required. That was the great difference between the burgher's qualification in London and elsewhere. If they introduced this new register into London they would introduce a residential qualification—that was to say, they would require residence for the 12 months ending the 15th of June, and they, therefore, had to form a different register. Now, what was the good of creating a third register, which was not very materially different from either of the other two, but was very confusing to the persons who had to vote? He would be quite open to accept for the purpose of the Local Government Act in London either the one or the other of the two lists that he had described. That was to say, either the list for municipal, parochial, or Vestry purposes, or the Parliamentary list, with, of course, the addition to it of women and Peers, who were excluded from the Parliamentary list. They might choose either of the two; and it was a matter fairly open to the consideration of the Committee which of the two should be adopted. By this Amendment he merely excepted the County of London from the operation of this clause; and he desired to say a word or two in favour of the adoption of the Parliamentary register. What was the difference between taking the Parliamentary register and the register under the Bill? The difference, practically, would be this—that a certain number of lodgers would be included if they took the Parliamentary register; but, on the other hand, there would be some £10 occupiers who would be excluded, and there would be a certain diminution in the register, because residence was not so rigid in the case of the Metropolis Management Act. There was one other recommendation for the line of action he suggested, and it was that it left only one printed register in London, and he had hoped that that one register would become the sole register for all purposes; if so, a considerable saving would be thereby effected. There was, however, a further advantage, and that was that they would have no double revision, for women and Peers could form a separate list, just as property voters formed a separate list in the case of the county register. Simplicity really was the chief point he aimed at; there was no Party advantage one way or the other; this was really a matter of economy and simplicity. If any modification of what he suggested was felt to be necessary, he should be very willing to accept it. He desired to avoid multiplication of registers, for he believed that many small difficulties would be obviated if there was but one register. In conclusion, he desired to say that he hoped that the President of the Local Government Board would be able at an early stage to say what were about the divisions he meant to make in London, because it was easily seen that if the divisions were to be as he (Mr. Stuart) hoped they might be—namely, the Parliamentary divisions—it would very greatly expedite and facilitate the employment of the Parliamentary register. It would not be requisite that the register should be split up into wards or voting districts; but the register, exactly as it stood, would be utilizable. For many reasons, as well as registration reasons, he hoped that arrangement might be adopted. He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 19, after the word "England," to insert the words "except for the county of London."—(*Mr. James Stuart.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, he quite understood that the hon. Gentleman had not made this Motion from any Party point of view at all. He and the hon. Gentleman were perfectly agreed that whether they adopted the Parliamentary register or the municipal register, it was of no moment to one Party or the other; but his objection to the proposal of the hon. Gentleman was that if they accepted it they would place London in an entirely different position to that occupied by any other of the municipal boroughs in the United Kingdom. Every borough in the United Kingdom, from Liverpool and Manchester downwards, to the smaller boroughs, would have a different franchise to the one which the hon. Gentleman proposed to give to London. The franchise in the one case would be the municipal franchise, and that in the other would be the Parliamentary franchise. The only object that the hon. Gentleman said he had in view in proposing this change for London was that it was a more simple, less complicated, and less expensive plan. If the hon. Gentleman could be assured that his fears were in a large degree groundless, he (Mr. Ritchie) was sure the hon. Gentleman would not desire to press his Amendment, because he would not advocate London occupying a different position as regards franchise to that occupied by any of the large or small boroughs of the Kingdom. The impression upon the hon. Gentleman's mind, and, no doubt, on the minds of many hon. Gentlemen, was that they were going to have a multiplicity of registers; but he assured the hon. Gentleman that that was not so at all. There would be but one register—a similar register in the counties to that which now existed in all boroughs; but the register would be divided into three lists or divisions. The first list would be composed of nine-tenths, he might say 999-1,000ths of the voters, of those who were entitled both to the Parliamentary and municipal franchise. As the hon. Gentleman knew, in nine cases out of 10 a person who had the Parliamentary franchise had also the municipal franchise, and a person who had the municipal franchise had the Parliamentary franchise. Therefore, the great bulk of the voters both for one and the other would be comprised in the first list. Then there would be a second list, and that list would be composed of those who were Parliamentary voters, but not municipal voters. That would be a very small list, because it would be composed of the freeholders, the lodgers, and those who held the service franchise. Then the third list would be composed of those who had a right to vote for municipal purposes and not for Parliamentary purposes, and that would consist entirely of women and Peers, so that the two smaller lists would be very narrow and of small dimensions. The great list would be the first list—namely, that of those who were entitled to vote both for Parliamentary and municipal purposes. The hon. Gentleman was mistaken in supposing there would be a double revision. Nothing of the kind would occur; the revision of the three lists contained in the same register would take place at the same time; there would be no complexity whatever; and he did not think that there would be the slightest difficulty experienced by any voter. Looking to the fact that the complexity and difficulty which the hon. Gentleman feared was not at all involved, he hoped the hon. Gentleman would see the impossibility of treating London in a different way from that in which any other borough was to be treated, and of departing from what he (Mr. Ritchie) ventured to say was the fundamental principle of the Bill—the extension of municipal privileges throughout the country.

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) said, he was sure they were all glad it was proposed to have but one register; but there would be this difference between London and the country, that the County Council would be elected upon one register, and what in London would be the future District Councils—the Vestries—would be elected on a different register. Some of the rated householders, entitled to vote for the County Councils, would not be entitled to vote for the Vestries. Therefore, there would be two different voting arrangements for Vestries and County Councils. When they came to the case of the City, matters were still different. There the Common Council were elected on the Parliamentary franchise. He should have thought that for the present, having regard to the close approximation in character of the Vestry electorate to the electorate it was proposed to create, they might have gone on with the rate-book until the Government could have seen their way to propose a unity of franchise.

MR. RITCHIE said, he would acknowledge that there would be, until they got the whole scheme for London Government before the House, the difficulties which the hon. Gentleman had pointed out. The Government thought that the preferable mode was to start at once with what they considered was a proper register for London; and they hoped in a short time to be able to make a proposal to the House which would do away with the differences which had been referred to.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had not seen his way to accede to the request of his hon. Friend (Mr. J. Stewart). There was one point which had been somewhat overlooked by the right hon. Gentleman. He had said that they wanted to create for London a different electoral qualification to that for other parts of the country. He (Mr. Rowlands) was bound to say that there was a very strong feeling in London that, now they were creating a new County Council that was to have control over local matters in the Metropolis, lodgers should have a right to participate in the elections. London stood in an exceptional position in regard to lodgers as compared even with the large towns in the country. Owing to the present high rents, lodgers in London were persons who would be small householders in country towns, or even in some of the largest Provincial towns, and in consequence would have all the rights of citizenship. In London they were debarred from those rights; they had no right whatever to vote in elections for the School Board, or of those who administered the Poor Law, and they would have no right, as the Bill now stood, to vote in the election of those who would have the huge powers they were so directly interested in, upon the County Councils. Seeing that no Provincial town could compare with London as to the proportionate number of lodgers, lodgers in London had a perfect right in this new departure to claim that their interests should be considered. The only way in which that could be done was by the adoption of the Parliamentary register, *plus* the addition of Peers and women. Having had some little experience of burgess lists, he could not help thinking that the Parliamentary register was far preferable. As a matter of fact, there was no burgess list in London. If there was a Vestry election, and one wanted to contest any particular ward, he had no list to go upon at all; the rate book only was at his disposal, and possibly that was the reason why so little interest was taken in Vestry contests in the Metropolis. He felt strongly upon the lodger question, and therefore he hoped his hon. Friend would divide the Committee. He was quite aware that the usual argument used against lodgers being allowed to vote was that only those who paid rates should have the right to vote. But his contention was that a lodger was as much a ratepayer as any other person in London; they admitted him as a compound householder; and he (Mr. Rowlands) asked the House to consider what was the difference between an individual who had to take a set of rooms in a large house in which the landlord lived, and an individual having a set of rooms in a house in which the landlord did not live. In the one case he was a householder, and was entitled to participate in the elections of Boards of Guardians, School Boards, and Parliamentary Representatives; and in the other case, from the mere fact that the landlord lived in the house, he was debarred from all these privileges, although he might be paying identically the same rental. Take the case of the large blocks of model dwellings. A man living in one of them was considered a householder and allowed to participate in all the local life. Why was that? Only because they had in that case gone on the assessment of each separate flat; but the man did not pay the rates directly, but indirectly, just as the man having a set of rooms in a house in which the landlord lived. He (Mr. J. Rowlands) begged his hon. Friend (Mr. Stuart) to press his Motion to a Division, because he thought they ought to have some positive decision with regard to the right of lodgers to be placed on the local franchise list. There was another reason why the Parliamentary register should be adopted, and that was that in London—he thought there was scarcely an exception at the present time—the Parliamentary registers were made out in street lists, instead of alphabetical order. They all knew what an advantage that was. This had been done in many instances, not at the wish of one political Party, but at the wish of both political Parties; and a most striking instance was afforded by the constituency the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) formerly represented—namely, the Tower Hamlets, where in all the divisions the registers were in future to be made out by mutual consent in street lists, instead of in the old-fashioned alphabetical order. Seeing that lodgers held all the qualifications of citizenship, he thought it was high time they were allowed participation in local life.

Mr. THEODORE FRY (Darlington) said, he wished the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to place both the lodgers and service franchise men upon the municipal list as well as upon the Parliamentary list. There were numbers of men who were formerly entitled to vote for such bodies as Boards of Guardians, but who, when the new service franchise was created, were taken off the municipal list and placed only on the Parliamentary list of voters, although it was said they did not in one sense pay rates, yet in another sense they did. It would simplify things exceedingly for men on the "Lodger" franchise and on the "Service" franchise to be placed on both lists throughout the country.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, he thought there was much force in the appeal for a simplification of the Register. The "Service" franchise men did not constitute a very large class, and the arguments in favour of allowing them the franchise were conclusive. But he was concerned rather with the question of lodgers, betwixt whom and householders there was no distinction except one that had been created most unfairly to the lodgers. Lodgers were not entitled to the Parliamentary franchise unless they paid £10 a-year for an unfurnished room, and this really amounted to a great deal more than householders were called upon to pay to be entitled to a vote, and in country districts it amounted to a prohibition. In his own constituency, for instance, rents were very much lower than they were in London, where £10 as the rent for an unfurnished room might not be above the average rental; but in country districts it was obvious that hundreds of men were disfranchised who, if they were technically householders, would have a vote. An opportunity presented itself for the right hon. Gentleman to do a bold stroke of business and get rid of the lodger franchise by reducing it to the same dimensions as the household franchise, and simplifying the register and the Bill. It would be doing nothing but justice to a class against whom nothing could be said, but that their economical habits induced them to live in a cheaper manner. A singular illustration of this came under his notice during the franchise controversies in 1884-5, and it was in that part of the Metropolis the right hon. Gentleman represented. A most respectable man at 60 years of age, who had reared a family and had sons and daughters out in the world, finding it more convenient to live with his wife in rooms, gave up his house, and thereupon he was deprived of that franchise which he had enjoyed for all the previous years of his adult life. Cases of this kind constantly arose. Of course, he knew that in this case it would be argued that lodgers did not pay rates; but, as everyone knew, practically lodgers did pay their share indirectly just as much as those who paid under the compound system. Where rates were heavy, rents were proportionately increased, and often enough out of proportion, and the lodgers paid more than their share. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether it was not possible to simplify things and do this act of justice.

MR. RITCHIE said, hon. Members invited him to enter upon a wide field of Amendments he could not contemplate without dismay. To take the Municipal Corporations Act in hand and amend it in the way proposed would be to raise matter quite outside the Bill. The Government, in relation to the Bill, took the Municipal Act as they found it and applied it to the rest of the country. In proceeding upon that principle, he did not for a moment say that Amendments might not properly be made in that Act; but it was a task the Government were not prepared to take in dealing with this Bill, nor could they attempt to deal with it in the case of London without extending the application to the rest of the country. This was far too large a matter to add to the difficulties with which the Bill was already connected.

MR. WHITBREAD (Bedford) said, he desired a little more information. The right hon. Gentleman had gone far in his explanation to remove the apprehensions of those who contemplated, with something like terror, the addition of another register; but would he be good enough to explain the starting of the new register? There seemed to be some difficulty not met by any provisions in the Bill. For instance, the qualification by residence was six months for the municipal vote, twelve months for the Parliamentary vote. If the right hon. Gentleman could assure the Committee that the difficulty could be met and overcome so that the new register could be started by the machinery sketched out, it would go a long way to removing objections to the Bill as it stood.

MR. RITCHIE said, he understood the register was already made out in municipal boroughs and in three divisions. The first division was composed of those who were entitled to vote in municipal and Parliamentary Elections; the second, those who were entitled to the Parliamentary franchise only; and the third, those on the municipal franchise only. The last two divisions were very small, the first was very large. It would be the duty of the overseer, of course, in considering whether a voter should be put on the one or the other, to satisfy himself as to qualification. That, he understood, would be the process under the new system.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) said, the right hon. Gentleman must be well aware, from his own personal experience, that the position of the intended county of London would be entirely different from that of any other large town. He (Mr. Picton) had had some experience in the matter, because for nine years he had been, he hoped, a tolerably active member of the London School Board, and thus was brought into contact with the great populations of eastern London, in Hackney, the Tower Hamlets, and elsewhere. Many censuses were taken by the School Board for various purposes, and on one occasion schoolmasters and mistresses obtained a return of the number of parents of children attending the schools who lived in one or two rooms, and it would astonish the House to find how enormous was the proportion. In schools of 1,000 children, it was found that 800 or more lived with their parents in one or two rooms. Of course, some of them might rent the houses in which they occupied only a room or two, while sub-letting the rest; but they would not be many. Others would be paying as much as £10 a-year for very wretched accommodation, and by taking great trouble might get on the register as lodgers. But he was speaking within the limit when he said that the vast majority were on no register whatever. There were streets after streets of small houses, little villas they might be called, in some parts of Hackney, and not one of them in the occupation of one family, the lower part of the house, perhaps, being held by the chief occupant, the rest of the rooms let off to lodgers. The effect of treating London exactly the same as other and smaller towns such as Leicester would be that enormous populations in the East of London would have no voice in municipal matters, among which—sanitary matters, for instance, forming a large portion of municipal business—lodgers in crowded dwellings were most seriously and directly interested. It would be unjust to leave these without a voice in the election of municipal authorities. He hoped the hon. Member (Mr. James Stuart), who was well able from his knowledge of his own constituency to appreciate the importance of the point, would urge his Motion to a Division, and he also hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would, on consideration, see that the case of London did not necessarily involve the question of other large towns.

MR. RITCHIE apologized for interposing so often, but this was his last appearance with reference to this point. The hon. Member spoke of vast numbers of people whom he described as being on no register at all; and clearly, if they were not on the Parliamentary register, they would not come within the scope of the Amendment or within the lodger franchise. From his not inconsiderable knowledge of the East End of London, he could assure the hon. Gentleman that the number of lodgers on the Parliamentary register was extremely small.

MR. JAMES STUART said, he should not like this remark to go forth as an exact representation of the case. The number of lodgers on the Parliamentary register was very small, but it was very much smaller than the number entitled to be upon it if they were to make their claim; therefore, he was proposing to deal with a large number of people who were excluded from the franchise they had every right to. If the Bill passed in its present form, London would differ from every other municipality in having an extra list for voting purposes.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) asked, whether it was the intention of the Government to add the same proviso in elections for the new County Councils as existed in the Municipal Corporations Act, that no elector should have the right of voting in more than one division of the same constituency?

MR. RITCHIE: Certainly.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 110; Noes 226: Majority 116.—(Div. List No. 93.)

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 207.]

(*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. T. Lea, Mr. Sinclair.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he was not present during the discussion in Committee; but he understood the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) had inserted, at the instance of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), an Amendment, the effect of which would be, in his opinion, most injurious, and instead of conferring any rights, would take away a great number that existed. The Amendment gave the right to renew applications; but it excluded all holders of town parks who, now that the law was changed, might now desire to go into Court. That might not be the intention; but, in his view, it would be the effect. The declaration that—

> "Disqualification before the passing of the Act on the grounds aforesaid shall not be a bar to another application by the person claiming to be lessee,"

so far as it had any effect, would be mischievous; and, therefore, he proposed to insert the new clause to provide that an application dismissed before the passing of the Act, but renewed and allowed subsequently, should, in the decision of the Court, date from the day when that decision would have come into operation under the original application. Of course, it was inconvenient to discuss the matter on the present stage; and, perhaps, the better course would be to formally move the re-committal of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be re-committed."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he hoped the hon. and learned Member (Mr. T. M. Healy) would not persist in that Motion. The matter was discussed at some length in Committee; and the Amendment moved by the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland was accepted by the hon. Member for South Down (Mr. M'Cartan), who moved an Amendment in the name of the hon. Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy). The Amendment of which the hon. and learned Member for North Longford had given Notice raised a new question altogether, and one outside the scope of the Bill. As a matter of fact, the Government had declined, unless the Bill were confined to the matter of assignment, to assent to the Bill at all; and he feared that, in an attempt to achieve too much, the hon. and learned Member would accomplish nothing at all.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University) said, the remarks of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) dealt with two points. The first related to the fixing of a judicial rent in cases where an unsuccessful application had been made before the passing of the Act, and then a subsequent application had been granted after the passing of the Act; and the hon. and learned Member proposed that in such a state of facts the judicial rent should not relate to the application which had been rendered successful by the passing of the Act, but to the previous application, which the law did not then allow to be entertained. That did not appear to him to be a reasonable suggestion, and he could not advise the House to accept it. This Act liberated the tenant from the consequences of his own default in taking an assignment the landlord was willing to grant, without taking the precaution to have his consent endorsed on the lease in compliance with the Act. From the consequences of that neglect the Bill would liberate him; but to put him in the same position as if he had been careful and diligent all through, the Government could not agree. The other matter raised by the hon. and learned Member was rather one of form, arising out of what occurred in the last discussion. The Bill provided that no application by the lessee should fail on the ground of certain informality in the assignment, and the Committee had before it the fact that there might have been previous applications which had failed on that ground, and it was thought right that the tenant should come into Court notwithstanding. When the Act passed, the fact of an application not being tenable under the Act of 1887 should not be a bar to a second application; and, so far as he had ascertained the practice of the Land Commission, it would not be a bar. He would, therefore, agree to strike out the words introduced on the previous occasion, for he quite appreciated what the hon. and learned Member said—that they might suggest that in other cases the failure of an application might be a bar to a subsequent tenable application. He could not, however, go the length of accepting the new Amendment, which would amount to a radical alteration of the Acts of 1881 and 1887. There would not be the slightest danger of a tenant who had made an application before the passing of this Act and failed, being on that account debarred from making another; and, therefore, quite appreciating what the hon. and learned Member said, he would meet him half-way, for the Act would be better without the words introduced on a previous occasion.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, it would have been better had the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) considered the full effect of what was proposed. However, it was the Bill of the hon. Member; and his duty was to protect one set of tenants from any mischievous result. At the request of the hon. Member, he would not press the Motion for re-committal. He was obliged to the hon. and learned Solicitor General for offering to meet him on the other point, as to which he would reserve his remarks.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. T. M. HEALY said, it would be only reasonable for the Government to accept the Amendment he now would propose. The Act of 1887 enabled the tenant to get certain advantages in Court, and these advantages were also designed by the framers of the Act of 1881, but given up at the instance of the present Lord Chancellor of Ireland. When the Crofters' Act came to be passed, making the judicial rent date from the time of application, then, in the Act of 1887, Parliament reverted to the original design of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). It was said by the hon. and learned Solicitor General that the tenant was placed in the position of having his application rejected by his own act and default, but it was nothing of the sort. The tenant might have taken out an assignment at a cost of £10. On large estates the landlord would say—"If you want this done, my solicitor is Mr. So-and-So." And then Mr. So-and-So would say—"My charge for preparing an assignment is £10." Then the tenant, who up to 1881 had no status, thought—"So long as the landlord does not turn me out I do not care for a bit of parchment." But the moment he got into Court he was met by the fact that he was not a real tenant. Grave injustice had resulted to men who had been recognized as tenants year after year, and nobody disputed their tenancy until the landlord on a technical point sought to deprive the tenant of the reduction on the rent of a-year or a-year and a-half. Only ungenerous landlords were guilty of this, and he noticed they were generally lords who took the advantage. His Amendment might very reasonably be accepted.

New Clause—

(Land Commissioners to decide date of commencement of judicial rent.)

"Where any application has been dismissed prior to the passing of this Act, and is renewed and allowed after the passing of this Act, the judicial rent shall date as from the gale day when it would have come into operation had the original application not been dismissed, and the order of the Land Commission fixing the date for the commencement of such judicial rent under this section shall be conclusive in all legal proceedings,"—(*Mr. T. M. Healy,*)

—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, it was quite true that the judicial rent in ordinary cases dated from the service of the original notice, not from the date of the judgment given; but there was something in what the hon. and learned Solicitor General said, that it did not follow that the tenant who committed the mistake should be put exactly in the same position as the tenant who had not. However, if the Government accepted the Amendment, he would not object; but if the Government refused, he was bound by the arrangement that the Bill should be confined simply to matters of assignment, to vote with the Government.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, if the Question when put was contested, the discussion under the Rule must stop.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed, in Clause 1, page 1, line 10, to leave out the word "any," and insert the word "such."—(*Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.*)

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked, what was the advantage of this?

Mr. MADDEN said, after the word "any" was inserted in Committee, it occurred to him, reading the clause carefully, that it was not only not the best word, but that it might lead to serious misunderstanding. It might be so construed that where there were several successive assignments, and the landlord had consented to any one of them that consent validated them all. That was not the intention of the framers of the Bill, and could not be sanctioned if it were. No assignment which had been consented to practically by the landlord in the manner pointed out by the Bill could be invalidated before the Land Commission on the ground of the informality with which the Bill dealt, and the word "such" made that meaning perfectly clear.

Amendment *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. T. W. Russell, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 10, after the word "assignment," leave out the words "of such lease."

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he understood the hon. and learned Solicitor General agreed to the principle he laid down in the remarks he made earlier, and in his opinion it would be preferable to accept his Amendment instead of striking out the clause as the hon. and learned Gentleman suggested. In the case of town parks a radical change was made in their position by the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) in the Act of last year, and it was very much debated at the time. There was now no question in dispute, and the Amendments he proposed would, he thought, make no change in the law, and surely could do no harm. He had heard it contested, though it had never been judicially decided, and he had a very strong opinion to the contrary, that once an application was dismissed it could not be renewed. Certainly, he should prefer to have the clause omitted, rather than have a doubt thrown on the applications as to town parks, but he hoped the hon. Member would see the blot on his Bill, and accept the Amendments to the 2nd clause, the first of which he moved, the omission of the words "on the ground aforesaid" in lines 3 and 4.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understood that the hon. and learned Member suggested to the clause being struck out altogether. If that is his desire, he should make that Motion first.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, that placed him in a difficulty, for he would prefer to have his Amendments inserted. Could he not move the omission of the clause after the Amendments.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, that could not be done on Report.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 2 be omitted."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy*).

MR. MADDEN said, he quite appreciated the substance of the remarks of the hon. and learned Member (Mr. T. M. Healy), but he feared that the Amendments would bring up a number of subjects connected with the Act of 1881 not contemplated by the Bill. It would be better to omit the Clause, and he did not think there would be the slightest danger to leaseholders thereby.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *omitted.*

On the Motion of Mr. T. M. HEALY, the following Amendment made:—In Clause 3, line 8, to leave out the word "leaseholders."

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

MOTIONS.

—o—

BURGH POLICE AND HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) Bill do consist of Twenty-five Members.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Mr. Anstruther, Mr. Asher, Mr. Baird, Sir George Balfour, Mr. Barbour, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Bolton, Mr. Preston Bruce, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Macdonald Cameron, Sir Archibald Campbell, Mr. R. F. Campbell, Dr. Clark, Mr. Cochrane-Baillie, Mr. Donald Crawford, Lord Elcho, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. Hozier, the Lord Advocate, Mr. Menzies, Mr. F. S. Powell, Mr. Sinclair, Mr. Mark Stewart, Mr. Webster, and Mr. Williamson, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

FOREST OF DEAN TURNPIKE TRUST.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the affairs of the Forest of Dean Turnpike Trust.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Mr. W. B. Beaumont, Lord Edward Cavendish, Mr. Salt, Mr. Beach, Mr. Samuelson, Viscount Folkestone, and Mr. Long.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to inquire and report to the House under what conditions with reference to the rate of interest, expenses of management, maintenance of roads, payment of debt, and term of years, or other special arrangements, the Act of the Trust mentioned should be continued.

Ordered, That all Petitions relating to the continuance or discontinuance of this Trust be referred to the Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.—(*Mr. Long*).

EAST INDIA (HYDERABAD DECCAN MINING COMPANY).

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the formation and promotion of the Hyderabad Deccan Mining Company, Limited, the circumstances under which the concession held by that Company was obtained from the Government of Hyderabad, and the subsequent operations on the London Stock Exchange by persons interested in the Company.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Sir Henry James, Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Slagg, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Bristowe, and Mr. Labouchere.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.

House adjourned at half after
Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 4th May, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, Amendment* (91); Local Bankruptcy (Ireland)* (93).

Committee—Copyright (Musical Compositions) (61-92).

Report—Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, Amendment* (88).

Third Reading—Copyhold Acts Amendment* (89); Westminster Abbey* (57); Customs (Isle of Man)* (60), and *passed*.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL—*Second Reading*—Local Government (Ireland) (Coleraine, &c.)* (63).

COPYRIGHT (MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS) BILL.—(No. 61.)

(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to order).

Clause 1 (Provision as to damage).

LORD BRAMWELL said, he moved to omit this clause, which proposed to alter the laws relating to dramatic literary property by limiting the penalty or damages to be awarded upon any action or proceedings in respect of an unauthorized representation of any musical composition to such sum less than 40*s*. as should in the discretion of the Court be reasonable. By the law as it stood at present, if a man composed a song, he had the exclusive right of representation as regarded it. That was a right which the composer could sell, and which was frequently sold for hard cash. This Bill proposed to take away that existing right from those who had composed songs, and from those who had purchased the right of representation, and—let there be no mistake about it—the Bill proposed to do that without giving any compensation whatever to the persons so to be deprived of their rights. He challenged the noble and learned Lord the late Lord Chancellor (Lord Herschell) to deny the truth of that statement. The noble and learned Lord had read the names of a number of distinguished persons—his own among them not being the least distinguished—who recommended the alteration in the law which the Bill proposed to effect, and the noble and learned Lord asked whether anyone would suppose that such distinguished persons would recommend such an attack as this clause was described to be upon property being made. For his own part, he should not have supposed that the noble and learned Lord himself would have recommended such an attack as this being made upon property; but the fact was that the noble and learned Lord, and the other distinguished persons, had done so, and therefore there was no supposition about the matter, because it was a fact. He (Lord Bramwell) had not said that this was a serious attack upon property, as his noble and learned Friend imputed to him—it was the precedent which it was now proposed to make, which might by-and-by be relied upon as a justification for more serious attacks upon property. A paltry piece of spoliation like this ought to be equally resisted with a more substantial one. If a man picked his pocket of a pocket handerchief he was a low thief, but he ought to be punished, as well as the man who effected a more substantial robbery. Then there was his noble—he would not say his learned—Friend, because a man appeared to cease to be "learned" when he became a statesman—the Colonial Secretary, whose proposals savoured more of the statesman than of the lawyer—rather of a love of popularity than of law and right. His noble Friend had referred to the case of a Mr. Wall, who, he said, had charged a dear little girl of 13 years of age, £2 for singing a copyright song at a concert for charitable purposes.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Lord KNUTSFORD) said, that he had not made the statement, which had been made by another noble and—probably the noble and learned Lord opposite would admit — learned Lord.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (the Earl of ONSLOW) said, that he had made the statement the noble and learned Lord referred to.

LORD BRAMWELL said, that he would finish with the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies before he proceeded to anything else. The noble and learned Lord said that Sir Arthur Sullivan and Messrs. Boosey approved of this clause. No one could speak without respect of Sir Arthur Sullivan; but he would venture to say that Sir

Arthur Sullivan approved of this measure because he knew nothing about it. Messrs. Boosey were very respectable people, but they did not oppose this clause because they were musical publishers, and the more songs were sung the more copies of them they sold. Doubtless, Messrs. Boosey, therefore, would sooner pay a person £2 for singing a song than charge him £2 for his singing. The evidence of Messrs. Boosey, therefore, respectable though they no doubt were, was worthless as regarded the present matter. He challenged the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies to deny that this clause proposed to take away a right without giving any compensation for it. With regard to the dear little girl of 13 who sung a song for charity, he wondered whether she had sung for charity, or for the pleasure of hearing her own voice, or to contribute to the pleasure of her parents and friends, which had no doubt much more to do with the matter than charitable motives. Still, if he had been the proprietor of the song, and he had been told that it had been sung for charity, he was not at all sure that he should have asked for the £2. He said that he was not at all sure that he should have done so advisedly, because if a man permitted his songs to be sung for charity without demanding payment, he might part with all the value of his property. On the other hand, however, if he had been the father of this dear little girl, and he had heard that a demand had been made for the payment of this £2, he should have paid what, after all, was only a just debt. The noble and learned Earl near him seemed to approve of the Bill, and as he had challenged others, he challenged the noble and learned Earl to deny that this clause proposed to take away a right without any compensation being given in respect of it. This was not a question of alteration of procedure alone; it was taking away a substantial right. No doubt it was a small matter; but a bad precedent was established by the Bill, and would be applied in other cases. He should not deal with the provisions of the Bill in detail; but he would submit to their Lordships that the Bill took away a right without pretending to give an equivalent for it, and he would challenge the noble and learned Lord the late Lord Chancellor, the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies, or the noble and learned Earl beside him, to contradict the description he had given of the measure.

Moved, "To omit Clause 1."—(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, that as the noble and learned Lord had good-humouredly challenged him to reply, he would state shortly the reasons which induced him to disagree with his noble and learned Friend on this matter. In saying that a right of property was taken away without an equivalent being given, what did his noble and learned Friend mean by "a right of property?" What he called "a right of property" was clearly the claim given by the Statute to any person proceeding for the infringement of a song to minimum damages of 40*s*. If that were what the noble and learned Lord called "a right of property," it was a very peculiar description to apply to a mere regulation by Parliament interfering with the legitimate function of a jury to assess damages that the minimum damages for the infringement of the Act should be 40*s*. The same Statute also gave the plaintiff a right to double costs in all cases, which would be a much more valuable right, in a pecuniary sense, than 40*s*. damages. But this the noble and learned Lord justly regarded as a matter not of property, but of procedure; and he was willing that it should be taken away. He (the Earl of Selborne) thought the same principle applicable both to damages and to costs. He objected to the present practice under the Statute, and should support the clause.

LORD HERSCHELL said, he wished to express his concurrence with the views of the noble and learned Earl. His noble and learned Friend had observed that neither Sir Arthur Sullivan nor Messrs. Boosey knew anything about this question. In this case those who wrote the music, those who wrote the words, and those who dealt in both, agreed in seeing nothing to object to in this Bill. Only one solitary individual objected. In his opinion, this Bill did not take away any right of property. The right of property given by the Statute was the right of exclusive representation of the song—that no person was to be at liberty with impunity to perform it. But not every remedy given by the Statute was part of the right of property. This Bill did not take away the right to sue for infringement of copyright; it only abolished the right to minimum damages, and left the whole question of damages to the decision of the Court. Was the Legislature, because it had once fixed a minimum of damages, to be bound for all time to continue that measure of damages? Was the Legislature bound to hold to that measure of damages when it was shown that it worked injustice, and that the best course was to leave the measure of damages to the tribunal? He believed that this Bill took away no right of property.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, he agreed that there was some slight doubt whether they were not confusing things with words. What was called a right of property, no doubt, was incapable of exact definition, and yet everybody well knew what it meant. One incident of a right of property was that its possessor could enforce it, and thus make it of some value to himself. The particular thing with which their Lordships were dealing was the right of exclusive representation, and it was to be observed that that right which was thought to be fenced round by the Legislature was the right of representation on each particular occasion. The general right of copyright or the right to multiply copies was sufficiently protected by law already. But, doubtless, the Legislature, in passing the Act which it was now sought to repeal, foresaw that it would probably be impossible for a person to give evidence applicable to the particular injury done to him on a particular occasion. The right with which they were now dealing was the right of single representation, and a jury would probably say they could not assess the damage done in respect of each representation. The Legislature, in order to get rid of that difficulty, thought it right to fix the minimum amount of damages in order to prevent these representations being made without the sanction of the author. As it was competent for the Legislature to pass that Act, so they might now amend it; but he thought it desirable that those who insisted on the alteration should show their lordships why the owners of this kind of property should be left without protection. He would suggest that the Judge should have a discretion in awarding costs, and that the amount of the penalty should remain as at present. Deep as was his respect for the Commission, he must vote for the noble and learned Lord if he brought this matter to a Division.

EARL GRANVILLE remarked, that the lawyers did not all give them the same advice, and therefore he should prefer to look at this question from the point of view of a common juryman. If, as the noble and learned Lord said, the Judge would be able to assess the amount of costs, he did not see why the jury should not be able to assess the amount of damages.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW pointed out that in the evidence given before the Commission it was stated by a music publisher, who was well qualified to judge, that he did not believe any living composer had derived sixpence profit from the performance of his songs. That was the kind of property which the noble Lord said would be taken away by this Bill—property which had never been worth sixpence to its owner. The way in which the cumulative penalty worked this great hardship was best illustrated by the evidence of another music publisher. An agent said—"I understand that you have purchased the copyright of a song." It was not a classical production, but the song was popular. It was called "Tommy, make room for your uncle." The agent went on to say—"Do not attempt to recover penalties for one or two performances, but wait till the pantomimes are in full swing, and you will then have an opportunity to recover numerous penalties and to put £200 into your pocket." The object of the Bill was to prevent such an abuse as that.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining Clauses *agreed to*, with Amendments: the Report thereof to be received on *Friday* next; and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 92.)

LOCAL BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) BILL.

BILL PRESENTED.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND (Lord ASHBOURNE) said, he rose to call attention to the subject of the establishment of local Courts of Bankruptcy in Ireland, with a view to presenting a Bill. This subject had from time to time within the last 10 or 11 years occupied the attention of Parliament and of successive Governments. The Bill which he had to present to their Lordships proceeded on the lines of, and was largely identical with, those previously introduced. At present the only bankruptcy jurisdiction in Ireland was the Bankruptcy Court of Dublin, which did very good and efficient work and enjoyed the confidence of those who had to avail themselves of its jurisdiction. But Belfast, a great mercantile community, the capital of the North of Ireland, a great centre of commerce and a great seat of manufactures, also had been anxious for a great number of years to have at its door and within its own geographical boundaries an efficient and working Bankruptcy Court. Belfast, which had a growing population and an increasing commerce, had likewise asked from time to time that in addition to having a local Bankruptcy Court the area of the jurisdiction of its Recorder and its County Court Judge should be re-adjusted. Again, Cork, the capital of Munster, also desired, and fairly and reasonably desired, to have a local Court to administer its bankruptcy business. With that wish successive Governments had sympathized, and he thought that as far back as 1879 a Bill was brought in and was re-introduced by the next Government in 1883, and he knew that last year several Bills were brought in to deal with this subject. Now he had to ask their Lordships to allow him to present a Bill dealing with this important subject and to give a first reading to it. The Bill which he sought to introduce proposed at once to introduce local Bankruptcy Courts in Belfast and Cork. It proposed also to take power to establish local Bankruptcy Courts by Order in Council in Londonderry, Galway, Waterford, and Limerick, as expediency and the state of business might require. He might also take power of adding to and varying these districts as the exigencies of business or changes in population might demand. It was also proposed to authorize the Lord Lieutenant in Council to join on part of Antrim to Down on the next vacancy in the County Court Judgeship, and also of adding on a portion of Down to Antrim, and also similarly of adding portions of East Cork to West Cork. Powers were also taken of transferring cases on the application of any suitor from the Bankruptcy Court in Dublin to the rural bankruptcy jurisdiction and *vice versâ*. There were other clauses dealing with machinery with which he would not trouble the House, and which could be discussed at a later stage of the Bill. He hoped the Bill would be printed and distributed in the course of a few days, and he proposed to fix the second reading for this day week.

Bill to provide for the establishment of local courts of bankruptcy in Ireland—*Presented* (The Lord Ashbourne).

Lord FITZGERALD said, he was rather disappointed at the statement of his noble and learned Friend. While he objected to the fantastic clauses proposed last year in the Land Bill, he was in favour of a small local bankruptcy jurisdiction, under which a small tenant might at once realize and distribute his property among his creditors, and in a short time be a free man again. To these men this Bill would give no relief whatever. To relieve the tenants from their rent or to give them additional privileges was useless, if it was really done, not for the benefit of the tenant, but for that of the money lenders. Let them enable the tenant to give up his farm and at once become a free man. If a tenant farmer had an interest in his farm that was put up for sale—and it would probably be bought in for him by his friends —he got at once an absolute discharge from all his debts, and his property was realized and distributed. He would reserve any further criticism till he had had an opportunity of examining the Bill; but he would warn the noble and learned Lord that that project of establishing local Bankruptcy Courts in Belfast and Cork was one which he would not find it easy to carry out. It had always met with opposition on this side of the water. If there were a Bankruptcy Court in Belfast it affected not only Belfast but Manchester, Liverpool, and other commercial centres. So far back as 1857 he had a conference with the late Lord Cairns—then Mr. Cairns—on this subject in reference to a Bankruptcy Bill he himself was conducting in the House of Commons. He explained to the noble

Lord the ground on which he did not think the creation of local Bankruptcy Courts was expedient. It was that there was not sufficient Bankruptcy business in the country to maintain one Court. Lord Cairns was satisfied with a provision then inserted in the Bill that in case of bankruptcy a local inquiry might be carried out at Belfast or Cork or elsewhere, to save the creditor's expenses, but the general administration should be in one central Court. The proposal in this Bill had always met with opposition in Dublin and in England. If they asked the opinion of the English creditors in such cases, they would be told that it would be most inconvenient to have such local Courts, and that one Court at Dublin would be much more accessible. He was not pledging his final opinion on the Bill, which he wished to form after a candid examination of its details.

Earl SPENCER did not wish to enter upon a discussion of the Bill, which would be more conveniently taken when they had the Bill before them; but he would like to say this in regard to the subject, that he was well aware that what the noble and learned Lord who spoke last said was quite true. There would be considerable difficulty in carrying the Bill; but, on the other hand, he wished to add that from the knowledge he gained when they were trying to deal with the subject in 1883, he would say that there was a strong feeling in different parts of Ireland, particularly in Londonderry and Belfast, in favour of the erection of local Courts beyond those in Dublin. But for that feeling it was probable that they would have taken measures in 1886 to carry out the project.

Bill read 1ª. (No. 93.)

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—OUTRAGES ON NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.—OBSERVATIONS.

Lord FITZGERALD said, he rose to call attention to two outrages committed on national school teachers and their families, the one on Patrick Robinson and his family at Knockagoshal National School, Co. Kerry, in the month of March last, and the other on John Curtin and his family at Knockatea National Schools, in the month of December last. The system of national education had existed in Ireland for over 50 years. It was established by Mr. Stanley, on the statesmanlike view of united secular education and separate religious instruction. The system had overcome great difficulties, and was a success. About £700,000 a-year was granted by Parliament, while the contributions in the country were practically *nil*. The system was controlled by an unpaid national board, consisting of men of great ability and eminence. There were between 7,000 and 8,000 schools, in each of which there was one or more teachers, who were appointed chiefly by the clergy, who were managers, but paid their salaries by the Board. Outrages had recently been committed upons national teachers and attacks on the system generally; and he thought it his duty to call attention to them, and to ask the Government whether there was any probability of the perpetrators being brought to justice. There were two cases in particular about which he had obtained perfectly trustworthy information, derived not from the newspapers, but from investigations on the spot. The noble and learned Lord then described the nature of the attack on Robinson, whose life had been previously threatened. Patrick Robinson was national school teacher at Loughfoodra, about nine miles from Castleisland, in the county of Kerry. The district was wild and remote, and the population few and scattered. About 11 o'clock the teacher was engaged in the ordinary duties of his office, and his two daughters were busy teaching, when his attention was directed towards the door by a stir of great excitement among the pupils, consisting of somewhere about 50 boys and girls. He there saw three men, armed, and one of them disguised by a mask. Two of them went to the head of the school, and the masked man, who was probably the leading ruffian of the district, ordered the teacher's daughter Margaret to go up to where they were and go on her knees. He then ordered Mary Ann Robinson, her sister, about 17 years of age, to come up and kneel down near him, and he ordered the teacher to go on his knees on another part of the school, saying that he wanted to swear him. Robinson asked him what he wanted to swear him for, when the man replied to prevent him talking about his neighbours. In the meantime Mrs.

Robinson came out of her residence to come into the school, when the man at the door pointed a gun at her and ordered her back to her residence. The undisguised man put a pistol to Mary Ann Robinson's cheek, and snapped it three times, but it missed fire. The masked man then, with a curse, ordered his companion out of the school, and took a gun and shot Mary Ann Robinson. The shot riddled a considerable portion of her dress, but, fortunately, did not injure her. He then shot Mr. Robinson, and wounded him severely in the abdomen, there being over 70 perforations. The three ruffians then decamped, firing shots outside. The scene became one of the wildest confusion, the wounded man lying on the floor covered with blood, and the children screaming in terror. The police station was at a distance, but a messenger was sent, and they came and removed the wounded teacher and his daughter to the hospital. On the night of the 17th of March last some men went to the hospital at a late hour and demanded admittance, which was refused. They said they wanted to see Robinson, and they were told they could not. They then wanted to see his daughter, which was also refused. These men, in order to get into the hospital, climbed over a high wall. No doubt their object in coming was to intimidate Robinson and his daughter from giving evidence against the perpetrators of these outrages. Subsequent inquiry disclosed that this was not the first attempt on Robinson's life. The ruffianly perpetrators of these cowardly outrages escaped for the time; but one of the questions which he proposed to put to the noble Lord opposite was whether any clue had as yet been discovered likely to lead to justice on the perpetrators? In August last, while the teacher and his family were at dinner in their own residence, a party of men passed by, and one of them discharged a loaded gun through the door. The contents of the gun perforated the door in very many places and broke a pane of glass at the opposite side of the room. On a Sunday in January last, Mr. Robinson saw five men masking themselves nearly opposite his residence, when he ran into his house and bolted his door. Two carts shortly afterwards passed by, which he thinks, prevented the men from attacking the door. They went to the rear of the house and remained there for about an hour. They fired a shot through one of the back windows, breaking it, and then went away. Now, as to the case of John Curtin. Curtin is the teacher of Monteagle National School, in a remote district in Kerry. His school declined in the number of children in attendance, and the attention of the local Inspector was directed to the state of the school, and he paid it a visit in consequence. The teacher and his pupils appeared to be in an unsettled state of mind for school business, and on inquiry the Inspector found the cause to be as follows :—On the previous Monday, about 12 o'clock, as the teacher, Mr. Curtin, was speaking to the father of one of the pupils outside the school, he saw a masked armed man approaching the rear of the school, followed by five others. He ran towards his residence, which is situated near the school, when a shot was fired after him. Three of the men went into the school, and amid the screams of the children, some of whom clung round the assistant teacher, one of the men fired a shot into the schoolroom. They then went away, after firing some shots outside the school. Late in December last, a further desperate attempt was made, in broad daylight, to murder this national school teacher, but although the original design was not successfully accomplished, the would-be assassin succeeded in wounding both himself and his wife (Mary Curtin), the latter rather seriously. Curtin lived at Monteagle, a wild and desolate region. It is about three miles and a-half from the village of Brosna, and borders on the confines of Cork and Limerick. In this district Curtin has been engaged for the last 15 years teaching a national school, and, as far as can be ascertained, has always been on friendly terms with the neighbours. Yesterday, about ten minutes past 11 o'clock, accompanied by his wife and son, John Curtin, he started for the village of Brosna for the purpose of attending mass there. They travelled in a common cart, and reached a place not far from Brosna about 20 minutes past 11 o'clock. Curtin dropped his whip and his son got out to recover it for him. The young lad had taken the whip off the road, and was getting into the cart, when they heard the report of a shot, which shattered Curtin's arm and severely wounded Mrs. Curtin. After the shot had been fired, three men, who were in ambush, rose from their places of concealment and ran eastwards in an uphill direction. Curtin, though severely wounded, jumped off the car and across the ditch behind which they were ambushed and pursued them about 100 yards. He called on the cowardly assassins to stand, but the leader only turned round and presented a revolver at him and then passed it to the nearest man, who did likewise, but neither of them fired. Curtin, being alone and wounded, turned back to the assistance of his wounded wife. The men concerned in this cowardly and ruffianly attack were not disguised. When Curtin got back to his wife he found the poor woman bleeding from wounds on the right eye and neck. He then drove to Brosna for the priest and doctor. Curtin did not feel his own wounds very much owing to excitement, but subsequently he found his coat had been riddled with shots. Two policemen who were in the district from early morning heard the shots, and made towards the direction and discovered Mrs. Curtin wounded on the roadside. She was wounded in the eye, breast, right arm, shoulder, and knee with shot to the number of 42 grains, while her husband was wounded in the right hand, arm, and side. Such were the two cases which he brought under their notice. He felt deeply outrages like these, perpretrated on teachers of national schools, of which there were 7,000 or 8,000 in Ireland, and in which there was given a good primary education to the children who were willing to avail themselves of it free of cost. If there was a person who ought to be protected by the people of the locality, it was the national school teacher; if there was a place that should be sacred from outrage, it was the school in which their children were taught. He had not the means of tracing these outrages to their source. There was some organization—what it was he did not venture to say; but strangers were brought or sent from remote districts to carry out these crimes. In one case, in County Limerick, a school was Boycotted because shelter was given to some policemen during a heavy shower of rain. This village school was thus Boycotted at an expense to the Exchequer of £76. In another instance, the father of two pupils refused at the bidding of the local League to cease cutting timber for a gentleman, the result being that the school was Boycotted at a cost to the county of £75. Finally, he referred to the experience of St. Cronan's National Schools (boys and girls), King's County, the monitress of which, Agnes Sullivan, on July 5, 1887, went to the wedding of her cousin, who was marrying the sister of a Boycotted man. The following day the school was Boycotted, three pupils only would come to school, the day after that two, and the next day none. The object of Boycotting the school was to procure the discharge of the monitress. Similarly, in a boys' school Boycotting was decreed; the attendance fell to 0 in three days. The cause of the Boycotting in this school was that two boys, relatives of the Boycotted man, remained pupils of the school. The manager, who was the parish priest, then proclaimed a vacation. The schools re-opened on the 16th of August, when four children only came to the girls' school in addition to the innocent but obnoxious monitress. Others came as far as the door, but left without entering, seeing her there. Having thus called attention to these very painful facts, he asked the Government if they were able to indicate what likelihood there was of the perpetrators of the two outrages to which he had more particularly referred being brought to justice?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND (Lord ASHBOURNE) said, that it would not be surprising to noble Lords who knew the long and honourable connection of his noble and learned Friend with the Board of National Education in Ireland that he took a keen interest in the painful circumstances to which he had drawn attention. It was impossible to listen without the deepest pain to the simplest statement of the way in which at this time of day, and at this advanced stage in the history of civilization, the course of education in Ireland had in recent years been sought to be arrested and interfered with by the Boycotting of schools and schoolmasters. The statement which he had submitted to the House was only too true. Unfortunately, National schoolmasters and their schools had been subjected in the cases referred to to such a barbarous and inhuman course of Boycotting as was a scandal to every community that permitted it to continue in their midst. The steady amelioration which was to be witnessed in the condition of the country would, however, tend in an increasing measure to put an end to the state of matters as it had been described. Boycotting, as the figures which had been presented to Parliament practically showed, had largely fallen off in number, and the instances were decidedly decreasing in vigour as well. Belief in the power of those who had previously had recourse to that terrible weapon was weakening and passing away. In many districts, faith in the power and authority of the law was returning, and with returning confidence came renewed courage. Owing to these influences, the Boycotting of school-houses had diminished, and would doubtless steadily and largely diminish; and he ventured to think and hope that, if on a future occasion his noble and learned Friend recurred to the subject, there would be a great and decided change for the better. With regard to the two cases referred to, he was not acquainted with the precise details; but, so far as he knew, Curtin's case well merited the grave terms of censure which his noble and learned Friend employed and the anxious way in which he appealed to the Government to direct their attention to it. A Constabulary hut had been erected in the neighbourhood, and the Government were using every effort in order to make amenable to the law those who were answerable for the outrage. The case of Robinson and his two daughters only occurred last March, and was also a painful and serious one; and anyone who was acquainted with Kerry, where it happened, would know that the locality was one requiring the close and attentive examination of the Government. There had been a difficulty in identifying, which he did not like to enlarge upon, and of getting accurate information. That might be accounted for in a variety of ways which he did not like to go into at present. His noble and learned Friend asked if the Government had any clue with reference to these cases? If he had the means of giving a full answer, he would beg leave not to do so, as it might interfere with the course of justice and the due prosecution of the offenders. He would only say that the two cases in question were engaging the closest and most anxious attention of those answerable for public prosecutions in Ireland, and the Attorney General for Ireland would do everything reasonably within his power to see that those crimes should not remain unpunished.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, he could not help thinking that the particulars referred to by the noble and learned Lord (Lord Fitzgerald) should be made available to their Lordships in the shape of a Return, and he gave Notice accordingly that he would move on Monday next for a Return of all national schools in Ireland, by provinces and counties, which had been reported to the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland as having been Boycotted at any time since October, 1880, with particulars of such cases.

EARL GRANVILLE said, he hoped the Government would not give their assent to the Motion of which Notice had been given. He was bound to say that he thought it was one of a very unsatisfactory character. His noble and learned Friend asked the Government for information with regard to two cases and what measures were being taken? The only answer which the noble and learned Lord gave to the House was that there was a general improvement in Ireland under the Act now being administered; but with regard to the particular cases he merely confirmed them without giving the slightest indication of the Government being able to punish the particular individuals. That did not appear to him to be consistent with the roseate description he had given of the state of Ireland.

LORD ASHBOURNE explained that what he had said amounted to this, that the cases were before the Attorney General for Ireland, whose business it was to look into them, and that it was not desirable for him, even if he had the information, to go into specific details.

EARL SPENCER said, he entirely agreed that it was very undesirable for the Government to give any details while the matter was under the consideration of the Attorney General; but the noble and learned Lord had misunderstood what his noble Friend said, which was that he was afraid the explanation given as to this particular district was hardly so satisfactory as they hoped. It was said that the condition of the country as to Boycotting had considerably improved. Well, no one would rejoice at that statement more than he did and those who sat behind him. At the same time, the noble and learned Lord did not give a good account of the unfortunate district near Knockagoshal, and they on the Opposition side of the House would have been glad to hear that something had been done by this time towards tracing the ruffians who made the attacks on the schools. Castleisland was one of the worst districts in Ireland. Since he had known Ireland it had been very often under a reign of terror. There had been gangs of people in that district who had maintained a species of intimidation; and he certainly had hoped that the Government would have been able, by the special measures they had taken with regard to Kerry, to restore something like order in the district. He was afraid from the answer which had been given to his noble and learned Friend that the Government had done very little towards discovering the perpetrators of those two outrages. As to the Return which his noble and learned Friend had given Notice to move for, he suggested that the Government should also be asked what they had been able to do with regard to discovering and bringing to justice any of those who had committed outrages in these particular cases? He thought that this would be a very interesting addition to the Return.

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury) said, he considered that the noble Earl was a little unreasonable in expecting that Her Majesty's Government should have been able within the few months which had elapsed since those outrages had been committed in all cases to trace them to their authors. Where could the noble Earl find a precedent for applying the same rigid law which he sought to apply to the Government, and which he did not apply to himself. The noble Earl had, when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, enormous powers in his hands, and yet how long was it before the Phœnix Park murderers were brought to justice? The whole attention of Ireland was directed to that investigation, and yet those secret societies, with ramifications so wide, which were supported by influences so powerful, were able to set the noble Earl at defiance. It was not unreasonable that in a desolate district in Ireland where the population was sparse, and the means of tracking the criminals were scant, some time should elapse before they were brought to justice.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said, he did not believe that it was the intention of any Member of the Opposition to cast blame on the Government for not having succeeded in discovering the perpetrators of the outrages. They were only afraid that the Government had not succeeded better than any previous Government. In the unfortunate circumstances of Ireland, outrages of the description referred to by his noble and learned Friend, and which were disastrous to the peace of the country, had been committed, and yet it had not been possible to trace the perpetrators. All that his noble Friend meant to say was this, that while the noble and learned Lord opposite stated that the general state of the country had improved, the particular instances brought to the notice of the House did not seem to sustain the major proposition. Unfortunately, for long years there had been this one lamentable fact in regard to Ireland, that very often, he might almost say generally, in the case of a certain class of crime where witnesses came forward and stated what they had actually seen in order that the law might be vindicated, they had in many cases been subjected to persecution of the severest character, merely because they had given testimony in order to enable criminals to be brought to justice. That had been one of the most grievous symptoms of the social condition of Ireland for a long time. He and his noble Friends would be glad to hear whether the Government had made progress in breaking down this feeling of hostility in Ireland.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he hoped the Government would go very carefully into all the details of the cases which were to be embodied in the Return asked for by his noble and learned Friend. He trusted the noble Earl would also move to be included in the Return, as far as the Government could get at them, the causes for which those national schools had been Boycotted; also the person or organization which had caused the Boycotting in cases where it was supposed there had been any conspiracy.

The Earl of **MILLTOWN** said, the noble Earl (Earl Spencer) had stated that the district of Castleisland was not only a scandal to Ireland, but to Christendom; and that that was a state of affairs which had existed during his administration of the country. He thought the noble Earl must have referred to his last administration, because up to the formation of the National League in 1879 the district all around Castleisland, and the whole of that portion of Kerry, was one of the most peaceable in Ireland. It had been proved before the Commission on which he served, that for 40 years previous to the formation of the National League there had not been a single outrage in the whole of that district.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY BILL.—(No. 5.)

(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

THIRD READING.

Bill read 3ª (according to order).

Clause 4 (Provision of fabric fund).

Lord **NORTON** moved in Sub-section 4 of Clause 4, an Amendment providing that, whenever in due course of time a sufficiency of funds renders it possible, it might be considered within the improvements of the Abbey for which this clause provided to restore the north transept to its proper use for worship by relieving it of a row of most incongruous occupants, for which a more suitable building should be made. He urged the desirableness of removing the colossal statues mounted on colossal pedestals which blocked up and disfigured this portion of the Abbey. His proposal would not involve the immediate appropriation of any sum of money, but only in aid, when possible, to funds now being subscribed. The improvement indicated was desired by the Dean and Chapter themselves, and he thought the public generally who were interested in the Abbey and the purposes for which it should be used were as anxious as the authorities that it should be carried out.

Moved, in page 4, line 18, at end to insert—"In due course of time, when a sufficiency of funds renders it possible, a more suitable building in connection with the Abbey for the statues of great men, which now occupy, in an unseemly row, the east side of the north transept, shall be made."—(*The Lord Norton.*)

The **PRIME MINISTER** and **SECRETARY** of **STATE** for **FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (The Marquess of Salisbury) said, that the object of the Bill before the House was to find money for the restoration of Westminster Abbey, and it would be unreasonable to apply any part of that money to the erection of a new building for the reception of the statues now in the Abbey. He sympathized with the view of his noble Friend, but he did not think it necessary to go to the great expense which carrying it out would involve. National pictures had been removed to Bethnal Green, and perhaps it would be as well to send these statues there also. He would earnestly ask his noble Friend not to press his Amendment. The money in the Bill was taken for a particular purpose—namely, the restoration of Westminster Abbey. He would recommend the noble Lord to endeavour privately to obtain the money he required, and not allow Westminster Abbey to tumble down whilst he arranged a plan for the removal of the statues within it.

Lord **MOUNT TEMPLE** said, he was glad that the subject had been mentioned. Westminster Abbey was now quite full, so that at the present moment, if any general or admiral was going into battle he could not say, as Lord Nelson had said—"Victory or Westminster Abbey," because there was no room in Westminster Abbey; it was all filled up. There was a prevalent and increasing desire amongst the public to perpetuate the memory of distinguished men who had conferred benefit on the nation by their moral or political or intellectual work, and the popular method was to erect their statues in places of public resort. This reasonable feeling would be assisted by erecting on the property of the Abbey a sort of *campo sancto*, where statues could be put instead of their being tossed about in all parts of London.

The Earl of **KIMBERLEY** was not at all sure that our modern statues had been so great a success as to render it desirable that they should be collected together and placed in a separate building. There were, no doubt, some successful statues; but, on the other hand, we had effigies of warriors in London which were rather objects of terror than otherwise. Whether Nelson himself would have liked being placed on the top of a pillar in Trafalgar Square might be doubted. A lot of these statues standing in a row would be a painful spectacle.

Amendment (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*. An Amendment made; Bill *passed*, and sent to the Commons; and to be *printed* as amended. (No. 94.)

LOCAL COURTS OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) — INQUIRIES BEFORE SELECT COMMITTEES—PROTECTION FOR WITNESSES.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN asked the Lord Chancellor to what extent witnesses testifying on oath before Select Committees of the House were protected, as there had been some misapprehension and confusion in the public mind upon the point?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, that it was as well that it should be understood that absolute and perfect protection was given to witnesses examined before Select Committees in both Houses of Parliament. Apart from the privileges of the House, that had been held for a great number of years to be the law in our Courts of Justice. Witnesses giving evidence upon oath were only liable to be indicted for perjury in the event of their giving false testimony, and no action or other legal proceedings could be brought against them in respect of the evidence given by them. In that, and in the other House of Parliament, the protection given to witnesses was even more perfect, because the power existed, and it had not been allowed to slumber, but had been exercised over and over again, of summoning persons who were guilty of such a breach of privilege as bringing an action against such a witness and of committing them to the custody of the proper officers of the House.

House adjourned at half past Six o'clock,
to Monday next, a quarter before
Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 4*th May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered— First Reading* — Mines (Limitation of Hours) * [241]; Merchant Seamen (Widows and Orphans' Pensions) * [237]; Footpaths and Roadside Wastes * [238]; Colliery Tenants Relief * [239]; Factory Acts Amendment * [240].

Third Reading—Customs and Inland Revenue [202], and *passed*.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS—*Second Reading*—Water * [227].

Report—Metropolitan Commons (Farnborough), &c.* [192]; Metropolis (Whitechapel and Limehouse) * [194].

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

QUESTIONS.

COURT OF BANKRUPTCY—THE CHIEF OFFICIAL RECEIVER.

MR. ELTON (Somerset, Wellington) asked the President of the Board of Trade, How long the present provisional arrangement, under which a sum of £8,000 per annum is allowed to the Chief Official Receiver in Bankruptcy, as an officer of the Board of Trade, to be expended by him as he may think fit on his personal staff, is to continue; and, whether he will take the necessary steps for bringing the Chief Official Receiver's Office under the immediate control of the Treasury and the Civil Service Commissioners, by placing it on the permanent establishment of the Civil Service?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The appointment of the Chief Official Receiver in Bankruptcy was originally made for a period of five years, which will expire during the present year. The whole arrangements of the Department are, however, at present under consideration; and I regret, therefore, that I am not in a position to give the hon. and learned Member any undertaking.

POST OFFICE — LICENCE TO THE WRITING TELEGRAPH.

MR. M'EWAN (Edinburgh, Central) asked the Postmaster General, If his refusal to grant a licence to the Proprietors of the Writing Telegraph is indicative of a resolution to depart from the position taken up by the Government, as defined by Sir Henry James (then Attorney General) on the 29th of November, 1880, in the case of the "Attorney General *v.* the Edison Telephone Company (and others)," now United Telephone Company (specially reported for *The Telegraphic Journal*, 15th December, see vol. 8, page 425), as follows :—

> "There is no desire on the part of the Crown to check invention. I most emphatically disclaim that inventors and Companies will always be dealt with in a liberal spirit, if they consent to become licencees of the Crown ;"

and further, in the same case, the Attorney General said (see *Engineering*, vol. 30, page 514)—

> "The Government has no wish whatever to stop energy for increased knowledge in telegraphy. The sole object of the Crown on the present occasion being to obtain an order for a compulsory licence upon all persons who should use the telephone ;"

and if that action did not arise in consequence of the Telephone Company having refused to become licencees; whether his attention has been called to the statement of the Attorney General, on his application to two Judges of the High Court on the 11th of April, 1881, to vary the decree (see *Telegraphic Journal*, vol. 9, page 149)—

> "The litigation has now come to an end. When once the claim of the Crown to the monopoly was admitted, they would be ready, in the interests of the public, to grant licences, so that there might be no impediment in the way of the active carrying on of the telephonic communication ;"

whether, seeing that the proprietors of the Writing Telegraph only ask to become licencees of the Crown, he will state on what grounds they are refused to use their telegraph system ; and, has he discretionary power to alter the principle on which Government has declared its intention to deal with inventors and Companies, as in the Edison case?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that the declaration which his Question gives in the first person is not a quotation from the report in *The Telegraphic Journal* of December 15, 1880. That report is a condensed account of the proceedings, and is given in a narrative form in the third person. The report in *Engineering* is also a mere condensed account. I can cite nothing in the shorthand writer's notes which conveys such an impression as the hon. Member has received. I may further say that the then Postmaster General did not, on the judgment being given in his favour, immediately concede a general licence even to those who were parties to the case before the Court. He freely exercised his discretion, refusing a licence here, and granting a licence there. I have, on a previous occasion, stated to the hon. Member that the Government has never assumed the position of granting indiscriminately a licence to every inventor of a new form of apparatus. I have also informed him that if there is a substantial demand for the establishment of exchanges to be worked by the instruments of the Writing Telegraph Company, I think it preferable that they should be in the hands of the Post Office, the instruments being supplied by the proprietors on terms to be arranged. To both these statements I still adhere.

SUEZ CANAL—RETURNS OF SHIPPING AND TONNAGE.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, with reference to the Commercial Paper, Suez Canal Returns of Shipping and Tonnage, annually presented to Parliament, there would be any difficulty in keeping a record of the countries from and to which vessels enter and clear the Canal, so as to add to that Return a Table showing the aggregate number and tonnage of vessels entering and clearing the Canal from and to each country each year?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The Secretary of State is in communication with the British Directors on the Council of the Suez Canal Company, in order to ascertain whether such information can be afforded.

CHANNEL TUNNEL (EXPERIMENTAL WORKS).

SIR CHARLES PALMER (Durham, Jarrow) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether there is now any reason why the explorations should not be continued, so as to test the possibility of making a tunnel between this country and France, and so remove the danger and discomfort in the communication between this country and the Continent, as has been recently shown by the loss of the *Invicta*?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The *Invicta* has not been lost, or even damaged; and having regard to the vote arrived at by the House last Session on the Channel Tunnel Bill, I certainly should not be justified in agreeing to the suggestion of the hon. Member.

NAVY GUNS—THE RETURN.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, If he can hold out any hope that the Return asked for by the hon. Member for East Marylebone on the 17th of February, 1888 (relative to the number of ships of war waiting for their guns, as well as the probable date on which those guns will be mounted on board) will be presented to the House of Commons before Whitsuntide; and, if not, whether he can fix a date for the presentation of that Return?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) (who replied) said: Yes, Sir; certainly before Whitsuntide. It is a difficult Return to prepare, as the destination of guns has been frequently changed.

WAR OFFICE—FIRST AND SECOND ARMY CORPS—HORSE AND FIELD ARTILLERY.

CAPTAIN COTTON (Cheshire, Wirral) asked the Secretary of State for War, in the event of the First and Second Army Corps, including ammunition columns, being despatched on active service, What will be the number of batteries of Horse and Field Artillery remaining available for the following purposes respectively:—the supply of the waste of the Army in the field; the reinforcement of the Indian and Colonial Establishments; and action with the Regular, Militia, and Volunteer Infantry remaining in the United Kingdom?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): In the event of two Army Corps being suddenly sent upon foreign service, it would be necessary, if there was no time to organize other ammunition columns, to utilize for this purpose 14 batteries of Field Artillery, and there would then be left only 537 officers and men of the Royal Horse Artillery, with 16 guns, and 2,069 of the Field Artillery, with 40 guns, including the depôts; but in the event of mobilization for home defence, there would be no occasion to break up the 14 field batteries not required for service with the two Army Corps, and they would be all available. The establishment of Royal Artillery was fixed after an elaborate inquiry two years ago into the whole organization of our Army.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE POST OFFICE AT ABERAMAN.

MR. RICHARD (Merthyr Tydvil) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that the functions of the Post Office at Aberaman as respects savings banks payments, Post Office orders, postal orders, and telegraphic communications have been suspended for several weeks, to the great inconvenience of the inhabitants generally, and of the working classes especially; and, whether he will give instructions that those branches of the postal business be there resumed without delay?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The transaction of those branches of Post Office business described by the hon. Member has been temporarily suspended at Aberaman, owing to the necessity of immediately taking the office out of the hands of the late receiver. Steps are being taken for the appointment of another receiver; and when this has been done, no time will be lost in arranging for the transaction of all branches of Post Office business at Aberaman as before. I am informed that there is a post office within a short distance, where the required accommodation is supplied.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—RAILWAY COMPANIES—USE OF PRIVATE WIRES.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) (for Mr. JOICEY) (Durham, Chester-le-Street) asked the Postmaster General, If, to suit the public convenience, he will consider whether he can arrange to allow Railway Companies to transmit public telegrams by their private wires during hours in which the postal telegraph offices are closed, or at any time where no postal telegraph office exists within a reasonable distance of the population surrounding the railway station; and, whether such arrangements would increase the revenue of his Department without any expenditure of capital on the part of the Post Office?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I have to state that there are nearly 1,600 railway stations now open for the transaction of telegraph business during hours fixed by the Companies; and in cases of emergency telegrams are, with my entire concurrence, accepted at other times and also at other stations. Such telegrams are included in the accounts with the Department, and the Companies receive the usual commission for transmitting them.

CANAL COMPANIES—PROTECTION OF BANKS AND TOW-PATHS.

MR. AIRD (Paddington, N.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he will consider the desirability of introducing a Bill to give to some Public Authority the right of requiring Canal Companies to protect the tow-paths and banks of canals when passing through populous neighbourhoods?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The matter referred to by the hon. Member is one of some difficulty, and I am not sure that it appertains solely to the Board of Trade to deal with it. If he will communicate to me the circumstances of any case that has come within his notice, I will consider whether any clause on the subject can properly be introduced into the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill now before the House.

RAILWAYS—OLD RAILWAY STATIONS —IMPROVEMENT.

MR. AIRD (Paddington, N.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, in the interests of the public safety, he will consider the advisability of applying to many of the antique stations still existing, the requirements now held to be necessary in the construction of new railway station works; and also of conferring powers on the Board of Trade to exercise afterwards reasonable supervision and to enforce such additions being made as may be proved necessary for the altered condition and increase of traffic?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade have power to direct an inspection of all new works made from time to time on existing railways, and in the exercise of this power the circumstances of old stations are frequently brought under their notice. Whether the Board of Trade should or should not have the further powers referred to by the hon. Member is a matter of policy which I cannot deal with in the limits of an answer; but the matter will receive my consideration.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)— CHAPLAINS' SALARIES.

MR. CRAIG SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he can inform the House on what scale, or on what principle, the salaries of chaplains in the English prisons are fixed; and, if the salaries of chaplains in Scotch prisons are fixed on the same scale or principle; if not, if there is any objection to apply the English scale to the chaplains of Scotch prisons of the same size as to cell accomodation and daily average population?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (A LORD of the TREASURY) (Wigton) (who replied) said, the salaries of chaplains in both English and Scotch prisons were fixed on a general proportion to the average number of prisoners under their charge; and though it is difficult to apply the English scale, as a whole, to Scotland, I believe that there is little, if any, difference between them when fairly compared. A Memorial for increase of pay has recently been received from the chaplains and surgeons of the three largest Scotch prisons, so I am precluded from discussing the question further at present.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE LICENSING CLAUSES.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If, having regard to the opposition, evidenced by numerous Petitions to this House and the expression of many public meetings, to the Licensing Clauses of the Local Government Bill, on the part of the Licensed Victuallers and the off-licence holders, as also of many actively engaged in the furtherance of greater general temperance, Her Majesty's Government will withdraw or postpone those clauses, as calculated to divert into side issues the consideration of the extension of local government?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): As I have already stated, the Government do not propose to withdraw these clauses from the consideration of the House.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL—UNSTAMPED BEARER SECURITIES.

MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, under the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, a holder of unstamped bearer securities must stamp them should he deposit them after July 1st with two bankers for safe custody, or for the encashment of his coupons; whether a banker who delivers such securities to the owner, or to another banker for the owner's account, must stamp them also; and, whether the holder of such securities who has to leave them with agents for the renewal of the coupon sheets, or to justify his attendance at meetings, must stamp them?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): It is assumed that in neither of the cases put does any change in the ownership of the bonds or any assignment of any interest therein take place. If that be so, no liability to the new duty would arise.

POST OFFICE—THE PARCEL POSTMEN.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Postmaster General, What is the position of the men employed in the Parcel Post; whether 18*s.* a-week is the maximum limit of their wages, or whether there is any increase contemplated after a certain term of service; and, whether the hours of the men employed in this work are to be maintained at the present average?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The men employed in the Parcel Post are taken on without Civil Service certificates, and at all ages. Those who do well, and are within the limits of age prescribed for permanent appointment, are subjected to examination by the Civil Service Commissioners and pass on to the establishment as vacancies occur. As many as 66 so passed during last year. At 18*s.* a-week, which is the maximum wage they can receive until promoted to the establishment, there is no difficulty in getting candidates. Indeed, a large number are now waiting for employment. The attendance averages eight hours in the day, and this average there is no intention of changing.

MR. LAWSON asked, if the right hon. Gentleman would give the total number employed in the Metropolitan area?

MR. RAIKES said, he would be glad to supply the hon. Gentleman with the information.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —CONVEYANCE OF LETTERS BY RAILWAY—SPECIAL STAMP.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil) asked the Postmaster General, If he can state what the difficulty is in issuing special stamps for the conveyance by Railway Companies of letters which have not passed through the post; and, whether, having regard to the great convenience to the public of allowing the practice of transmitting letters by rail to be continued, he can hold out any hope that the difficulty will be met?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): There are several difficulties in the way of issuing special postage stamps for the purpose of conveying letters which have not passed through the post. These need the most careful consideration. But with the desire to arrive at a satisfactory solution, I have appointed a Departmental Committee to report on the subject, and the Committee has already commenced its inquiry.

LOTTERIES ACTS—EDINBURGH EAST DIVISION CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that one Kenneth J. Brand, describing himself as secretary, is now offering for sale tickets for a drawing, in the nature of a lottery, announced to be in aid of funds to furnish a hall for Edinburgh East Division Conservative Association; whether the drawing is advertised to take place on June 1; whether the prizes include cigars; whether Kenneth J. Brand is licensed to sell tobacco; and, whether the Government will take any action in the matter?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I am making inquiry into this case. The hon. Member has supplied me with a list of prizes. Except as regard three framed engravings of Lords Beaconsfield, Salisbury, and Randolph Churchill, a photo album, and an embroidered silk draught screen, and, possibly, also Lord Beaconsfield's selected speeches, I cannot hold that they properly come under the description of works of art falling within the principle under which by Statute Art lotteries are made more moral than others. The list does include a box of cigars, and I am informed that Mr. Kenneth J. Brand has no licence to sell tobacco. I shall call the attention of the Inland Revenue to this part of the case. When my inquiries are complete, I shall be in a position to judge what action should be taken.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — PORT SANITARY AUTHORITY FOR DARTMOUTH.

MR. MILDMAY (Devon, Totnes) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Local Government Board still adhere to their proposal to issue an Order constituting a Port Sanitary Authority for Dartmouth; and, whether, seeing that a Local Government Bill, based upon a representative system, has been brought in, they will consider the advisability of postponing the constitution of the proposed authority until after the passing of the Local Government Bill, when it can be brought into harmony with the provisions of the Bill?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Local Government Board have deemed it necessary to issue an Order constituting a Port Sanitary Authority for Dartmouth. The Order has been objected to by the borough of Totnes, and will not take effect until it has been confirmed by Parliament, and the Order will be submitted for confirmation. The provisions of the Local Government Bill do not, in my opinion, afford any ground for not proceeding with the Order.

AFRICA (WEST COAST) — OPOBO— KING JA-JA.

SIR EDMUND COMMERELL (Southampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, taking into consideration the circumstances of the extradition of King Ja-Ja of Opobo, as set forth in the Correspondence now before the House, Will he hold out any hopes that when matters are more settled in Opobo, Ja-Ja will be allowed to return?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Only the conviction that the presence of Ja-Ja at Opobo, or on the neighbouring coasts, would prevent the quiet settlement of affairs in that region would have induced Her Majesty's Government to consent to the extreme course of deporting him, and they have no desire that his exile should continue longer than is necessary. He will be treated with all possible consideration and courtesy; and when, under the measures which are contemplated, the delta of the Niger has been brought under a settled government, and it is ascertained that his presence will no longer be injurious, Her Majesty's Government will gladly consider the propriety of sanctioning his return to his native land.

INDIA—PORT TRUST FOR ADEN.

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Port Trust of Aden has been, or will be, empowered to dredge the inner harbour for shipping, under cover of the new forts, by means of money to be raised on security offered by the Port?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The establishment of a Port Trust for Aden has been for some time under the consideration of the Government of India; but no intimation has yet been received that the question is settled, or a Port Trust in existence. Dredging is going on meanwhile under the orders of the Government of Bombay.

CHINA — POLL TAX ON CHINESE SUBJECTS IN THE AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Is it true that the following protest from the Chinese Ambassador in London has been forwarded to the Australian Governments:—

> "Chinese Legation, 12th December, 1887.
>
> "Lew-ta-Jen to Lord Salisbury.
>
> "My Lord,—The Chinese Commissioners who recently visited the Australasian Colonies for the purpose of inquiring into the condition of Chinese subjects residing in these parts of H.B.M. Dominions report that in each of the Colonies they visited a poll tax of £10 is imposed on Chinese subjects from which the subjects of other Powers are exempt. I am also informed that at the present moment a Bill, which passed the House of Assembly of Tasmania in September last, is under the consideration of the Legislative Council of that Colony, having for its object the imposition of a similar tax on all Chinese subjects who may hereafter visit the Island for the purpose of trade:
>
> * * * * *
>
> "The Imperial Government hopes that, with a view to the elimination of any part of such laws which may be found to be at variance with Treaty obligations and international usage, Her Majesty's Government will be pleased to institute an inquiry into their nature, and how far they are compatible with the increasing growth of the friendly relations which now happily exist between the two countries.—I have, &c., LEW;"

and, if so, what steps the British Government intend to take in the matter?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The passage quoted is a correct extract from a letter received from the Chinese Minister, dated the 12th of last December. The Governors of the Australasian Colonies have been instructed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to furnish Reports on the subject of any exceptional legislation affecting Chinese subjects which is in force in the Colonies under their Government. Her Majesty's Government are awaiting the replies from the Governors of those Colonies. They are fully aware that a strong indisposition has been shown in the Australasian Colonies to admit large numbers of foreigners who would not permanently reside there or contribute to the future stability of the community; and they will anxiously endeavour to procure an arrangement satisfactory to the Colonies and acceptable to the Chinese Government, with whom Her Majesty's Government are in friendly relations.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT — DISTRIBUTION OF VOTING PAPERS BY THE POLICE.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in the recent vote taken on the proposal to establish a public library in Marylebone, the police who distributed the voting papers in some cases actually delivered with the voting papers another paper calling on ratepayers to vote "No;" whether the policeman who actually delivered such papers at 53, Berners Street, Oxford Street, stated that he believed the paper asking ratepayers to reject the scheme was issued by the same authority as the voting paper; and, whether he will take immediate steps to prevent any recurrence of such employment of the police?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): No, Sir; I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the fact is not as stated. The police distributed the voting papers, but no other paper. I am not aware what belief the policeman who delivered a voting paper at 53, Berners Street, expressed about the other paper with which he had nothing to do. The police have been engaged in distributing voting papers since 1837. This practice has been adopted at the desire of the parishes, and I see no reason to interfere with it.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked, whether, if he placed in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman evidence that papers of the kind described were distributed by the police with the voting papers, the right hon. Gentleman would direct inquiries to be made?

MR. MATTHEWS said, he would be happy to consider any evidence the hon. Member laid before him.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—MR. DEVERS, POSTMASTER AT CARNDONAGH.

MR. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.) (for Mr. CAREW) (Kildare, N.) asked the Postmaster General, with reference to the execution recently levied on Mr. Devers, the newly appointed Postmaster at Carndonagh, Whether he is aware of the considerable time during which the *fi. fa.* remained in the hands of the Sheriff's bailiffs, and what Return was made by the Sheriff on the *fi. fa.*; whether he is aware that the Sheriff's bailiffs endeavoured to effect a seizure on frequent occasions, but that Devers had on all occasions, except one, succeeded in closing the door before the bailiffs effected an entrance, and that on this exceptional occasion, owing to the resistance of Devers, the bailiffs were obliged to retire; and whether, under the circumstances, he will approve of the appointment of Devers as Postmaster?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): The inquiries on the subject which I promised not yet being complete, I have nothing to add to-day to what I stated when the Question was asked on the 26th ultimo.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—COUNTY COUNCILS—TAXES ON CARTS.

Mr. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is prepared to give an option to the County Councils of imposing the taxes on carts?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Seeing the considerable difficulties with which the Government is confronted in dealing with the opposition to this tax, I confess I should doubt the expediency of putting so critical a duty on the County Councils at their first starting as the decision whether or not to impose this tax. And the difficulties created by adjoining counties would be very great. The roads of the one county might be used by the carts of another, while the county where the carts were kept might not levy the tax. You might have a war of licences between different counties.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—LICENCE ON TRACTION ENGINES.

Viscount EBRINGTON (Devon, Tavistock) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the proposed £5 licence on traction engines will be in addition to, or in lieu of, the licences now levied by the County Authorities?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The proposed duty will be quite apart from the licences now levied by the County Authorities; but I may remind my noble Friend that the Act of 1878 gives the County Authority the option of altering and repealing their bye-laws in respect of these licences, and reducing the fees charged for them. It fixes a maximum fee which may not be exceeded; but the fee may be less than the maximum, and occasionally is.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES—CONVERSION INTO COMPANIES.

Mr. MOWBRAY (Lancashire, Prestwich) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that certain Friendly Societies registered under the Friendly Societies Act are seeking to become converted into Companies; and, whether, if converted into Companies, they will or will not be subject to the provisions of the Life Assurance Companies Act?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (A Lord of the Treasury) (Wigton) (who replied) said: The Chief Registrar informs me that he has heard unofficially of two cases answering to the description in the Question. The second paragraph, however, should be addressed to the President of the Board of Trade.

NAVY GUNS.

Mr. E. HARDCASTLE (Salford, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, with reference to the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty that five first-class iron-clads already complete are now waiting for their guns, and that two more nearly completed will have to wait till March, 1889, for theirs, and that this delay has arisen from miscalculation on the part of the manufacturers (including Messrs. Armstrong and Whitworth) as to the date of completion, Will he say whether these firms are manufacturing largely naval guns for Foreign Powers; and, whether, in the present condition of Europe, the Government will permit priority in the delivery of such guns to, or in the manufacture of such guns for, any Foreign Power while so considerable a portion of our Fleet is left wholly unsupplied?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle):

I know that the firm of Sir William Armstrong and Co. have had foreign orders for guns; but I believe that the work which they carry out for the Italian Government will, for the future, be executed in Italy. I have no knowledge of any such foreign contracts being held by Messrs. Whitworth. The last Question raises a very grave question of public policy, which must be for the decision of the Government as a whole.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—RIOT AT CLASHMORE—CASE OF HUGH MATHESON, COTTAR.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Secretary for Scotland has yet considered the 12 statutory declarations submitted to him between the middle of March and beginning of April, and containing evidence which, if true, proved that Hugh Matheson, a crofter at present undergoing 12 months' imprisonment for mobbing and rioting, was innocent of the offence for which he was sentenced; and, when it is expected that a decision will be come to in his case?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The decision of the Secretary for Scotland in this case has been delayed partly by the serious illness of the presiding Judge, and partly by the earnest desire of the Secretary for Scotland to go more fully into the cases. He regrets that, after giving it his most anxious consideration, and making the fullest possible inquiry, he sees no sufficient ground for interfering with the verdict of the jury.

PRIVATE BILLS—THE POLICE AND SANITARY REGULATIONS COMMITTEE.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether any of the Private Bills referred to the Police and Sanitary Regulations Committee contain clauses imposing restrictions on the liberty of the subject not imposed by the existing law; whether the Home Office has reported against these restrictions being enacted; and, whether, in the event of the Police and Sanitary Regulations Committee inserting these clauses, he will call the attention of the House to these clauses before the Bills containing them are passed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): There were clauses against Sunday processions in streets in the Kingston Improvement Bill, the Lancaster Corporation Bill, and the Llanelly Local Board Bill. In the case of the Kingston Bill, the clause was withdrawn by the Promoters. The clause in the Lancaster Bill has been struck out before the Committee this afternoon. The Llanelly Bill has not yet been disposed of. In all three cases the Home Office reported adversely to the clause against processions, as being matter for general legislation. The Under Secretary of State has, at my request, been in communication with the Chairman of the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations, and with the counsel to Mr. Speaker; with the result that the Chairman has promised to consult the Committee as to the possibility of bringing to the notice of the House, in a manner more effective than that hitherto adopted, those matters upon which the Standing Orders bind the Committee to make a Special Report. I should be unwilling to interfere with the discretion which the Standing Orders show that this House intended to vest in the Committee, and which it exercises after hearing local evidence and obtaining local information not usually accessible to any Public Department. Either the House must trust the Committee to exercise the powers which the Standing Orders give it, or must withdraw those powers altogether.

IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS —GOVERNMENT GRANTS.

MR. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Did he read the address, delivered in Belfast on the 3rd of April, at the annual conference of the Northern Union of Irish National Teachers; whether he is prepared to advise the Government to make a grant of at least £50,000 to that badly paid class, the Irish school teachers; and, whether he will say by what date a Bill will be brought in by the Government to put the Irish National teachers on equal grounds with the teachers of England and Scotland?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I have seen the address referred to, and greatly regret that anything I have said in this House should be interpreted as indicating that I do not sympathize with the difficulties under which the National school teachers may labour. It will always be my desire to do anything in my power to improve their position; but I am met by the same difficulty which my Predecessors have been unable to surmount—namely, that already the contribution from Treasury sources towards elementary education in Ireland is enormously greater per child than in England or Scotland, while the contribution from local sources is enormously less; and I cannot at present see my way to increasing this disparity, as the hon. Member seems to suggest.

Mr. O'HANLON: When will the Government introduce a Bill to improve the position of the Irish National teachers?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought I had already intimated that the Government have no proposals to make on the subject. I greatly regret our inability to do anything in the matter.

INDIA—CASE OF MR. TAYLER, LATE COMMISSIONER OF PATNA.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, with reference to the allegation that the India Office contains no record of any communications between Mr. Tayler, late Commissioner of Patna, and Sir Stafford Northcote in 1867, Whether the India Office possesses any record of communications between Mr. Tayler and Sir Stafford Northcote in 1868; whether it is a fact that such communications terminated, on the change of Government in that year, with an assurance from Sir Stafford Northcote to Mr. Tayler that his case would be fully investigated by the new Secretary of State; whether that assurance was ever communicated to the Duke of Argyll; and, whether the question submitted to the decision of the Duke of Argyll referred to the general merits of the case, or only to the particular point as to whether the case should then be re-opened?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): There is no official record of any communication between Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr. Tayler in 1868, other than that printed in Parliamentary Paper 308 of 1879. But a letter addressed to Lord Salisbury in 1877, which, being practically an application for honours, was, according to the usual practice of the India Office, dealt with personally by the Secretary of State, and not officially by the Secretary of State for India in Council, is still preserved in the India Office. This letter enclosed copies of the correspondence which Mr. Tayler alleged to have taken place between himself and Sir Stafford Northcote in 1867-8. There is no record of Sir Stafford Northcote's alleged assurance, other than a statement of Mr. Tayler; nor any record of such assurance having been communicated to the Duke of Argyll. There is, however, no ground for supposing that the case was not fully investigated by the Duke of Argyll. The questions submitted to the Duke of Argyll by Mr. Tayler's Memorial of October, 1868, were—(1) That the order for his removal from the office of Commissioner of Patna in 1857 might be cancelled; (2) that he might be recommended to Her Majesty for honorary distinction; (3) that pecuniary compensation might be awarded him.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked, if the hon. Member would inquire of the Duke of Argyll in regard to the matter?

Sir JOHN GORST said, his official experience had been too short to enable him to say whether such an inquiry would be proper; but if the Question were put on the Paper he would find out.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—CLAUSE 66—BORROWING CLAUSE.

Mr. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is the intention of the Government that Sub-Section (f.), Clause 66, of the Local Government Bill, should merely afford extended facilities for carrying on emigration in the same way as is now done by Boards of Guardians, or whether it is intended that it should give power to County Councils to borrow money for the purpose of colonization or the settlement of emigrants upon the land; and, whether the Government intend that, if such powers are given to County Councils, they shall be regarded as a substitute for any further action on the part of the Central Government?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): We hope that the sub-section of the Local Government Bill referring to emigration will have a more extended operation than the powers now possessed by Boards of Guardians; but my hon. Friend will see that it is not possible, within the limits of an answer to a Question, to deal with such important points as he raises. This can only be adequately done when the measure comes on for discussion in Committee.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS ACTS (1861) AMENDMENT ACT.

MR. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Local Government Board declines to certify any school or home under 25 & 26 *Vict.* c. 43, if the children at that school or home are sent out to any of the elementary schools in the neighbourhood; and, whether, if that is so, the Local Government Board will consider the desirability of relaxing the Rule?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It is not the case that it is the practice of the Local Government Board to refuse to certify a school under the 25 & 26 *Vict.* c. 43, on the ground that the children are sent out to an elementary school in the neighbourhood. There are many cases in which schools have been certified by the Board where the arrangement exists; but the statute only applies to schools; and to constitute an institution a "school," if there is no mental instruction given, the Board consider that there must be skilled industrial training.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE LICENSING CLAUSES —REFUSAL OF RENEWALS—COMPENSATION.

MR. CALEB WRIGHT (Lancashire, S.W., Leigh) asked the President of the Local Government Board, if the holder of a licence for the sale of intoxicating liquors commit an offence against the Licensing Laws, and his licence be endorsed for a first or second offence, in case the Licensing Authority refuse to renew the licence, will the holder of the licence or the owner of the licensed premises be entitled to compensation?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Before renewal of a licence can be refused without compensation under the provisions of the Bill, it is necessary that a report against the renewal should be made by the Justices. A report to this effect may be made after an endorsement of a conviction for either a first or second offence, or after an offence has been committed, although there has been no conviction.

EXCISE DUTIES (LOCAL PURPOSES) BILL — GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS FOR USE OF ROADS.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in the event of the Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill passing into law, it is intended that Government Departments, which in many cases are most extensive users of public roads for the purposes of haulage, shall pay contributions (in lieu of duties) to the Local Authorities in respect of such use, following the analogy of contributions from the Exchequer, in lieu of rates, in respect of Government property?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Vans and carts employed under contracts with the Government will be charged with the new duty; but there is no intention of imposing it on Artillery carts or ambulance waggons, or other vehicles which are not used for the conveyance of any goods or burden "in the course of trade."

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — IMPRISONMENT OF MR. JOHN ROCHE, OF WOODFORD.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the case that Mr. John Roche, of Woodford, now imprisoned in Galway Gaol under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, has been in hospital since Monday week, and is now suffering from acute lung disease; whether he will consider the propriety of ordering his release, with a view to sparing his life; and, whether it is the fact that no Visiting Justice has visited the gaol for some days past; and, if so, why not?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Owing to the short Notice, I have been unable to obtain a detailed reply. A Report was, however, received this morning at Dublin Castle from the medical officer of Galway Prison, stating that the condition of the health of Mr. Roche is such as to render him unfit for further confinement. In accordance with the practice in such cases, the Lords Justices have ordered his immediate release.

In reply to a further Question from Mr. CONYBEARE,

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the course pursued in the case of Mr. Roche had been the same as in the case of any other prisoner.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE COUNTY COUNCILS.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he is now prepared to lay upon the Table of the House the number of members of the County Council in each county of England and Wales?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, that he hoped to be able to lay on the Table a Paper by the time the House was in Committee on the Local Government Bill; but he was not sure that it would be ready before the Whitsuntide Recess.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—STERRY *v.* MASTERS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the decision of the Divisional Court, consisting of Mr. Justice Wills and Mr. Justice Field, that the contract in the case of "Sterry *v.* Masters" was not an agistment, will apply to cases of graziers on the Barking and Purfleet Marshes, in Essex?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), who replied, said: In answer to the hon. Member's Question, I have to state that the decision in "Sterry *v.* Masters" will not, in my opinion, apply to graziers in the Barking and Purfleet Marshes unless they have entered into an agreement to the same effect as that which was discussed in that particular case.

IMPERIAL DEFENCES—THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the forcible statements recently made by distinguished officers of the Navy and Army regarding the dangerous weakness and inefficiency of both Services to carry out their duties of national defence; and, whether, in view of these statements, he will assure Parliament that the Royal Commission which was promised by the Government to inquire into the system of administration will be appointed before Whitsuntide; and, if not, at what date?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Sir, I am not prepared to enter into any argument with my noble and gallant Friend as to the preamble of his Question; but I may say that the Government are by no means willing to admit the dangerous weakness of the Army and Navy, nor the inefficiency of either of those Services. I am, however, glad to be able to announce that the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) has consented to preside over the Royal Commission which is to inquire into the most important question which has been raised in the course of these discussions—namely, that of the administration of the defensive services of the country; but I may say that the reference of the question to that Commission is not quite so wide as was contemplated in the first instance. It has, however, been deemed advisable to frame it in such a manner that it will be possible for the Commission to report in the course of the present year, if not before the end of the present Session of Parliament. The Government have felt that it would be most undesirable, after full consideration, to ask the Commission to undertake a duty so wide as to render it impossible for us to obtain early advice on that which the Government and the country regard as the most important part of the question which has been raised in recent discussions. The Reference to the Commission has been made in these words—

> "To inquire into the civil and professional administration of the Naval and Military Departments, and the relation of those Departments to each other and to the Treasury; and

to report what changes in the existing system would tend to the efficiency and economy of the Public Service."

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD: How soon may the House expect to know the names of the Members of the Commission?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: It is our desire to form the Commission as rapidly as we can, consistently with the object which we have in view—to secure the service of the most able and experienced men in the discharge of the duties which will be assigned to them. The noble and gallant Lord must be aware that the selection of Members is a matter of exceeding difficulty. I hope, however, that we may be able to announce the names to the House in the course of the next week or 10 days; but I cannot enter into an engagement to do so, having regard to the importance of the decision with which we have to deal.

Captain PRICE (Devonport): Will the terms of the Reference enable the Commission to pronounce any opinion as to the efficiency of the Navy to carry out its duty of national defence?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: No. I distinctly exclude that from the Reference to any Commission whatever. In the debate which took place in March last it was stated that it was the duty of the Government of the day to determine what measure and quantity of force shall be employed in the Public Service, and we cannot devolve that upon a Commission.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.): I am bound to say that I have listened with great regret to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. As one of those who originated the debate which has resulted in the appointment of this Commission, I think it is necessary to express my extreme regret —— ["Order, order!"]

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. and gallant Gentleman is not entitled to interfere, except by putting a Question.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN: I was going to give Notice of a Motion.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. and gallant Member may do so at a later stage.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.): The First Lord of the Treasury will see that this is a totally different Reference to the one which was proposed before—namely, to inquire whether our means of defence were efficient, or whether they were not; and, as far as I am concerned, I think that Reference will hardly meet the agreement which was then come to.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I have preserved the terms of the Reference which I read out in March last. It was in these words:—

"The extent to which our naval and military systems, as at present organized and administered, are adapted to the national wants."

I have stated to-night that it has been found on examination that this Reference would be so wide as to render it impossible for any Commission to report within a reasonable period upon any one of the points about which the House and the country want advice and guidance. We have, therefore, taken the question of the organization and administration of the Departments as being in itself the question on which at present there is the greatest desire for guidance and direction. The Commission that will be appointed will, therefore, have to consider the existing administration and the relations of naval and military officers with the First Lord of the Admiralty and with the Secretary of State for War, and to ascertain for themselves whether or not that system of administration is best calculated to secure the efficiency of the Services and economy in administration.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN: In consequence of the—to my mind—somewhat unsatisfactory answer now given by the right hon. Gentleman, I beg to give Notice that at the earliest opportunity that the Rules of the House permit I shall call attention to the undertaking of the Government with regard to this Commission given by the Government at the instance of the hon. and gallant Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) and also to the narrowed terms of the Reference announced to-night; and I shall take the opinion of the House as to whether this is for the benefit of the Public Service.

Mr. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked, how far the inquiry of the new Commission would differ from that of the Commission that investigated the Civil Service Establishments?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: The inquiry is altogether different. It refers to the principles on which these Departments are administered. I may specially refer to the position of naval and military officers attached to the Departments as indicating the very grave questions that will be raised and investigated by the Commission to be presided over by the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS (ADMISSION OF STRANGERS.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) (for Mr. Atherley-Jones) (Durham, N.W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether facilities will be afforded to the House for considering and expressing an opinion upon the recommendations of the Committee with regard to the admission of strangers to the House, and more especially to the suggested curtailment of the privileges of Members in that respect, and the transference of duties from the officials of the House to the Police?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The Report of the Committee alluded to has only just been circulated; and I am not prepared to make any statement in regard to a matter which affects the convenience and privileges of the Members of this House until I have had fuller time for consideration and for consultation with the officers of the House and until the wishes of Members have been ascertained.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked, whether Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer knew that the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill had not been reprinted; and, whether, having regard to the fact that the Bill had been considerably altered in Committee, he would consent to postpone the third reading until it could be reprinted and circulated?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, the alterations which had been made in the Bill were alterations of detail, which could not be changed at the stage of third reading. He understood that the reprint of the Bill would be in the hands of hon. Members within an hour, and he certainly could not postpone the measure.

In reply to Mr. Childers (Edinburgh, S.),

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, the principal Business on Monday must be the Local Government (Electors) Bill, and the Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill would not be taken on that day.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MESSRS. WARBURTON AND CADDELL, R.M.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has obtained any information with regard to the statement which appeared in *The Daily Telegraph* yesterday—namely, that an old man, aged 80, and his wife, both persons in feeble health, had been sentenced to one month's imprisonment by Messrs. Warburton and Caddell, Resident Magistrates, for the offence of retaking possession of an outhouse on the farm from which they had been evicted; and whether, considering the age of the old couple, and the fact that the wife is in a very emaciated condition, the Government will see their way to order the reconsideration of this exceptionally harsh sentence?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have received no information as to the facts of the case to which the hon. and learned Gentleman refers, but I will inquire into it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Deputy Speaker do now leave the Chair."

GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF RAILWAYS.—RESOLUTION.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie), in rising to call attention to the present position of affairs with regard to the Railway Companies of the United Kingdom, and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the time has arrived when the Government should appoint a Committee or Royal Commission to take into consideration the question of acquiring the railways of the United Kingdom in accordance with the provisions contained in the General Railway Act of 1844,"

said, he thought that he need not apologize for introducing this subject, having regard to its immense importance. So far back as 1844 a very considerable section of the community was in favour of the purchase of railways by the State; but the Committee appointed in that year declared that they would deem it unwise to enter into any engagement which would tend to interfere with the action of the Legislature in future times. How much the State had lost in consequence could be seen from the figures he would give to the House. At that time the receipts of the Railway Companies amounted to between £5,000,000 and £6,000,000 sterling. Within eight years from 1844, that was in 1852, they exceeded £15,000,000, and within 21 years from that time they amounted to more than £32,000,000. In 1843, then, the receipts of the Railway Companies amounted to £4,500,000, while the capital employed exceeded £72,000,000. At the expiration of 21 years the growth had been enormous, the total revenue exceeding £32,000,000, and the capital employed amounting to £455,500,000. As to the present state and condition of railway enterprise in this country, according to the last Returns published by the House, dated December 31, 1886, the total capital employed in the railways amounted to nearly £828,500,000, and the total receipts from all sources exceeded £66,500,000, and the net receipts £30,000,000. As to the different Stocks at present constituting the total of £828,000,000, he found that of Ordinary Stock the capital exceeded £305,000,000, and Preferential and Guaranteed Stock £314,500,000, and of Debenture Stock and Loans £208,500,000. The amount which had been paid by way of dividend upon the Ordinary Capital exceeded £12,000,000; upon Preferential and Guaranteed Stock, £13,000,000; upon Debenture Stock and Loans, nearly £9,000,000. The average rate per cent upon Ordinary Stock had amounted to 3·94; upon Preferential Stock to 4·14; and upon Debenture Stock and Loans, 4·18. The average rate of interest paid had therefore slightly exceeded 4 per cent. These figures would show what a source of profit the railways might become to the State, and he considered that it was neither expedient nor possible for this country to take up an isolated position with regard to this matter. He would call the attention of hon. Members to the action of Germany, as well as that of Belgium. Although in France the system was similar to our own at present, yet France was moving in the direction which Germany and Belgium had pursued, and Switzerland was arranging within the next 15 years to take into the hands of the Government the entire control of the railway system throughout the Federal States. Nearly all the railway lines in our Australian Colonies had been constructed by the different Governments of those Colonies, and the opinion of the best-informed authorities was that their railways would constitute for the future an increasing source of revenue to the Colonies. On the question of economy, the disadvantage under the existing system was obvious if they compared rates current throughout the different countries. In Sweden the estimate was 30*s.* 4*d.* per ton per mile; France, 12*s.* 10*d.*; Great Britain, 11*s.* 3*d.*; Holland, 9*s.* 10*d.*; Austria, 9*s.* 3*d.*; Italy, 9*s.*; Germany, 7*s.*; Belgium, 6*s.* 10*d.*; United States, 5*s.* 3*d.* The English rates, therefore, were nearly 20 per cent above the average of Continental rates, and more than double those current in America; but if they took the two Continental countries which had control of the railways, they found that our rates were 85 per cent above those of Belgium, and 60 per cent above those of Germany, showing the enormous extent to which our traders and manufacturers were handicapped by the present system as compared with our two chief rivals. The terminal charges were also much higher in England than in other countries. Reverting to the question of capital, the amount required to be provided if the Government decided upon taking over the Railway Companies would depend entirely upon the terms of purchase, and the rates of interest proposed to be paid to existing shareholders. Even assuming that shareholders should receive the same rates of interest as at present, he estimated that by means of uniform rates, a superior management and consequent economy, a saving might be effected of not less than £10,000,000 sterling per annum. One of the principal reasons which could be urged in support of State purchase would be the material benefit resulting to our great industries, and the consequent stimulus to production which would follow. The rapid strides which certain Continental countries had been making, and the harder competition which our merchants and manufacturers had had to contend against, had resulted from no source more potent than the existing high tariff in this country as compared with Continental rivals. In addition to that it was notorious that certain Railway Companies had offered inducements in rates to Continental competitors for the importation of their products. He maintained that State purchase of railways would tend largely to remedy the disadvantages under which our great national industries laboured owing to the present system. Anyone conversant with the action of Railway Companies in the past would agree with him that their operation and action had been based entirely on a regard for selfish interests, and not either to further the trade and commerce of the Empire or to give the facilities and low rates which the community as a nation had a right to expect. The great object of a Government ought to be to develop to the utmost our internal resources, and to afford every facility for utilizing the products of every district of our country. Under the present system towns of which the industries had been decaying for years past, and where the consequent wealth and influence of the inhabitants were on the decline, could not possibly bring to bear that influence on Railway Companies which, by securing cheaper rates, might, at least, check that unfortunate condition of things, and the inhabitants of the more remote districts possessing advantages for certain manufactures by a uniform scale of rates would be able to develop new industries upon the introduction of capital which would follow the facilities afforded by cheap rates. While 1*d.* on the Income Tax realized a sum of about £1,500,000 sterling, 1*d.* upon the railway rates of the United Kingdom represented a sum of over £4,000,000, so that in a life-and-death struggle the Chancellor of the Exchequer would possess a financial source of boundless capabilities. The acquisition of railways by the State would enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the near future so to develop and increase the Revenue of the country as to proportionately lighten the burden of the taxation, while materially reducing the amount paid for the transit of goods and passengers. He felt convinced that the acquisition of the railway system would tend to stimulate further the energy, wealth, industry, and national credit of the country, and that every industrial enterprize would thus become developed to its utmost capacity, so that we would be enabled in a manner unparalleled in past history, great as that had been, to retain for generations to come our foremost position among the nations, and a hold of those markets which it was the complaint of politicians of every Party we were fast losing from no cause more than from the fact that one of the greatest motors of commercial enterprize had been allowed by successive Governments to become a monopoly, to the discredit of the country and to the disadvantage of the entire population.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) said, he would have preferred to have seconded the Motion after the Mover of the Amendment to the Motion (Sir Julian Goldsmid) had addressed the House, because then he would have known on what arguments the Amendment of the hon. Baronet was based. The terms of the Amendment were—

"The principles laid down in the Resolution of 28th April 1874 ought not to be departed from."

That was a very much larger question than the purchase of the Irish railways, though he was persuaded that the same arguments applied in both cases. As to the Irish railways, he ventured to say that if the sage advice of Lord Melbourne had been followed in 1838 many of the troubles in Ireland, economical, social, and political, would probably by this time have disappeared. If the hon. Member for South St. Pancras (Sir Julian Goldsmid) had been able to bring forward any argument of any weight in support of his contention that it was financially inexpedient for the State to purchase the railways, the other two heads of the argument might not have been insisted upon. But he (Mr. Howell) contended, on the contrary, it was financially expedient that the State should purchase the railways. It was financially expedient when the inquiry was instituted in 1844. The great misfortune to the country was that at that time the House did not see fit to follow up the indication given them by the Committee; but he thought the House was more at fault in 1865, when it refused to carry out the Act passed by the House. It was very singular why in 1865 the House did not see fit to put in motion the powers of the Act of 1844. On that occasion the House refused because the terms were exorbitant, because it was thought that the terms could not be carried out to the advantage of the country. That depended upon circumstances—it depended upon whether they took one isolated case, or whether they regarded the matter from a broad point of view. Taking the case broadly, as it was formulated in the Act of 1844, the terms were elastic enough to cover whatever was needed at the present day. Financially inexpedient. Surely, when by a mere stroke of the pen the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) —who was so wonderful at finance—could convert the National Debt; there were many Railway Companies perfectly willing to accept the scrip of the Government in lieu of that already in existence. A great number of railways, that to-day could pay no dividends at all, would be able to pay dividends if they were under the control and management of the State. But, taking the case as it stood, what did they find? As his hon. Friend (Mr. Watt) had said, the fact was that about 4·8 per cent would cover the entire dividends paid on all the railways in the United Kingdom. Many of the Companies could pay no dividends, and possibly one of the reasons was the way in which they had been hampered by other Companies that were able to pay dividends. As a matter of fact, our present railway system was ruinously expensive in every way. It was expensive to the great body of the shareholders. Notwithstanding that, the average profit was something over 4 per cent. A certain number of the railways paid considerably over that amount. Under judicious management all the railways could participate in the advantages of the immense traffic there was in the country. One of the reasons why some of the Irish railways could pay no dividends at all was that Railway Companies in Ireland had the very singular habit of running their trains in such a way that they could not by any means accommodate one another. Passengers frequently found they arrived at a station just after a train by which they had desired to travel had started. He could quite understand that under such a system of management many of the Irish Companies were unable to pay dividends. But if the lines were under the control of the State, not only the particular bondholders or shareholders, but the whole nation would be considered —the advantages would be with the nation at large. Not only did he contend that it would be financially sound, as a mere matter of business, for the State to purchase the railways, but that it would be of immense advantage to the traders of the country. They had heard a great deal, both in and out of the House, of the depression of trade, and of the way in which many people were handicapped in their business. One of the reasons why many of our agriculturists were not able to compete with the foreigner was that every obstacle was thrown in his way by the Railway Companies. Cattle and corn could be brought across the Atlantic and carried through England at a cheaper rate than they could be carried from two points in this country. Girders could be manufactured on the Continent and sent *vid* Grimsby to Sheffield at an immensely less cost than home manufactured girders could be carried from Grimsby to Sheffield or from Sheffield to Grimsby. This was the fault of the Railway Companies, which he hoped would be remedied by the Railway Rates Bill. He maintained that it was wise that the nation should take into its own hands an immense monopoly of this description, and administer it, not for the benefit of the shareholders of any particular railway, but for the benefit of the entire nation. He knew, judging from the observations made in a debate upon this subject in 1874, he would be met by the remark that it was not desirable to take away from individuals and place in the hands of the State too many matters. He held that opinion, but he also maintained that the State had the right to control everything in connection with our body politic. The railways had become an immense monopoly—possibly the greatest monopoly in the world—and from his point of view the State would have a perfect right to interfere with it, and especially to interfere on the lines of the Act that had already been passed. But another reason urged for the Amendment—and, of course, he was only able to anticipate the arguments of the hon. Baronet (Sir Julian Goldsmid) by referring to *Hansard*, where he found the terms of the Amendment moved on a previous occasion—was that the purchase of the railways would unduly enlarge the patronage of the Government. He would not have been surprised at such an argument being used by a Member holding views similar to his own with regard to politics generally; but one would have thought the hon. Baronet would not have objected to enlarge the patronage of the Government. Speaking broadly, he (Mr. Howell) was not so much opposed to enlarging the patronage of the Government. What he wanted to see was the patronage of the Government wisely bestowed. If the patronage of the Government was bestowed for the benefit of the entire nation there was no harm in giving to the Government a large amount of patronage. The misfortune in the past had been that this patronage had been used, not for the benefit of the many, but for the advantage of the few. He fancied that, with the extension of our representative institutions, that was not likely to recur in the same ratio. But there was a third argument used by the opponents of this proposal, and that was that the pressure of Business in Parliament would be seriously increased. His experience of Parliament had been by no means equal to that of the hon. Baronet; but he ventured to think the effect would be in a contrary direction. The fact was that a large amount of time was taken up now by the consideration of Railway Bills by Committees sitting upstairs. A very considerable portion of this time would be saved if the railways were under the control of the State, to say nothing of very great expense. To-day the Board of Trade had a very great deal to do with the management in an indirect way of railways, and it cost the nation a very large sum of money to keep the Railway Companies straight. Then there was, in addition, the Railway Commission, which had been sitting for many years, and whose powers were, he supposed, to be enlarged by the Railway Rates Bill. By the same Railway Commission, or some such Commission, the entire railways of the State could be managed with more economy and better effect than they were managed to-day. It had been said by many men, who were capable of judging, that the absolute cost of management could be reduced by one-fourth. If that were so, the State would derive a splendid revenue, and that very speedily. As to the time of Parliament being wasted, it was wasted now, and for what purpose? For the purpose of preventing free competition in railways. They heard a great deal about free competition and not interfering with the right of contract, yet Railway Companies fought each other year after year, spending large sums of money belonging to the shareholders in the first instance, but which had to be paid by the public in the long run, and for what reason? Simply to prevent that free competition that was intended to be enlarged by the Act of 1844. He fancied that, instead of enlarging and increasing the pressure of Business in Parliament, so far as this particular matter was concerned, it would do just the reverse. Whatever time was spent upon railway matters would be spent for the benefit of the entire country. The main reason why he supported this Motion—and it was no new question as far as he was concerned, because he had held this opinion for over 30 years—was that great advantage would accrue to the nation. He thought that an immense development of home industries would result. Our home industries would be able to compete with the foreigners, if they were not handicapped as they were to-day. It was all very well to deprecate competition on the part of the foreigner. It was all very well for some hon. Members to be looking forward to the time when we might be able to resort to Protection in regard to our industries. Let them remove the obstacles in the way of the industries at home. If they did that they would have little reason to fear the competition that might take place in respect of many matters. America, if she were only wise enough to remove her protective tariffs, would prove a great competitor with us. France was no great competitor of ours, and had not been for years. Germany, however, with her State railways, must be regarded as our greatest competitor. Belgium, with her management of railways, and now Switzerland with her railways were competing with us, and certainly

France had an advantage over us with regard to the control of the traffic of the railways. What was proposed to be done by the Railway Rates Bill was to regulate to some extent our railways with regard to tariffs, and so forth. That was all very well, but what was asked by the supporters of the Motion was that the State should assume some kind of authority with regard to railways. He believed that the purchase of the railways by the State would prove of immense advantage to the country, and for that reason he had pleasure in seconding the Motion of his hon. Friend.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, the time has arrived when the Government should appoint a Committee or Royal Commission to take into consideration the question of acquiring the Railways of the United Kingdom, in accordance with the provisions contained in the General Railway Act of 1844,"—(*Mr. Watt,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) said, the hon. Member who opened the discussion (Mr. Watt) appeared to have ignored the fact that the House of Commons had, on more than one occasion, considered the question whether it was desirable that any portion of the railway system of the United Kingdom should be purchased by the State. He (Sir Julian Goldsmid) remembered at least three long and important discussions upon this great question. They applied only to a small section of the railways of the country—namely, the Irish railways; but he referred to the matter in order to show that there was something in the history of the past to which it would have been well that the hon. Member (Mr. Watt) should have turned his attention. The first debate took place in 1872, the second in 1873, and the third in 1874. In the Division in 1873 there voted for the purchase of the Irish railways 65 Members, and there voted against that purchase 197. The Motion was brought forward by the late Lord Claud Hamilton, and at that time they were distinctly told there were several reasons, connected with the poverty of the country and the large number of small Companies in Ireland, which ought to induce Parliament to consider the question of purchasing those railways, and which did not apply to the railways in England or in Scotland. The same thing was repeated in 1874, when the Motion was made by Mr. Blennerhassett, and opposed by himself (Sir Julian Goldsmid). Upon that occasion there voted in favour of the proposed words standing part of the Question 56 Members, while there voted against it 241, and there voted for his (Sir Julian Goldsmid's) Amendment, which the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) had just referred to, 235 Members, and against 156. That being the more recent history of the question of purchasing a small part of the railway system of this country, he should have expected that the hon. Member, who, with great courage, proposed that the country should go into a business, which would involve an expenditure of capital of more than £1,200,000,000, would have given them some strong reasons for departing from the principles laid down in the Resolution adopted by the Government of Lord Beaconsfield. But the hon. Member had done nothing of the kind. He had quoted a considerable number of figures from the Statistical Abstract of the United Kingdom, to which all of them had access, but which merely went to show that the railway capital had increased enormously in the last few years; and that, as far as they were concerned, they could not complain at the high rate of interest which was paid upon that capital to the shareholders. But the real question was, was there any great, any overwhelming necessity which ought to compel them to embark on this new business? He looked to the authority of great men, who had experience of Public Business in this country, and he asked himself, what did they say upon this matter? He found that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), in 1873, uttered these very significant words—

> "Nothing but a case that might be said to amount to very nearly a rigid necessity could warrant the State in undertaking a trade or business."—(3 *Hansard*, [215] 1158.)

That was a proposition in which he (Sir Julian Goldsmid) entirely agreed, and upon that ground, if upon no other, he should be prepared to oppose the proposal of the hon. Member for the Camlachie Division of Glasgow (Mr. Watt). There was no paramount necessity—in fact, there was no necessity at all—for the adoption of the present proposal. But if there were a necessity, what would be the result? Again, he referred to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, for that right hon. Gentleman had said—

> "It was totally impossible to suppose that if the State attempted to work railways directly, and under principles of Parliamentary responsibility, the persons entrusted with the carrying out of that system would not be liable to pressure, legitimate and illegitimate in every sense, from every quarter."—(*Ibid.* 1163.)

There were many other disadvantages which would ensue upon the purchase of the railways by the State. In the first place, they must remember that the present capital of the railways was nearly £900,000,000 sterling, and that to purchase the railways of this country would involve an expenditure of something like £1,200,000,000; because if the capital paid 4 per cent, and if they were to give 2¾ per cent to the holders of the Stock, it was perfectly obvious that they must give a much larger nominal amount of capital. That was a serious undertaking, for which he thought Parliament was not prepared. But they must remember the constant pressure which was brought to bear in former times upon Members of Parliament, and upon the Government, even with regard to very small and unimportant posts connected with the Post Office. What would not happen with regard to the 300,000 *employés* who were now under railway control? They would have constant Motions made in the House with regard to salaries, with reference to the promotion of officials, and respecting the superannuation of officials, with which the House of Commons would have to deal. Then they would have a higher and a larger class of questions. One town would consider itself unfairly treated in comparison with another. One town would consider that insufficient advantages were given to it, and complain that it had not sufficient terminal facilities, and so on. It was easy to see that the House and the Government would be overwhelmed if they undertook that immense business. The hon. Member imagined that the possession of the railways by the State would promote the industries of the country. How would it do that? Why, the moment the Government took the management of any undertaking, they did their best to stifle private enterprize. What had been the experience of Government management in many cases? Had they not heard of Dockyard scandals, and of War Office discredit? Were they not going to have a Commission appointed to inquire whether the State was doing its duty in one of the most elementary departments of the work which was entrusted to it? They were told by hon. Members opposite, and by hon. Members on that side of the House, that the State had not done its duty, that the Admiralty and the War Office did not fairly allow the country to be defended in the way it ought to be, because their work was badly done, and when they were told this day after day, it was proposed to impose upon the responsible Government the duty of managing the greatest financial and commercial undertaking in the world. It was an impossibility, for reasons which could be given, that the Government could undertake such onerous and enormous duties. They were told just now by the hon. Member for North-East Bethnal Green that the method of managing this great Railway State Department would be by means of a Commission, and that that Commission would be more economical than the Boards of all the great Railway Companies. He (Sir Julian Goldsmid) supposed there was nobody who had had greater experience of railway matters than Mr. Moon, the Chairman of the London and North-Western Railway Company, and what had he said? He had said that every member of a Board of a great Company like his should undertake a particular section of work and be responsible for it, and he (Sir Julian Goldsmid) was informed by a gentleman who had been connected with that Board that each man had to do separate work, and that each man had as much to do as he could fairly undertake. That meant that if they had a great Railway Board it would be impossible for them to manage all the railways in the United Kingdom. They would be obliged to have a large number of Committees. They would bring all the railways under Government management and place them under Committees, so that, in fact, pretty much the same system as the present would prevail, only that the Government would be responsible, and that there would be frequent discussions in the House of Commons upon that responsibility. He did not wish to labour the question; but it was well known that if the House of Commons in 1873 and 1874 was of opinion that it was undesirable to add to the commercial relations of this country by purchasing the Irish railways, it would be all the more unwise to add to them by purchasing the railways in this country, because the new House of Commons ought to remember that the business of the Government was to govern, and not to trade. It was quite right, in the interests of the public, to regulate the method and management by means of the Railway Commission, and by rules established by Parliament; but it did not follow, for that reason, that they ought to obtain this immense monopoly. He believed that the desire of all the best railway men in the country was, by reducing the rates, to serve the public as far as they possibly could; and he thought they would find that there was no country in the world—and he knew a great deal about foreign countries—where there were as many trains and where the public convenience was so largely consulted, and where, on the whole, the people were served better than in England. He had lived for many years in France, and he knew that, although there was a slight difference in the price of a ticket per mile between the French and the English ticket, it cost him more to travel in France than in England, for the very reason that every pound of surplus luggage was charged for; whereas, in England, there was scarcely any charge for luggage.

Mr. HOWELL said, he did not say that the railways in France belonged to the State.

Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID said, that certain lines in France were laid down, and Companies were authorized to work them upon certain conditions. The Companies were under certain regulations. In Germany the trains were few and far between. He had travelled much in Germany, and he had seen a good deal of the proceedings of German railways. No complaint was scarcely ever attended to, because they could not complain to anybody but Government officials, who would not forward them to headquarters. Then there were hard-and-fast rules which must be accepted by people, whether they liked it or not. What was the difference between England and Germany in this respect? If hon. Gentlemen took the trouble to inquire, they would find that there was hardly a main line in England on which a train did not run at least once in half-an-hour. There was nothing of the kind in Germany; and he was satisfied that if we had State management here, similar to that in Germany, the hon. Member (Mr. Howell) would be the very first to revolt against it. The hon. Member referred to Switzerland; but there was a more important instance which he entirely refrained from mentioning—namely, that of Italy. Italy found that it was impossible for the State to manage the railways satisfactorily, and having purchased the railways they immediately created two great Companies to manage the railways instead of the State. These Companies held a lease of the railways, and regulations were laid down for the management of the lines by the State. He considered that the right system was that the Government should not hold, and should not work, railways, but should control their management on behalf of the public where there was any necessity for doing so; and he was satisfied the interests of this country would be best consulted by not increasing the debt, by not undertaking this immense administrative and Parliamentary responsibility, but by leaving matters as they were, with such improvements of the law as the wisdom of Parliament might from time to time suggest. He understood that he could not move the Amendment of which he had given Notice, because the proposal of the hon. Member (Mr. Watt) was itself an Amendment. He was certain, however, that the Government would not give the Commission asked for; because, if they did, it would imply that they were prepared to accept the principle of the Amendment of the hon. Member. Knowing the Government's past history and present opinions, he was satisfied they would not do anything of the kind;

and, therefore, he contented himself with opposing the proposition of the hon. Gentleman.

LORD HENRY BRUCE (Wilts, Chippenham) said, that in Canada and Australia, under Government management, the people had far more lines in proportion than we had in this country. He noticed that in the observations that had been made nothing had been said as to what would be for the interest of the country. If previous Governments had done their duty in this matter the present system would never have been maintained, and the railways of the country would have been conducted in the interests of the nation, and not for the benefit of private individuals. He supported the Motion, because all that they now asked for was that a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into the subject, and sooner or later this great question must come to the front and be encountered.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury) said, that he was unable to support the proposal. If he thought the suggestion of the hon. Member for the Camlachie Division of Glasgow (Mr. Watt) would supply a remedy for the grievances which they complained of in connection with Railway Companies, he (Sir Bernhard Samuelson) might be disposed to look with favour upon the appointment of the Parliamentary Commission which the hon. Member asked for; but he saw no possibility of any good arising in that direction from such a Commission. If the result of the deliberations of a Commission should be a recommendation that the railways should be purchased by the State, he believed that no Government would adopt it, and, in his judgment, they would be perfectly right in refusing to do so. We had had our own experience of the State purchase of the telegraphs. At the head of the postal telegraphs was a most efficient officer, Mr. Preece; and everyone acknowledged that that gentleman was a person of great scientific attainments, and quite capable of managing his Department, which, in fact, he did manage in a most excellent way; but in the purchase of the telegraphs we acquired at a cost of £11,000,000 what we might have constructed for £3,000,000 or £4,000,000; and for railways that we might construct for £400,000,000, we should have to pay £1,200,000,000. After we purchased the telegraphs, there was a new invention, the telephone; and in other countries this invention had been enormously developed; but it had not been so largely developed in this country, simply because it would interfere with our vested interests in the telegraphs. In all such things there was nothing like private enterprize for promoting their development; indeed, he might say that the Mover of the Resolution had himself proved that, and had answered himself when he told the House that between the years 1844 and 1865—that was in 21 years—the income of the railways had increased from £5,000,000 to £32,000,000. Would anyone believe that such an increase, which meant an equivalent increase in the accommodation afforded to the country, would have occurred if the development of the railway system had been left to the Government? But it was notorious how badly the Government in this country, at all events, managed all industrial undertakings. The Government had been the shipbuilders of the Navy for he was afraid to say how many years, and at the end of that time they were told at the beginning of the Session that things had hitherto been so badly managed that by some new regulations our ships were to be built 40 per cent cheaper than before. Whether that economy would actually be realized was another and a very different question. So also with the construction of our artillery, we were constantly hearing of guns parting from their trunnions, of guns losing their muzzles, and of their lining tubes being cracked from end to end. He believed that in Germany railways were well managed by joint Boards of Government officials and commercial representatives, with regard to the interests of traders as distinct from those of passengers. In this country we had a competition of a curious kind between the railways themselves—to carry goods and passengers, not at their cheapest rate, but in the shortest time. In many cases facilities were afforded which were more than were really necessary, and they had to be paid for whether they were wanted or not. Mr. Oakley, of the Great Northern Railway, had told him that the competition between the railways in the manufacturing districts was as to who was to carry goods and to keep them longest in warehouses; and the result was that enormous warehouses had been built in order that customers who did not require goods immediately might have them warehoused. For affording these facilities rates were much increased, for those who did not require these facilities had to pay equally with those who did require them. The payment for this kind of facility, which was afforded at great cost, might well be regulated so that there should only be a claim for payment on account of services actually required and asked for, and to this extent the provisions of the Railway Rates Bill of the Government, or, if he might allude to it, of his own Bill, would, no doubt, be of considerable service. There were three trains starting at the same time from London for Manchester, and each, it might be, carrying very few passengers, and because they afforded these facilities the Companies could not afford to reduce their fares. While he was altogether opposed to the acquisition of railways by the State, he thought that much might be done by regulation and by amalgamation. One advantage would be a fusion of the directorates. But, of course, measures would have to be taken for the protection of the public. The Midland Company recently came to Parliament with a Bill asking for power to make arrangements with six or seven other railways for a joint purse, and that might have been a good thing for the railways, but perhaps not for the public, unless there had been full provision for the protection of public interests. He had insisted on clauses being introduced giving that protection, and the Railway Companies assented to their introduction; but in the end they withdrew the Bill. Without such protection was afforded, it might be doubted whether railways would care for the public interests. If amalgamation could be effected under proper conditions to be laid down by Parliament, it might be accompanied by a reasonable reduction of rates, and the public might be benefited and the railways too. That he believed to be the alternative to the purchase of railways by the State. It was not surprising that the question had been brought forward, because the Companies did things which could not be justified, and the traders were feeling their action more and more. It was true that the merchandize rates on the Continent, particularly those of Germany and Belgium, were lower than those of this country. We had to compete with the manufacturers who used those railways, and the competition was becoming keener every day. Antwerp was as magnificent a port as any in Europe, and it enjoyed facilities of cheap transport from North Germany, from the manufacturing districts of Westphalia, from those of Belgium, and even from France. It was not surprising that Glasgow should have moved in this matter, because Glasgow suffered from the competition of Belgian manufacturers and engineers. Still, he did not believe that State purchase of railways would be a remedy. A truer remedy seemed to be amalgamation under proper conditions imposed by the State, and such amalgamation would do far more for the commerce of the United Kingdom and for the railway proprietors—because the two interests were bound up together—than any legislation such as that contemplated by the Railway Rates Bill could possibly effect.

Mr. J. C. BOLTON (Stirling) said, he agreed with much that had fallen from his hon. Friend the Member for Banbury (Sir Bernhard Samuelson), but he thought that he had taken a wrong moment for the ventilation of his particular views with regard to the railway system on the Continent. But while, undoubtedly, he had obtained a large amount of information on these matters a year or two ago, he thought he had probably forgotten that his facts were for the most part dispelled by the late Mr. Grierson. Undoubtedly, cases might be found in which the rates and fares charged on the Continent would compare favourably with those in this country; but it was not only the rates charged, but there was the question also as to the work performed for those rates. They all knew, or ought to know, when they expressed decided opinions on points of this kind, that the speed at which merchandize was carried was very different in this country from that with which it was carried on the Continental railways. His hon. Friend had referred to the fact that there were many more trains in England than were actually necessary for the convenience of the public. Undoubtedly, if they looked to the convenience of one man alone, there were far too many trains running at the present time, and he was prepared to admit that, even looking at it from the point of view of the public as a whole, there were too many trains running; but deprive the public of one of these trains, and he said the result was many and repeated complaints. Referring to the remarks of the Mover of this Resolution, he (Mr. Bolton), speaking as a railway shareholder, and having had many years' experience of the management of railways, said that railway shareholders would welcome very heartily a scheme for the purchase of railways by the Government if they considered only their own pecuniary interest. But he was not of that opinion, if he could transpose himself for a moment from the position of being a railway shareholder and director into one of the general public; for he was quite certain that the public would not derive those advantages which they anticipated, if once the railways became the property of the State. Undoubtedly, there would be enormous advantages to be derived from concentration of management, and to that extent he agreed entirely with the hon. Baronet (Sir Julian Goldsmid), when he said it would be a great advantage to the public were amalgamation of railways possible without extravagant cost. But he did not think that any Railway Company would, without some prospect of strong help from the Government, propose to amalgamate with any of its neighbours. Speaking for one line in which he was interested, he said that the cost of the fight would absorb nearly the whole of the ordinary revenue of the year. The hon. Member who introduced the subject based his argument, to some extent, upon the great advantages that would have accrued, judged by the state of railways 20 or 23 years ago. But if the railways had been taken over by the Government in 1865, was there a sane person who could imagine that, under Government control, the country would have been covered by such a network of railways as at present existed? It was competition that had done that; but competition was killed the moment a Government took over railways. The hon. Gentleman told the House also that this country was the only one where the Government had not made some progress in obtaining the control of railways; but he had forgotten the United States of America, where, perhaps, there were as many miles of railway as existed on the whole Continent together; and, as far as he was aware, not a single mile of those railways was under Government control, nor had any proposal been made for their acquisition by the State. Then, the hon. Member told the House that railway directors had been governed in their conduct by selfishness, and not for the general public advantage. Why, how could a railway director be expected in that sense to act without any regard for his own interest? The whole interest of railway shareholders and directors lay in the development, as much as possible, of the trade and commerce of the country. To be selfish in the sense in which he would have the House judge of railway directors would be suicidal; it would mean to kill the traffic by high rates, or the withdrawal of facilities, whereas the whole object and purpose of railway directors was to see how they might best serve the public, which was by increasing the facilities they afforded. He also, as well as the hon. Baronet below him, had travelled a good deal on the Continent, and he must say that he always felt great delight when he left a Continental railway carriage and entered an English one. Let hon. Gentlemen picture to themselves the position of men of business living 10, 15, or 20 miles from London. If the railways of this country were managed as railways are managed in Germany, they would have men hurrying away from their breakfasts in the morning to get to the railway station 20 minutes before the train started. There they would be locked up in a pen, and when the train was about to leave would have to rush out, and as many of them as were able find places. Those who could not get into the train would have wait for another, for the idea of putting on carriages for the accommodation of the public was a thing unknown on the Continent; whereas they all knew it to be the usual custom in England immediately to put on additional carriages whenever more passengers presented themselves than the train would accommodate. Therefore, he said that those gentlemen who expected to find increased facilities under Government management upon the German system would awake to very great disappointment. The hon. Baronet below him had spoken of storage being provided by Railway Companies in a general way. He did not quite follow him; but he did know, in connection with the Railway Company to which he had referred, that stores were being built as a means of affording free storage, or at a small charge, with a view of attracting more traffic to the line; but he must refuse altogether acquiescence with his assurance that it was the custom of any Railway Company in this Kingdom to retain goods in warehouses for purposes of their own. He would not trouble the House with any further remarks on that point. He could say a great deal more on the comparison of charges which had been made against Railway Companies of misusing their privileges; but he imagined they would have shortly a more full discussion of the subject in connection with the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, and he should therefore defer such remarks he had to make until that measure was before the House.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The hon. Member who has just sat down remarked on the academic character of this debate. I may add, that I do not remember ever hearing so important a proposal supported by weaker arguments. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Camlachie Division of Glasgow (Mr. Watt), desires that steps should be taken by the appointment of a Commission to consider the advisability of the purchase of the railways by the State in accordance with the principles laid down in the Act of 1844. I think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) will bear me out in this opinion—namely, that Parliament did not intend at that time to lay down the principle that the railways ought to be purchased and managed by the State, but merely to make provision for perfect freedom on the part of its Successors in dealing with railways constructed after the passing of the Act. Therefore, the hon. Member who has made this proposal has no right to refer to the Act of 1844 as in any way establishing the principle that the railways ought to become the property of the State, or to be managed by the State. But I am convinced that if Parliament should attempt to undertake the purchase of the railways, it would be found practically impossible to purchase them under the provisions of the Act of 1844. There are more than 2,000 miles of railway, many of them parts of the great main lines of this country, which were constructed before the passing of that measure, and which, therefore, would not come under its provisions. The Government have no right to accept the proposal of the hon. Member unless they can agree to the principle of the purchase and management of the railways by the State. In my opinion, nothing could be more injurious than the policy advocated by the hon. Member. There is no ground for it. If it were acted upon, many of the evils which he has alluded to as existing at present would be aggravated, and we should certainly be brought face to face with new evils of far greater magnitude than any which we now know. The House has been warned of the enormous magnitude of the operation which the hon. Member contemplates so calmly. It has been said that the purchase of the railways could not be effected without adding £1,200,000,000 to the Debt. Whether that would be the exact addition or not, the sum would certainly be immense—so immense as to cause a financial disturbance in the Money Market of a kind which might even affect the credit of this country. Of course, we should, to a certain extent, obtain value for our money, but only to a certain extent. The purchase of the telegraphs ought to be a lesson to us. We all remember how, owing to the necessity of taking prospective increment into consideration, the State had to pay far more for the telegraphs than it would have paid had it constructed them itself. Ever since the purchase, the Government have been pressed without pause to cheapen telegraphic communication and to extend it, and the result has been a deficit last year of £500,000. When we compare the far greater cost of railway construction and management with the cost of telegraphic construction and management, we may imagine what would be the cost to the State of carrying out the proposal of the hon. Member below the

Gangway. When this proposal has been made on former occasions it has always been stated that if the Government should become the owner of the railways it ought to lease them to Companies or individuals. I will not detain the House with arguments to show that no such arrangement could secure the objects aimed at, for both the hon. Member who moved this Amendment and the hon. Member who seconded it distinctly stated that they desired the railways to be worked as well as purchased by the State. This means that the Government should undertake a commercial enterprize of the greatest magnitude. Everyone will, I think, admit that the Government has no right to enter into competition with private individuals merely for the purpose of profit. It is, therefore, essential to the case of the hon. Member that he should make out that the railways would be better managed by the Government than they are at present. Would they? I do not believe it for a moment. Our railway management is not perfect; it might be improved; but I believe that, owing to the financial success that has attended much of our railway enterprize in England, the Railway Companies do better work at a cheaper rate than any other railways in the world. There may be lower rates and greater punctuality on the Continent; but the public pay for these by having less frequent and slower trains and great delay in the delivery of goods.

Mr. J. C. BOLTON: I did not suggest that there was greater punctuality on the Continent; quite the reverse.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Well, that is an argument that is sometimes used. The great objection to the hon. Member's proposal is that the Government could not manage the railways so well as they are managed now, and that if such management was attempted it would involve this country in grave political evils. Something has been said about the mismanagement of our naval administration. Many of us would be disposed to admit that such maladministration has in some degree been due to the political representation of the Dockyard Boroughs. This proposal would involve our taking into the service of the Government an army of railway *employés* numbering about 367,000. Differences between the employed and the employers sometimes occur in the railway service of a very serious character. These, under the present system, are settled on their merits, and without any reference to political influences. I would decline to introduce the curse of political influence and Party sympathy into the railway service of England. I think it would be a great public evil if the business of this House were to be smothered by innumerable Questions as to the disposal of railway patronage, the pay or the grievances of railway *employés*, the punctuality of trains, the rates and charges on the Government railways—all the multifarious details of railway management which would perpetually become the subject of question and debate in this House. I should be very sorry indeed to see the Government of this country laid open by such a system to the temptation which more than one foreign Government has not been able to resist—namely, the temptation of bribing localities by concessions to them of better terms for railway working and greater railway accommodation, and the construction of branch lines at the expense of the general taxpayers. The Royal Commission of 1865 reported, with only one dissentient—namely, Sir Rowland Hill—against a proposal of this kind. Since that time great changes have been made in the political system of this country. Public corruption, rather than private bribery, is the danger of an extended franchise, and no greater instrument of public corruption could well be devised than the ownership and management of the railways by the State. Reference has been made to the evil of railway monopoly. I admit that some of the anticipated methods of competition against railways have not been realized. There has never been any real road competition with the railways, and competition among the railways themselves has been reduced by amalgamations and working agreements, though not always to the public disadvantage. In this country, however, it is impossible that there should ever be complete railway monopoly, for it has been calculated that at three-fifths of the railway stations there is competition by sea. There is also competition from the artificial waterways of the country.

I would suggest that hon. Members would do much more towards preventing railway monopoly if they were to devote their attention to the possibility of the State acquiring the canals. The canals would not require a great rolling stock, or a large staff for their management. The carriage upon the canals has always been in the hands of private carriers, and possibly they might be purchased at a reasonable cost; and if they were owned by those who were able and willing to develop them, the traffic might be largely increased. Parliament has tried, but hitherto vainly, to prevent canals passing into the hands of Railway Companies, and I believe that there is a strong desire among the authorities of our great towns that some further step should be taken to preserve the competition of our artificial waterways. On this point I have only expressed my own opinion, and I am far from saying that there would not be grave objections to the acquisition by Government even of our canals. But from every point of view it is a more feasible and arguable proposal than that which we are discussing this evening. The railways have not, and are not likely ever to have, such a monopoly as would justify the heroic remedy which the hon. Member suggests. By means of legislation such as the Railway Rates Bill, by the competition of our artificial waterways and of the sea, I think it possible to preserve and safeguard the freedom of the commerce of the country. It must be admitted that the Railway Companies have themselves done a great deal to develop industry. What can have been more advantageous than the enormous third-class traffic on railways which has been promoted by the generous treatment of the public on the part of the Railway Companies? Treatment which was adopted by the Companies at the risk of their dividends, though it has ultimately resulted in their own pecuniary benefit. In conclusion, I can only repeat that I think that there is hardly any project that could be brought forward which is so little warranted from a financial, commercial, or political point of view, as that proposed by the hon. Member.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): There is now a long interval between the present time and 1844; but the circumstances under which the Act of that year was passed are sufficiently fresh in my recollection for me to respond to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. I do not think he has mis-stated the general intention and effect of that Act. Undoubtedly, the idea of State purchase of railways at that time was in an undeveloped state. It was quite impossible at the time to form any accurate judgment as to the extension of the railway system, and it appeared right that measures should be taken to establish the freedom of the State as to dealing with Railway Companies; but whether it was to be on the general basis of control or purchase it was then absolutely impossible to decide. It is almost ludicrous to look back upon the infant state of the whole question at that period when compared with the enormous development it has now attained. As this subject is of great interest, perhaps I may mention a fact which is within my own knowledge and recollection—a fact of very considerable interest—as being illustrative of the manner in which this vast subject has passed beyond all human computation of the possibilities it at first appeared to involve. About the year 1841 or 1842, when I was at the Board of Trade, the question arose whether there could be a railway into Scotland. I think at that time we owed a great deal to a gentleman well known in connection with railways, as a very bold, and not at all an unwise, railway projector—I mean Mr. Hudson. It is a great mistake to look back upon him as a speculator. He was a man of great discernment and possessing a great deal of courage and rich enterprize, and owing, perhaps, partly to him and partly to other men, we were bold enough at that day to entertain the idea of making a railway into Scotland, and the unusual course was adopted by the Government of Sir Robert Peel of appointing a Commission of a scientific nature to examine the whole question of what ought to be the line of railway into Scotland; and the House may be curious to know why it was the Government intervened in that particular case, simply to determine where the railway ought to run, when, I believe, there is no other example in the entire history of railways of a Government having attempted anything of the kind. I remember perfectly well the motive of the

Government. The motive was this—that as it was known, and firmly believed to be absolutely impossible, that there should ever be more than one railway into Scotland, it was considered of the highest public importance that the best scientific power of the country should be brought to bear on the choice of the line. As it was admitted that there could be only one line, it was most important for the public interest it should be the best, and upon that principle an inquiry was held and a Report was made in favour of a line which now crosses Shap Fell; and that single circumstance will illustrate more than any detailed statement the infant state of our ideas of railways about that time, and certainly it would have been most premature and unwise if that Commission had been appointed with a view to commit the State to the principle of the purchase of railways. Substantially, therefore, I agree with the account given by the right hon. Gentleman of the Act of 1844. I need not now go into the circumstances which prevented the more full operation of the control contemplated by that Act, for it would be a matter of considerable length, and it is not necessary to trouble the House with it. I think, with the right hon. Gentleman, that, upon the whole, the Railway Companies of this country have a very honourable record. They have set a very good example to the world. We may endeavour to pick out here and there points in which greater advantages are given on railways abroad; but it is quite plain that the public opinion of this country never would tolerate the restraints put on the movements of passengers which are of habitual occurrence on the Continent. I think one may fairly make this statement in justice to the Railway Companies—that when the first news was brought of the free movement of the locomotive on the first trial trip from Liverpool to Manchester, it was unquestionably considered an enormous innovation and a wonderful invention; but since that time—more than 50 years ago—it is hardly too much to say that we now travel at twice the pace and at half the price. I have always thought that if the purchase of railways could have been dealt with merely as a great financial operation, so that the Government should be the owners of the freehold in the permanent way, and that vigorous and active commercial Companies should have undertaken the working under the Government, there would have been a great deal to say in favour of such an operation; but then comes the question, whether leasing is a practical system, and I am afraid that, upon the whole, the commercial mind of this country has arrived at the conclusion that it is not a practical system, and that if the Government owned the railways they must also be the managers of them. I entirely agree with the right hon. Gentleman that, upon the whole, the objections to that system are conclusive. The Government of this country is the heaviest-laden Government in the world. There is no Government existing which has such a complexity and diversity of functions to discharge, and for us, unless in the case of the most urgent necessity, to load ourselves with an operation involving the taking on the back of the State of what I may call roughly the one-tenth part of the property of the country, and then to become responsible for the management of the railways, is, I really think, a suggestion which, though I admit it does present many attractions, would not for a moment be entertained by Parliament. In point of fact the Commission of 1865 went, I think, to the bottom of that question. I remember it well, because I was then the person principally concerned with the appointment of that Commission. Undoubtedly the attempt was made to fill that Commission with men of the greatest weight and of the most diversified qualifications, and when their Report came out it could not but be regarded as constituting a reliable and almost conclusive authority in favour of the view expressed by the right hon. Gentleman. At that time, I must own, I looked with considerable interest to that limited part of the question which is expressed by the word "Ireland." It appeared to me that if the question of purchase was one that could be entertained at all, Ireland was the portion of the Empire within which to apply it, because there the railway system had received a very limited development. The public were suffering then—I fear they suffer to some extent at the present time—from the very limited nature and extent of the operation of railways in that country; and it was then felt that if the question of purchase was a question to be entertained at all, Ireland was the portion of the Empire in which it might best be carried out. But the investigations of the Commission went to the point that even in Ireland the subject could not be entertained, for even there it appeared unwise and impracticable, mainly because of the inexpediency of charging the State with the management of the railways, and the impossibility of conducting State railways on any other basis. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has referred—I think very properly—to the hope that Parliament will exercise its best abilities in the reasonable control of the railway system, and he has referred to a subject in which we all feel a friendly interest—that of the Railway Rates Bill now before Parliament. I hope also, Sir, that due consideration may at some time possibly be given to what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman on the subject of the canals of this country. It does undoubtedly appear singular that the canal system, which has suffered so considerably, should have been checked so much in its development and so contracted in its operation in consequence of the great development of railways. But I will not enter upon that subject further than to say that if the right hon. Gentleman is able to give his attention to it in connection with the other subjects that demand his attention as President of the Board of Trade, he will possibly be able to do something practical in respect to it. It is undoubtedly, I think, one of the weakest portions of our present system of communication. There is no doubt that in these days and the days to come, the means of communication between different parts of the country form a subject of great interest and importance—an importance so great and so vital to the prosperity and development of productive industry that it is impossible to overstate it. I think, Sir, we cannot expect Her Majesty's Government to appoint a Commission on this subject until it can be shown that the investigation of 1865 was an insufficient investigation. Until we can entertain a reasonable hope that there is some other mode of progress to the national advantage which was unknown and undiscovered at that time, I should very much doubt whether it would be wise for us to undertake an inquiry, and unquestionably the Government would not be justified in assenting to it unless they saw their way as a matter of probability to some important practical results.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Deputy Speaker do now leave the Chair," again proposed.

SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT, SOUTH KENSINGTON—CIRCULATION OF WORKS OF ART.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, the subject he had to bring before the attention of the House was not one of an exciting nature, but of very considerable importance—namely, the desirability of circulating in towns and large centres of population those specimens of art, science, and industry, which were considered essential to the improvement of technical education, and the advancement of the workmanship of the artizans of the country. He hoped it would not be thought that he wished in any way to question the amount of work done, or to reduce the amount of money spent by the country on this very important subject. He believed we did quite as little as we could do; but the point of his remarks would be to endeavour to show that though the money voted by the House had greatly developed and very largely increased, we were not doing as much as we might do, and that we had not greatly increased the facilities given to artizans in closely populated districts for the study of works of science and art. He need not dwell on the importance of museums. The country voted several hundred thousands a-year for the purpose of museums, not only in London, but in Dublin, Edinburgh, and different parts of the Kingdom, which showed that the House of Commons and the public at large were fully aware of the importance of exhibiting to the masses of the people those specimens of art, workmanship, and industry, which so much tended to improve their trade and working capacities as artizans. Some people supposed that this was only needed in the interest of art; but it was not only necessary to promote industries which were essentially connected with art but also the various other industries carried on in the community. The necessity for the circulation of works of art and industry applied to almost every trade with which the country was connected. Those interested in the question desired that the artizans of this great Empire should enjoy at least as great facilities as the artizans of other nations of the world; and there was no trade, industry, or mechanical branch existing where the artizan would not be benefited and improved by being enabled to visit and see for himself the various specimens of different sorts of manufactures, which showed the development of his particular trade, industry, or handicraft, and enabled him to compare his own work with that of others who had excelled in his and kindred branches of manufacture. It was well understood that examples were important to engravers and designers of wall papers, painted glass, &c. But their importance was not confined to art work. They were equally important to the engineer, furniture maker, worker in metal, builder, textile fabric maker, chemist, and dye maker—in fact, to the artizan of every industry of the country it would be of advantage to secure that he should be able to visit and study the typical examples of his particular trade. But the real problem was how they could best place these specimens before the working classes of the country—how they could use them to the greatest advantage, and so secure that the largest amount of benefit might be received from them by the public. He wished to do away with the notion that some of his friends had—namely, that he desired to circulate those valuable works of art to small local museums which were irreplaceable. He did not intend that at all. He divided the art collections of the country into two classes—first, those unique works which were of great value, because they could not be replaced, they forming together one class; and, secondly, those which might fairly be devoted to the purpose in view—namely, many pictures, duplicates, triplicates, photographs of various works of art, specimens of manufactures and science, models, casts, reproductions, &c., which, if lost, were not irreplaceable, because they could be re-purchased or reproduced. He wished to be understood to mean that he did not in any way desire to circulate the first class—those articles which could not be replaced he thought ought not, except on special occasions, to leave our central museums, where students should go to see them. There might be some occasions on which those works might be exhibited elsewhere; but, as a general rule, they should never leave the national collections. But the other class to which he had referred—namely, duplicates and reproductions, were, no doubt, almost as valuable for students as the originals; and inasmuch as the artizans could not come up to London to see them, he thought it reasonable and proper that they should be sent into the Provinces for them to study. He went further, and said that it was essential that they should send these things about to a larger extent than at present, if they were to develop that technical education which hon. Members thought was so necessary for the future welfare of the country. Now, the idea of circulating art objects was a very old one. The first idea which occurred many years ago was that the art specimens should be sent about to the art schools in the country. In 1854 a Circular was issued by the Department of Science and Art, and signed by Sir Henry Cole and the present Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair) to promote circulation, and to tend to the establishment of local museums. It was laid down that there should be admission to those museums on three nights a week at an entrance fee of not more than 1*d.* The first collection was sent out in February, 1855, and led to very considerable results. That was the beginning of the present system of sending out objects of art and industry, and from that beginning had come a great deal of good. He wished to dwell on three special features of the development of the system of circulation. First, he wished to show what was done 30 years ago by the authorities at South Kensington; secondly, he should endeavour to show what extra resources Parliament had during that period given to those authorities; and, lastly, what was being done now, and what might be done with the larger resources now at their disposal. To show what was done 30 years ago, the first reference he should read was from Mr. W. Cowper, the Vice President of the Council. He said, in 1857—

> "The circulation of works of art which, in two years, have been exhibited to 88,000 persons in the Provinces, adding greatly to their appreciation . . . . . has induced their Lordships to extend the benefits of the valuable Library of Art in a similar manner."

An extra £500 was allowed, as also money to supply schools and museums with photographs of works of art. In 1858 the circulating collections went to 20 places, and were visited by 197,812 people in Birmingham, Nottingham, Macclesfield, Dublin, Clonmel, Glasgow, and other towns, although he could not find record of any having gone at that time to the suburbs of London. In the same year, Sir Charles Eastlake, at the National Gallery, urged that there should be a sort of out-of-town museum, where newly-painted pictures might be placed for some years, and then the best placed in the National Gallery, and he also suggested that a portion of the works might be lent to provincial museums. To show the extension of this system—in 1860, owing to the munificent gift of Mr. Sheepshanks, the South Kensington Museum was able to do a great deal more in circulating works of art. It was in consequence of that gift that they were able much more freely to circulate pictures, and special series which included engravings of the English school, wood engravings, wall decorations, painted glass, textile fabrics, pottery, glass, metal, furniture, water colours, oil paintings by ancient and modern masters, bronzes, reproductions, ivory, photographs, architectural drawings, &c. Thus, 30 years ago, the principle he was contending for was recognized, and he wished it to be borne in mind that it was so developed that, notwithstanding the comparatively small resources at South Kensington, they were able to send out collections to no less than 20 places. That was the first feature in this matter which he wished to bring before the House; and it was very important, because, if South Kensington was able to do all this 30 years ago, it would be seen, having regard to the extra grants since given, that the results at the present time were not proportionate to their increased resources. There had in the last 30 years been an enormous development throughout the country of the idea as to the importance of works and specimens of art and industry being circulated. There had been, owing to education, a hunger for these collections in all parts of the country; and in the densely populated districts generally there was a desire to share to some extent in the grants now made by Parliament for the Metropolis and other large towns. This matter was continually referred to in the Reports of the South Kensington Museum. The Science and Art Department, in 1861, reported that—

> "Applications for the loan collections had been received from all parts of England in the present year."

And so important was the matter considered, that in 1864 a Select Committee of the House sat to inquire into it, under the Presidency of Sir Stafford Northcote, and he would read a short extract from their Report, as it bore upon the subject in hand. The Committee said—

> "There can be no doubt that the fine collection at South Kensington is calculated to raise the taste of the country; or, at all events, of those persons who are able to visit it; but it is equally certain that it is only a small proportion of the provincial public which have the opportunity of doing so, and it appears that the arrangements made for circulating portions of the collections to the provincial towns are as yet far from perfection."

The Report went on to say—

> "Mr. Cole suggests some relaxation of the conditions under which works of art are sent to the provincial schools, which he thinks might induce the local committees to borrow more freely than at present. He also threw out some valuable suggestions as to the formation of local museums to be supplied in great part by a system of circulating some of the works of art belonging not only to South Kensington, but also to the National Gallery and the British Museum. These suggestions are well worthy of consideration."

And, in consequence of that Report, it was resolved—

> "That the collection of works of decorative art at South Kensington be made more generally useful than at present throughout the country, especially in connection with local museums."

It would be seen that the great feature of that Report of the inquiry so ably conducted by the late Lord Iddesleigh was the extension of the system of circulation and lending out works of art to local museums in different parts of the country; there was no talk of extra grants, and it was taken for granted that the collection was sufficient to do a great deal more in the way of circulation than was being done at the time. The result of this was that in 1864 a Minute was passed by the South Kensington authorities in which it was resolved—

> "That all works exhibited at South Kensington which can be lent and removed with safety are available for temporary exhibition to the public in local Schools of Art for short periods."

Year after year they found the Report referring to the wants of the Provinces. In 1876 it said that—

> "The demand from the Provinces is so great . . . ."

In 1880 collections were first sent to Corporations and free libraries, the circulation of which had up to that time been confined to Schools of Art; and in 1881, such was the pressure from the Provincial public, that the Report stated that South Kensington existed, not wholly, or even chiefly, as an institution for the exclusive advantage of visitors to London; but that it was in truth also a great national collection or storehouse formed and conducted for the benefit of the whole Kingdom.

He thought he had now shown his two points—first, what was done 30 years ago; and, secondly, that the country had been clamouring for a greater and greater share of the grants of Parliament during the last 30 years. Now, he could state briefly what had been done in the matter of Parliamentary grants in that period. And upon that subject he would have to go into some hard and dry facts of finance. What had been granted for the purchase of works of industry and specimens of science and art? Having gone through the Estimates, he thought he should not be far out in saying that in the last 30 years there had been granted for Works of Art, £316,000; Science Collections, £34,000; Aid to Local Museums, £8,400; Examples, £88,000; Reproductions of Works of Art, £57,000; Hire of Specimens, £9,200; Photographs, £20,000; Historical College of Painting, £15,000; Exchange of Works of Art, £5,500; Art Library, £63,000; and Catalogues, £38,000; making a total of something like £660,000 granted by Parliament during the last 30 years for specimens at South Kensington. In addition to that £32,000 had been granted for purchases of specimens for Jermyn Street, £50,000 for Edinburgh, and Dublin £47,000, or a total of £116,000; and, as far as he could make out, about £800,000 had been granted for similar purposes for the British Museum, and about £400,000 for the National Gallery. All those grants, in round figures, amounted to over £2,000,000 sterling for works of industry, science, and art. He wished to show that, having granted £600,000 to South Kensington alone, the public had a right—the provincial public had a right, and the suburban public of our great towns had a right—to a much larger proportion of this sum than they had at present. Supposing that of this £600,000 granted to South Kensington half was available for the purchase of those specimens of great value which it would be undesirable and improper to remove, there still remained £300,000 available for those specimens which could circulate from one part of the country to another, and he said that £300,000 would form a sufficient fund for a fine and complete system of circulating collections. But that was not all; because, as those who studied the Reports of the South Kensington authorities knew, in addition to the grants made by Parliament, they had received an enormous amount in gifts and bequests which, in themselves, formed a magnificent collection. In 1859 it was stated that the proposed purchases in the grant made by Parliament were only supplementary, the objects of these collections having been, for the most part, presented to the nation by the public. Among those gifts he might instance the following:—Sheepshanks' collection, numbering 522 objects; Ellison, 51; Brooke, 1,114; Duke, 1,314; Wollaston, 270; Ella, 326; Mrs. Plumley, 63; Townshend, 7,828; Dyce, 16,153; and Parsons, consisting of 139 objects. Those were some of the larger collections, leaving out of consideration the smaller ones, the list of which occupied many pages of close printing in the Reports for almost every year. He thought he had now shown clearly that 30 years ago the South Kensington Museum was able to circulate their collections to 20 places, and that their resources had since been added to, not only by an expenditure to the extent of £600,000, but also by gifts and bequests which amounted to almost the same value. He thought it quite clear that the amount of circulation now was not proportionate to the enormously increased resources which Parliament had placed at the disposal of the South Kensington authorities. What had been done by way of extra circulation with all these increased means? In the Report of 1886, it appeared that to 30 provincial museums, 26 temporary museums and science and art classes, there had been lent a total number of 26,164 specimens. This number of specimens, however, was not much greater than the number of gifts to the museum above referred to, to say nothing of the £600,000 granted by Parliament for the purpose of purchases on the understanding that the Provinces should have the benefit of them by the circulating collections. As they were told by the Vice President of the Council last year, in answer to a Question, that 26,000 specimens were circulated to 56 museums, he had taken the trouble to look into the matter, and see how long each collection remained in the country. He found that only four collections were lent for a year, seven for 11 months, six for 10 months, four for nine months, only one for eight months, and so downwards, till at last they had 23 collections circulated for one month only. But when they looked into the Report they found that the one month dwindled down, and a good many places had two collections a-month, and, in some cases, collections were lent for one or two days only. That was the case with regard to Brighton, which had a collection of 203 specimens lent for exhibition during three days in January. He was aware that a circulation of 26,000 specimens was referred to, and he said that they were the same specimens treated over and over again, like the army on the stage represented by the frequent reappearance of the same soldier. In the Report the number of days was distinctly shown during which these specimens remained at the places they were sent to, and hon. Members would see that the number of specimens calculated on these figures dwindled down to a very small number. He found, taking the whole of the exhibitions together, the average was 20 days each—that was to say, if two or three collections only were available, the South Kensington authorities would be able to do the whole of the work with those collections. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council would explain how it was announced that 26,000 specimens were circulated, while so many of them were only made use of for so short a period of time. He referred to the Blue Book to show that the same specimens were spoken of over and over again; that the maximum number of specimens sent out at one time was 9,351, and during all the rest of the year those not circulating must remain at South Kensington. If that were so, he thought it a very misleading statement to say that there was a circulation of 26,000 specimens. It would probably be said that the cost of these collections was very much greater then than it was 30 years ago. The 1886 Report stated that 30 collections, valued at £2,000 each, were issued. Taking that as correct, it amounted to £60,000 out of the £600,000 voted by Parliament for the purchase of specimens, and this the Report described as a "severe tax on its resources." He would now examine one or two details of expenditure. First, there was the photographic grant, which in 30 years amounted to £20,000. That was a very large sum, and some might say that it was excessive. But they had a statement of what the photographs cost, and at what price the Department was prepared to sell them to the public, and it was 2½*d*. per 25 square inches, or 1*s*. 3*d*. per square foot; if mounted, the cost would be, say, double, or 2*s*. 6*d*. a-foot. Working this out, it would be found that the £20,000 would supply a number of photographs sufficient for 80 collections at £250, and these would cover for a width of six feet a room 100 by 50 feet. He thought it was only fair to ask where were all those photographs; where had they been put to? They were good, although not quite so good as the works of art which they represented; they would be of immense use for the purpose of circulation. The House of Commons had granted in 30 years £60,000 to the South Kensington Museum for reproductions alone of works in metal and plaster. Now, £60,000 was a very large sum of money, and they knew that a very large collection of reproduced works could be obtained for £1,000. It was, therefore, sufficient to supply 60 such collections to different parts of the country; and for all practical purposes there was no doubt that reproductions of such things as he had referred to were as useful to the student as the originals. He maintained that this sum was sufficient to insure that the Museum should have in store a number of articles sufficient for these circulating collections.

He would also point out that there was always a cry at South Kensington that more space was wanted there; and it was true that the cases were so close together that some persons found it extremely difficult to squeeze between them. He was there a short time ago, and in one case he saw two Persian lamps practically identical, and at a few yards' distance, across the passage, there were three more lamps of the same kind. The furniture was crowded together, and he found three or four Chippendale chairs, side by side, identical with two others at a short distance. He asked why that should be, seeing that those specimens would be more valuable in small local museums in various parts of London where furniture, &c., was made, rather than huddled together at South Kensington. In one case there were two tables almost identical in pattern; in a second case, two, three, four, and five specimens of china all alike; and in a third case might be seen 18 similar knives, forks, and spoons. The specimens of earthenware were crowded together in such a manner that a visitor could scarcely see them. He found four duplicates on one shelf. All this showed that at South Kensington there was an immense amount of material which it was most desirable should be circulated, and it was these things which he desired to get into local museums. He knew that remarks would be perhaps made upon the subject; that he might be attacked personally, and be told that the objects were wanted to be circulated for political purposes. But all that he wanted was to have the specimens circulated—["Hear, hear!"]—and if the hon. Gentleman who cheered his last remark would only start another museum in his district he should be most pleased. He (Mr. Bartley) had established a museum in his district, and all that he wanted was to assist others to do the same. Seeing the immense educational value of placing such collections close to the homes of the workers themselves, they wanted the masses of the people to have the benefit of the collections as near their homes as possible. How was local effort and interest treated at South Kensington? In 1870 the Report stated that—

> "As a matter of course, the extent to which large towns can advantageously use the privileges now available for the circulation of objects illustrative of science and art in its application to industry depends very much on the accommodation in each locality for the purposes of exhibition. . . . . Clearly the function of the Science and Art Department was to assist local efforts, and not to originate them. The future supply of means for promoting such education must depend rather upon the provincial wants and demands than upon any arrangement of a class in the centre from which such wants may be met."

And, again, the Report in 1883 said—

> "The advantages of the art collections are such that they can be extended to any part of the Kingdom where any real desire exists to participate in them."

Those were nice words; but what were the facts of the case? In 1864 a deputation came from South London and North London to endeavour to get museums established in those districts where everyone agreed they were urgently wanted. The South Kensington Authorities said they were willing to aid; but now, 24 years afterwards, there was no museum in either of those two parts of London. The local effort had been smothered, and when application was now made it was always stated that there were no funds available. But he had shown that if South Kensington were only to keep half the specimens and only use half the Vote—that is, £300,000—for their own Museum proper they would still be able to supply 150 collections at £2,000 a-piece for circulation throughout the country; whereas they now had only 30 collections circulating, or one-fifth of the proper number. But he did not think that £2,000 was needed for every collection. His own collection cost about £1,000; and he thought if they had 100 at a cost of £500 each, 100 at a cost of £1,000, and 75 at £2,000, there would be 275 collections for £300,000, as against 30, which they now had for the same money. He saw no reason why the actual cost of circulating the objects should not be defrayed by the localities. He said that 275 collections would have done infinitely more good in promoting education than the small number on which the money had been expended. He ventured to criticize the action of the Department in spending £2,500 in purchasing five salt-cellars. As he thought two or three additional circulating collections would do much more practical good, this proposal would be a step of immense value for technical education.

With regard to the rules of circulation, it was not till 1880, owing to the agitation in Birmingham, that the rule was relaxed which now allowed the collections to be sent to Corporations. Why, he asked, were they to be confined to Corporations and free libraries? Perhaps, in the case of London, which had no Corporation, the rule would also be relaxed, and the County Council would be allowed to have the collections. They wanted in London at least 50 of these small collections. To have small museums close to their homes would be most beneficial in elevating the minds of the people, and be the best antidotes to drink and other evils. What they wanted was to have these small places of education, of recreation, and of industry within the easiest reach of the people. He believed that where these places were established they would be of enormous benefit to those who used them. Who stopped this great progress? It was not very difficult to say. He did not wish to say a word against a Department with which he was for so many years connected, and which had done more good for education, perhaps, than any other institution in the country. He believed they had been ahead, to a great extent, of the national wants; but he must candidly say that he was filled with disappointment that the Vice President (Sir William Hart Dyke), when he accepted his great Office, did not shake off the red-tape rules of officialism which governed his Department. He did not suppose the right hon. Gentleman considered himself a great Educational Minister; but he knew the right hon. Gentleman did consider himself a man of common sense—a man of keen sympathy with the wants of the people; and he (Mr. Bartley) thought the right hon. Gentleman would be the means of breaking down the red-tape officialism which existed at South Kensington. He was sorry to say, however, that up to the present they had not been able to induce the right hon. Gentleman to do that; but he (Mr. Bartley) hoped the result of this debate might tend in that direction. The rules of the Office were such that they did hamper the work to a great extent. He had urged that these collections should be lent freely, taking every precaution for their safety. He knew it would be said by some that he had an interested motive. It was always said, whatever one did, that one's motive was wrong; but if they were to be deterred from attempting to promote education, from attempting to promote local museums, not only in the Metropolis, but in the centres of industry and the large towns and villages, simply because the individual interested was of one political type or colour, it would be a bad thing for the country. This was an object for the attainment of which they ought all to combine, and he regretted there had been any Party spirit thrown into the matter by some hon. Members, because he happened to differ from them. If they would take charge of his own particular institution, he would be extremely happy to hand it over. He had shown conclusively that 30 years ago a step was made in the direction he suggested. What was wanted was that places of education and recreation, with specimens of art and industry exhibited at them, should be brought close to the homes of the people. It was no use telling the people of North London that they could go to South Kensington. They could not go to South Kensington in the evening after they had done their work. They could visit a small museum close to where they lived and study works of art and industry there, and if the collections were changed from time to time by a system of circulation immense educational benefits would follow. He thought he had shown that the Department had the means of making frequent changes in the specimens when exhibited. He trusted the view he took would be adopted, and although he knew that he could not carry his Motion to a Division, he hoped the Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) would give them some encouragement that he would frame such rules, and make such regulations, as would secure that the artizans resident in the large centres of industry might have the advantage of study, and the opportunity of comparing their works with the specimens of others. He hoped that, in this matter, our country would not be handicapped as it had been, but that Parliament would offer to the people those advantages which other countries considered were essential to the welfare of the working populations.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford) said, he desired to express his thorough sympathy with his hon. Friend the Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley) and assured him that as long as he (Sir William Hart Dyke) was connected with his present Office he should always deem it his duty to extend the system to which his hon. Friend had referred, as far as that could be done, with due regard to efficiency and economy. His hon. Friend had traversed a large extent of country in the course of his remarks, and he did not think the House would expect him to pursue his hon. Friend through all his statements. He might observe, however, that he was at variance with his hon. Friend in regard to the sum which he said had been expended in purchasing science and art specimens. The figure cited by his hon. Friend differed by about 50 per cent from that which he would presently state to the House. His hon. Friend seemed to forget that they must consider the parent as well as the welfare of the children. In other words, they must consider the primary object of the parent institution at South Kensington. His hon. Friend made it a great grievance that the Department in the time of Lord Spencer purchased some salt-cellars for a large sum of money. In point of fact, those salt-cellars were specimens which were absolutely unique, and the purchase was made on the recommendation of some of the best and most responsible judges of art in this country. He maintained that within the last 30 years the system of circulating the objects at South Kensington had been developed to an extent to excite the envy of many large towns on the Continent, and to have been productive of enormous use in the instruction of the working classes. Now, what was the progress which had really been made in regard to the practice of circulating objects? The point which the House ought to consider was of a two-fold character. First, were the present resources of South Kensington in regard to these specimens utilized to the fullest available extent; and, secondly, would it be safe to extend the rules and regulations now laid down for lending these specimens? The system at present adopted at South Kensington was as follows. They lent for a period of 12 months objects of science and art connected with manufactures, not only to museums under public authority, but also to temporary exhibitions when there was some guarantee that a museum would be ultimately established in consequence of those exhibitions. They also lent specimens for a shorter period of six months to schools of science and art. It had been urged by his hon. Friend that they should classify the specimens sent out, but he could conceive no alteration which would be more prejudicial than that. His hon. Friend suggested that minor objects should be lent out and the more expensive objects should be retained. To that he would say that if it once got abroad that we were only lending out second-class specimens there would be great irritation throughout the country. If specimens were to be supplied they should be the very best, and every effort should be made without distinction. With respect to the Metropolis, which his hon. Friend said had been badly treated, he would say that South Kensington and the British Museum were practically in the centre of the Metropolis. The most urgent appeals had come to the Department from the large centres of industry and manufactures, and this he conceived to be the best proof of the success of the system. In Birmingham, for example, in 1887, there were 433 objects exhibited, and the number of patents and drawings was 64, and these were opened to the public and inspected by 898,000 people. He contended that the system was a sound and proper one. The best specimens of each class of work were sent to the most important centre of the industry to which the work belonged, as ironwork to Birmingham, lace to Coventry and Nottingham, porcelain to Stoke-upon-Trent. In 1879 collections were sent only to seven permanent local museums, including Bethnal Green, and to 10 local exhibitions. In 1887 loans were made to

33 provincial museums besides Bethnal Green, and to 28 temporary exhibitions. These various museums were visited by no fewer than 4,900,000, exclusive of Dublin and Edinburgh; and in last year the total number of specimens lent for exhibition was 28,163 out of a total of 40,100. His figures did not tally with those of his hon. Friend as to the cost of these articles. During 30 years the total cost of art objects and reproductions was £370,000, whereas in last year alone the value circulated was £110,000, or more than a quarter of the total. He could be no party to relaxing the rules which at present regulated the loan of exhibits by the Department. There ought always to be someone on the spot to safeguard these treasures. He spoke feelingly on the subject, inasmuch as he had many years ago lent a collection of Sèvres china, which no money could replace, to the Alexandra Palace, of which only a heap of ashes remained after the great fire by which that building was destroyed. He fully realized that the loan of these objects of art was an enormous benefit to the people, and he would gladly do all in his power to carry out the system so far as it could safely and economically be carried out. Notwithstanding the criticism of his hon. Friend, he (Sir William Hart Dyke) ventured to urge that there had been an enormous advance, sure and gradual, as regarded dealing with the question which formed the subject of the Motion.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he wished to answer the challenge which had been thrown out by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. He had to charge the hon. Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley) with having used the Science and Art Department at South Kensington for personal and electioneering purposes in his own constituency. He was prepared to substantiate that charge whenever he had an opportunity of doing so. In a book called "A Guide to Mr. and Mrs. Bartley's Institution and Social Works in North Islington," the name of the hon. Member occurred two or three times on every page. This was done for the purpose of self-advertisement, and for the purpose of getting from the South Kensington Museum those works of art of which the hon. Member had just been speaking. If the Department were compelled to make the terms of lending its treasures more severe, he hoped gentlemen who so used the liberality of the Department to their own purposes would suffer thereby.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven) said, he was of opinion that no works of art ought to be allowed outside the Museum, except under the most stringent precautions. He believed no advantage to education would be gained by merely sending out specimens, and that was why he could not agree with that part of the Notice. He was of opinion that there ought to be exhibitions of this kind, where the working classes, and the professional classes as well, could take advantage of them. He could not agree with his hon. Friend (Mr. Bartley) that technical education would be promoted by his proposal. They had these Museums, containing specimens, and they turned a lot of people into them without any education at all. No doubt they appreciated the exhibitions, but they did not understand their meaning. Therefore, in his opinion, these collections were valueless on that ground. One thing he would like to see done, and that was the teaching of principles. He advocated the employment of lecturers where these collections were displayed, so as to educate the people who inspected the works of art, as to the different objects, forms, and periods. If they could get lectures and information founded on principles they would do far more real good than by efforts at haphazard selections from Museums. They had a collection at South Kensington which was not surpassed by anything in the world, and, notwithstanding some mistakes made, he took that opportunity of bearing his testimony to the admirable manner in which the Museum had been formed and managed.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Supply—Committee upon *Monday* next.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.—[Bill 202.]

(*Mr Courtney, Mr William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson.*)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I do not intend to detain the House at any great length, but there is one point I deem to be of great importance in respect to this Bill, and on which I must make some remarks. I mean the Wine Duties. I am not going to repeat any of the objections taken on former occasions to the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), but I am very desirous to say nothing that will increase in any way the difficulties with which he has to contend. I regret very much, and I think it possible he also regrets the vigorous manner in which his majority came up to support him, and the circumstances under which it was swollen even beyond its ordinary limits, when this question was formerly discussed; because I am not without a suspicion that my right hon. Friend would not have experienced any very keen or poignant regret if the feeling of the House about the measure had been such as would have enabled him to recede from the position he has taken up. What I wish to impress upon him is that, as he has shown a disposition to mitigate the effect of it, I hope he will lose no time in proposing the amending legislation now before us. The right hon. Gentleman must be sensible that the trade is necessarily thrown into a state of confusion and stagnation by the present state of things. It does not follow that because an alteration has in former times appeared impossible, it is still impossible, because I know that in the course of administration and experience sometimes modes are found of overcoming difficulties which have long appeared to be insurmountable. I have a good deal of misgiving as to the plan by which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to mitigate the effect of the tax he is about to lay on, and to restrict it to the more expensive wines; but I most cordially hope he may succeed in that purpose, and I trust he will lose no time in making his attempt, because it is quite evident that if anything can be done it may be done with great despatch as well as after considerable delay. The other question on which I wish to say a few words is the condition in which the Death Duties are left in the Vote now before the House. At the time we debated this subject before, I began by stating that the relation of the Death Duties to personalty, after the new enactment has come into operation, as compared with the Death Duties on realty, would be that of about three to one, and afterwards, having found myself in a certain error as to the sum I ought to have calculated and not taken into view, I pointed out that that would not materially modify the calculation I had made, and that the relation would still be nearly that of three to one. On reconsideration I am not at all inclined to modify my original estimate, but shall be prepared to contend that the rate upon personalty as compared with realty after those changes have taken place—I mean for Exchequer purposes, because, of course, if we include the local contributions the charge becomes much heavier—will be three to one. But what I wish to call attention to is the reason which has been alleged on certain occasions for maintaining the inequality—namely, that land is unduly taxed in other respects. Now, that proposition I wish to meet with the most unqualified contradiction of which Parliamentary argument admits. There is no unjust taxation upon land whatever which can be pleaded to sustain the inequality in the Death Duties, and I will state to the House why. The only two points which have been alleged, or which I believe can possibly be alleged, are these—first, the Land Tax; secondly, the Income Tax. Now, with respect to the Land Tax, I must say it requires much Parliamentary courage, I think, to urge on the part of the land that the incidence of the Land Tax upon land constitutes an inequality as between the owners of land and the owners of other descriptions of property in respect to taxation. The Land Tax represents a portion of the condition on which they hold the land. They did not obtain the land gratuitously, but for services. Undoubtedly they got rid of those services upon very easy terms, but the Land Tax is a relic of those services. It is impossible, in my opinion, to make the smallest claim on account of the Land Tax for compensation in any other form. But in respect to the Income Tax, I was myself the inventor of the doctrine that the landlord, under Schedule A, paid more than the normal rate of Income Tax, and I do not recede from that doctrine. It is, indeed a doctrine which applies unequally. In Ireland it does not apply at all. The Irish landlord does not pay a 6*d.* more, I believe, than the nominal rate of the tax. In Scotland the incidence has been altered since I said that on the average the payment of the landlord might be taken at 9*d.* as the equivalent to 7*d.*, by allowing to the landlord permission to deduct public burdens which at the time I spoke would not be deducted. As regards England, however, the matter remains very much what it was. I will not enter into details, but it is certainly true, in my opinion, that the landlord in England to a great extent, and in Scotland to a considerable extent, pays more than the nominal rate of Income Tax. Yes, Sir, but why was that argument produced on the part of the landlord? It was produced in order to meet the counter-argument of those who insisted that the trades and professions and the fluctuating and transitory incomes of the country are placed at a cruel disadvantage in comparison with land. That is an opinion which, whether true or not, has at times unquestionably had the assent of a majority of Members of this House, though it never was the law; and I make no doubt whatever that upon some future occasion the proposition which now slumbers for a while as a mere opinion will come forward and become a practical question. I may remind the House that at the time I urged this subject upon the House Mr. Disraeli had been Chancellor of the Exchequer, and what had he done? He had proposed an Income Tax of 7*d.* upon land, but reduced to 5*d.* upon trades and professions. It was to counteract that argument I pointed out that the landlord paid more than the nominal rate; but if that over-charge upon the land in respect of Income Tax is to be taken as a set-off against the severe operation of the tax upon trading and professional incomes and fugitive and transitory incomes, it cannot do duty over again. In 1853, when I entered that plea on behalf of land, the whole Tory Party in Opposition supported a Motion made by Sir Edward Lytton (afterwards Lord Lytton) attacking the plan of the Government simply on the ground that they proposed to re-impose the Income Tax without applying a remedy to the tremendous inequality between permanent and transitory incomes. I, therefore, wished to place on record, as a perfectly indisputable argument, that it is impossible to make use of the condition of the landlord under the Income Tax as a justification of the inequality of the Death Duties. This is a subject so important that it is absolutely certain, in my opinion, to become again a practical question before the House in future Sessions, if not in the present Session. My desire is to see established a perfect equity and evenness as between the Death Duties upon land and personalty respectively, otherwise, in my opinion, the result will be to raise in a very serious form a claim of the trading and professional classes in this country for relief under the Income Tax itself, and I by no means feel sure that if landlords as a body choose to raise that controversy they will not before they issue from it find cause to regret it. I will not make any general remarks on the Bill, the progress of which I do not wish to slacken; I am anxious that the proposal promised by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer shall not be delayed, and that the right hon. Gentleman shall lose no time in the attempt he has gallantly undertaken to make a distinction between cheap and dear wines.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I quite agree with my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) as to the importance of despatch with regard to the Bottled Wine Duties, and I accept his challenge that I should lose no time; indeed, I have this day been engaged with the permanent officials of the Treasury in elaborating a plan by which our views can be carried out. I admit the difficulties, but I hope they may be overcome. My right hon. Friend had felt that there is force in the suggestion that the Income Tax falls much more heavily upon land than upon other property. Now, in 1853 the right hon. Gentleman did apply the argument that it was as 9*d.* to 7*d.* as a counter-argument with regard to Succession Duty. He may not be prepared to do so now, but at that time he made a long, a powerful, and an elaborate argument to show that this position of the land with regard to the Income Tax ought to be taken into account with regard to the Succession Duty. The right hon. Gentleman says that position still exists. I should like to show the House how that operates. Let me show how the additional Income Tax operates in the case of a mortgage. Suppose a man has land of a gross value of £2,000 a-year, mortgaged to the extent of £1,000 a-year. The owner will pay the tax on £2,000, which at 6*d.* means paying £50. He will recover from the mortgage 6*d.* on £1,000—that is, £25. Thus he will pay himself £25. But, inasmuch as the net value of the estate is £2,000, *minus* 20 per cent, or £1,600, all the income he really enjoys, after deducting the mortgage interest of £1,000, is £600 a-year. Thus he pays £25 on £600, or 10*d.* not 6*d.*, in the pound. Supposing this process to continue for 13 years, the owner of the estate would have paid £130 too much, not reckoning interest. If at the end of that time the property changed hands —and, as a matter of fact, it does not change hands nearly as often as once in 13 years—the successor would pay 1½ per cent on the life interest. The average life interest is 13½ years' purchase of the net value. Therefore he would pay on £600, multiplied by 13½, equal to £8,100. One and a-half per cent on this would be £121 10*s.* The argument is that he pays only half what he would pay if he succeeded to personalty; therefore, he pays £120 too little. But, on the other hand, the property to which he succeeds has been paying £130 too much Income Tax. Thus, through the additional payment of Income Tax, he puts himself precisely in the same position in this case as if he had paid the full Succession Duty. The right hon. Gentleman feels the weight of this argument; but he wishes now—differing from his own argument in 1853—to take into consideration the temporary nature of profits under Schedule D as compared with permanent profits under Schedule A. He is apparently thinking of the permanent profits made in 1853 on land; but I doubt very much whether land can now be regarded as yielding as permanent a profit as business does. But how about the Funds, and dividends on Railway Shares and Debenture Stocks? Land alone is paying on the gross income instead of on the net. This question will have to be argued out; but there are strong grounds for holding that the Income Tax presses with especial weight at present on the landed interest, and the right hon. Gentleman will be met on that point on future occasions whenever he enters upon it. He has not attempted to-night to argue that land is paying only in the proportion of one to three as compared with personal property in respect to the Death Duties. I will not now argue that question either. But the fallacy of his contention arises from his taking, not the owner but the land into view. He arrives at his conclusion as to the proportion of three to one by taking the whole of the land, and he looks at the land on one side and to personalty on the other in reckoning how much the land ought legitimately to pay. I gave the right hon. Gentleman the reference to the Report of the Inland Revenue Board, which he specially praised, in order to show that the Land Tax was taken in as a charge on land, although not as a charge on the individual owner if you compare him with the owner of personalty. I admit that the question that the right hon. Gentleman has raised is one of the greatest importance, not only as between Imperial and local taxation, but as between the various forms of property; and I quite agree with him as to one important point which he touched to-night—namely, that visible personalty and the case of leasehold property ought to engage the attention of Parliament.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

MOTIONS.

———o———

MINES (LIMITATION OF HOURS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cunninghame Graham, Bill to limit the hours of labour by underground workers to eight hours a day, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Cunninghame Graham, Mr. Abraham, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Conybeare, and Mr. Cremer.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 241.]

MERCHANT SEAMEN (WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' PENSIONS) BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Hill, Bill for the providing of Pensions for the Widows, Orphans, and dependent relatives of Merchant Seamen, *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel Hill, Sir James Corry, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Royden, Mr. Seale-Hayne, and Mr. Donkin.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 237.]

FOOTPATHS AND ROADSIDE WASTES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Bill for the better protection of Footpaths and Roadside

Wastes, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Hastings, and Mr. Story-Maskelyne.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 238.]

COLLIERY TENANTS' RELIEF BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Blundell, Bill for the relief of Colliery Tenants, and to secure them against the loss of the minerals for which they have paid, *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel Blundell and Mr. Frank Hardcastle.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 239.]

FACTORY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Conybeare, Bill to amend and extend the Factory Acts, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Burt, Mr. Cremer, and Mr. Cunninghame Graham.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 240.]

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at ten minutes after Nine o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, *7th May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Customs and Inland Revenue * (95).

Second Reading—Timber Acts (Ireland) Amendment (69).

Committee—Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances) (43-96).

Withdrawn — Public Libraries Act, 1885, Amendment * (82).

Provisional Order Bill—*First Reading*—Local Government (Ireland) (Ballymoney, &c.) * (97).

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LIFE SAVING APPLIANCES) BILL.—(No. 43.)

(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1 (Duty to carry boats and other appliances for saving life).

On the Motion of the Earl of Onslow,

Amendment made, in page 1, line 10, by leaving out from ("all persons") to to the end of the clause and inserting ("her crew and passengers").

Moved, at end of clause add ("ships surveyed by the Board of Trade as passenger steamers, or passenger ships in the foreign trade, being always considered a distinct class requiring special provision of boats, rafts, or other appliances for saving life in case of danger, in accordance with rules from time to time, without which no certificate shall be granted them.")—(*Lord Norton.*)

The SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (the Earl of Onslow) said, he sympathized with the desire of the noble Lord that ships carrying passengers should be better provided with boats than those engaged in the ordinary carrying trade. The whole object of the Bill was to see that means were provided for saving life at sea according to the nature of the service in which the ship was employed. He could not consent to an Amendment making but two classes of ships. The noble Lord might safely leave it to the Board of Trade and the Committee to see that the different classes of ships were properly provided with life-saving apparatus, and carried in accordance with the nature of the service to be performed.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Appointment of consultative committee for framing rules) *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Power to make rules as to life-saving appliances).

The Earl of RAVENSWORTH, in proposing an Amendment providing that the Board of Trade, "on the advice of the Committee aforesaid," might from time to time make, rescind, and vary rules with respect to all or any of the matters mentioned in the second schedule of the Act, said it appeared to him to be a most extraordinary thing that the Board of Trade should take the trouble to form a Consultative Committee to advise it in the framing of rules having the force of "law," and at the same time take the power of making, rescinding, and varying rules, without giving any reason whatever. It might be urged that his Amendment ought to be rejected because it interfered with the responsibility of the Department. In this connexion he drew attention to what he described as a curious circular recently issued by the Board of Trade referring to his Amendment. He thought the circular was illustrative of the system which was carried on at the Board of Trade. He did not wish to make any attack on the Department, but merely to show what the system was and to what extent the responsibility was borne. The circular was dated May 2, and was signed by Mr. Gray. It asked the various shipping bodies throughout the country whether they had any observations to offer upon the Amendment which he had just moved, and that, if so, the Department would be glad to receive them. When he read that circular, it occurred to him to ask the question, "Where is the responsibility of the Board of Trade?" Did it rest with the distinguished statesman in "another place," or did it rest with the permanent public servants who sat in Whitehall? He thought it was clear on the face of the Bill that the Board of Trade felt the weight of the responsibility which rested upon it. Let their Lordships consider what the Board of Trade was called upon to do. It now regulated the mightiest interests in this country, and necessarily from day to day it found itself in the discharge of its duty face to face with the ablest men in the country—the managers of great industries. Those men, knowing their own business infinitely better than any President of the Board of Trade and all his staff put together, might naturally feel that friction was being created when they were interfered with by frivolous regulations. The noble Lord concluded by moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Moved, in page 1, line 23, after ("Trade") insert ("on the advice of the committee aforesaid.")—(*The Earl of Ravensworth.*)

THE EARL OF ONSLOW said, he regretted very much that it was quite out of his power to accept the Amendment of the noble Earl, which was not merely a small Amendment in a small Bill, but involved a departure from established Constitutional practice and proposed alterations in Parliamentary procedure which the Government could not agree to. The effect of the Amendment would be to shield the President of the Board of Trade from all responsibility to Parliament and the country for these rules. The noble Lord had thought fit to make a rather severe onslaught upon the officials of the Board of Trade in respect of a circular which had been issued on behalf of the Board. In issuing that circular the officials of the Board of Trade were anxious that those who were interested in this question should give an opinion upon the Amendment of the noble Earl. As far as responsibility was concerned, that circular had been sent out on his own suggestion, and with the full approbation of the President of the Board of Trade. If the Amendment of the noble Earl were adopted, the power of the President of the Board of Trade to rescind or to vary the rules would be taken away, and it would, therefore, be impossible to make any alterations in them. He therefore hoped that the House would not adopt the Amendment of the noble Earl.

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH said, he hoped that it would be thoroughly understood that he had no desire whatever to make an attack upon the Board of Trade officials.

Amendment *negatived.*

THE EARL OF HARROWBY said, he wished to enter his protest against the rules, which would have to lie upon the Table for a certain time, being laid upon the Table in a dummy form.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) said, that, as no time would be gained by laying the rules upon the Table in such a form, it was not likely that such a course would be taken.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, that the laying of dummy rules upon the Table was clearly not a compliance with the requirements of the Act.

LORD COLERIDGE said, he coincided with the view taken by the Lord Chancellor on the matter.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Penalty for breach of rules).

On the Motion of The Earl of ONSLOW, Amendment made, in page 2, line 7, by leaving out ("to sea") and inserting ("on any voyage or excursion").

Clause (as amended) *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Provisions for enforcing rules) *agreed to.*

On the Motion of The Earl of ONSLOW, the following new Clause was inserted, after Clause 5:—

(Saving as to sea-fishing boats.)

"The rules made under this Act shall not apply to any sea-fishing boat which is for the time being registered in pursuance of the Sea Fisheries Act, 1868."

Clauses 6, 7, and 8 *agreed to.*

FIRST SCHEDULE.

Constitution of the Committee.

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH said, he moved to amend the constitution of the Committee. According to the Bill, it was provided that the Committee should be composed of:—

"(1) Three shipowners selected by the President of the Board of Trade out of a list of nine names submitted by the Council of the Chamber of Shipping of the United Kingdom; (2) three shipbuilders selected by the President of the Board of Trade out of a list of nine names submitted by the shipbuilders of the United Kingdom; (3) three persons practically acquainted with the navigation of vessels selected by the President of the Board of Trade out of a list of nine names submitted by the Local Marine Boards of the United Kingdom; (4) three persons being or having been able-bodied seamen selected by the President of the Board of Trade out of a list of nine names submitted by seamen's societies recognized by the President of the Board of Trade for this purpose; (5) three persons selected by the President of the Board of Trade out of a list of nine names to be submitted conjointly by the committee of Lloyd's and the committee of Lloyd's Register Society."

He objected to the list of names of shipowners having to be submitted to the Board of Trade by the Chamber of Shipping of the United Kingdom. Although a very influential and valuable body, the Chamber of Shipping was by no means representative of all the shipowning interests in the country. The chief objection he took to the present form of the Schedule was that the shipowners were to be selected by the Board of Trade out of a list submitted. Surely they were competent to elect their own representatives. He did not pretend that there was any novelty about the Schedule he proposed, but he claimed that it possessed the high authority of the Board itself, its leading features having already been submitted to the country in the form of a Circular issued by the Board in January, 1882.

Moved, That the constitution of the Committee be as follows:—

1. "Ten shipowners to be nominated as follows: one by the Council of the 'Chamber of Shipping,' two by the Steam and Sailing Shipowners' Associations of Liverpool, and one each by the Shipowners' Associations of London, Glasgow, Leith, North-East Coast of England, Hull, Bristol, Channel Ports, and Ireland.

2. Three members to be nominated by the Councils of the 'Institute of Naval Architects,' the 'Institution of Shipbuilders and Engineers,' Glasgow, and the 'Institution of Shipbuilders and Engineers,' Newcastle-on-Tyne, respectively.

3. Three persons to be nominated by the 'Local Marine Boards' of the United Kingdom practically acquainted with the navigation of merchant vessels.

4. Three persons to be nominated by 'Seamen's Societies' recognized by the President of the Board of Trade for this purpose, being or having been able-bodied seamen.

5. Two persons to be nominated by the 'Committee of Lloyd's Register' and the Committee of the 'Institute of London Underwriters.'"—(*The Earl of Ravensworth.*)

THE EARL OF ONSLOW said, that neither the Schedule in the Bill nor that which the noble Earl proposed to substitute for it would fully meet the views of all the shipowners in the Three Kingdoms. For instance, he had received adverse remarks on the noble Earl's Amendment from Belfast, which port claimed to have representation, inasmuch as it contributed 50 per cent more than Glasgow or Bristol. Of the 27 members of the Consultative Council formed under the proposal of the noble Earl, 19 would be representative of shipowners only, and he asked their Lordships to consider how the master mariners, underwriters, seamen, and other important interests were likely to fare with such a majority against them. This Bill was really a very small one, and the objects at which it aimed were not very large. In fact, it would only seriously affect 1,165 out of the 37,552 vessels on the British register. He was afraid, therefore, that the noble Earl was forging a Nasmyth hammer to crack a nut. The Government honestly desired to meet the views of the shipowners, and as far as they could to accept the principle that those who understood the subject should advise the Board of Trade in reference to the saving of life at sea. He would ask their Lordships to adhere to the Schedule in the Bill, though he was willing to accept any six names to represent the shipowners and builders, upon which all the interests affected could agree.

LORD NORTON thought that if neither the system of election proposed in the Bill nor that in the Amendment would give satisfaction to the shipowners, it would be better to have no advising council at all, but to leave the Board of Trade free to obtain the best opinions it could in each case. Nothing justified the establishment of a Consultative Committee at all but the hope of making it a representative body, which shipowners generally would recognize; otherwise it was only mischievous, as dividing responsibility.

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH said, the ships chiefly affected by the Bill included the magnificent vessels belonging to the great lines of passenger steamers. The noble Earl had met him to a certain extent, and, indeed, to such an extent that he should hardly be justified in putting their Lordships to the trouble of a Division. At the same time he could not help thinking that the plan for appointing the Council laid down in the Bill was a very halting and unsatisfactory one.

Amendment *negatived*; First Schedule *agreed to.*

SECOND SCHEDULE.

Matters for which the Rules are to provide.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW, in moving an Amendment in the 2nd clause of the Second Schedule, said, the Schedule dealt with "matters for which the rules are to provide," and the 2nd clause was—

> "The number and description of the boats, life-boats, life-rafts, life-jackets, and life buoys to be carried by British ships, according to the class in which they are arranged, and the methods to be provided to get the boats and other life-saving appliances into the water."

The Amendment was to insert, after the word "arranged," the words—

> "And the mode of their construction, also the equipments to be carried by the boats and rafts."

The best method of saving lives was to prevent ships from sinking, and when shipowners made proper provision in the way of construction, water-tight compartments and bulkheads, he proposed that the Consultative Committee should have power to take this into consideration in mitigation of the obligations which they would otherwise apply. The second part of the Amendment was intended to meet the views of the noble Lord who had an Amendment to allow regulations to be made as to what should be carried in boats in the way of life-saving apparatus.

Amendment *moved*,

> In Second Schedule, page 5, line 1, after ("arranged") insert ("and the mode of their construction, also the equipments to be carried by the boats and rafts.")—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH said, this was a good Amendment, because it did justice to the immense improvements which were constantly being made in shipbuilding. The Amendment would only affect a certain class, but that the very best class of ships.

Amendment *agreed to.*

LORD COTTESLOE, in moving to add at the end after the word "buoys" the words—

> "And also a sufficient quantity of oil for use in stormy weather, according to the size and tonnage of ships or boats,"

said, that he felt deeply interested in the welfare of the British seaman, although he was not personally connected with either the Navy or the Mercantile Service. With the Mercantile Service he had never in any way been connected, but he had always had personal interests in the Royal Navy, and for three generations members of his family had flown their flags as Admirals in that Service. Their Lordships would remember that in 1882 this subject was brought before the House. A Return had, at his instance, been kindly produced by his noble Friend the Vice President of the Board of Trade, of the experiments which had been made and which appeared to have met with a considerable measure of success. The use of oil had in many instances been instrumental in saving life in tempestuous weather, and he thought that no ship should go to sea without carrying a certain quantity as part of her equipment. The subject had been taken up by the National Lifeboat Institution, and the result of their inquiries had recently been published in their journal. Reports were given in that journal by captains of ships who had succeeded in many instances in saving their vessels from shipwreck by the use of oil. Mr. T. A. Cregan wrote to *The Glasgow Herald* an account of a most effectual experiment during a heavy gale in the Bay of Biscay. A quart of oil in two canvas bags punctured with small holes proved so efficacious that scarcely a sea came on board, each wave as it reached the oil ceasing to lash and undulating past the ship without a break. Captain James Forman, of the ship *Airlie*, of Dundee, described the effect of the oil as "magical," and stated that but for its application he should certainly have lost all his boats. Captain Lashbrooke, master of the ketch *Elizabeth*, of Bude, gave similar testimony of his experience of this remedy during a storm on December 13, 1882, and the captain of the steamship *Stanmore*, which arrived at New York on September 21, 1882, ascribed his safety during terrible weather to his having towed a bag of oil, which slightly escaped, when the ship was running before the wind. Having shown the advantage of the use of oil as a life-saving appliance in stormy weather, he urged that no ship should put to sea without a supply of that article, and that oil should be included in the Schedule to that Bill. He ought to refer to an interesting Report on that subject made by Captain Chetwynd, R.N., who was specially engaged by the Life Boat Society to investigate and report on the use of oil in stormy weather, in which he said that the result of the experiments made had been to show that there was little difference in the effect produced by the various oils of ordinary everyday use, such as colza, linseed, fish or seal oil. In some cases paraffin was used with the same effect. Very small quantities of oil had been found sufficient to cover a considerable space with the smooth, glassy surface characteristic of oil on water. He therefore asked that it should be made compulsory on all shipowners to supply their vessels with oil as with other life-saving appliances. He hoped that none of their Lordships would ever experience the hazards and terrors of shipwreck; but were such a misfortune to happen to any of them, and they should be exposed to a tempest threatening the existence of the ship, he thought they would then be happy to avail themselves of the use of oil if any could be found on board. And if the master of the ship were in the emergency to offer them a boat which could not live in the sea while the passengers were getting on board of it, or a life-raft which would expose the occupants to the danger of being washed overboard, or a life-jacket to put on, or a life-buoy to cling to, he thought that a passenger would much prefer that the master should provide an oil bag or two to calm the surface of the water so as to enable boats to be safely launched and used for saving the passengers. Yet he regretted to say his noble Friend who had charge of that Bill hesitated to require that oil should be enumerated among the necessary life-saving appliances in the Schedule to the measure. The noble Lord moved the Amendment standing in his name.

Moved, in Schedule 2, page 5, line 6, after ("boats, life-boats, life-rafts, life-jackets, and life-buoys") add ("and also a sufficient quantity of oil for use in stormy weather, according to the size and tonnage of ships or boats.")—(*The Lord Cottesloe.*)

Lord ELPHINSTONE said, with regard to an experiment at Folkestone, by which oil was forced through a pipe from below to the surface of the water, it was found that the experiment was not so successful as some persons had been at first inclined to imagine. Oil forced up from below was not so efficacious as when poured on the surface of the water. An interesting experiment was tried in 1886 on the Royal Yacht *Osborne*, anchored at Carrickfergus. The Prince and Princess of Wales were on board and were anxious to land. A heavy sea was rolling at the time, and great anxiety was felt as to how the Princess could be conveyed ashore, because there was not enough water for the yacht to cross the Bar. The chief engineer then suggested that oil should be made use of for the purpose of smoothing the water alongside the yacht. A preliminary experiment was made, and the effect of the oil in breaking the waves was found to be so great that it was decided to carry the experiment further. When the Princess of Wales left the yacht a steam cutter was sent ahead to distribute the contents of bags of oil from the small holes in each bag. The desired effect was attained. No broken water and no sea came into the boat. It was announced as the conviction at that time that the development of oil pouring on water could not fail to be of immense advantage, especially in the case of lifeboats. So satisfied were the Admiralty of the importance of using oil in certain circumstances that they had issued a Memorandum for the information of officers in general on the use of oil at sea, and for modifying and breaking the effect of the waves. The manner in which the oil could be used was pointed out, and the cases in which it could be employed with advantage were also referred to. There could be no doubt that under certain conditions the use of oil at sea was of the greatest possible advantage. He did not know what the decision of the Board of Trade might be, but the Admiralty did not propose to issue any instructions to commanders on the subject. They felt satisfied, after calling the attention of officers to the use of oil by the Memorandum previously referred to, that it would be better to leave officers to exercise their own judgment according to the circumstances.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW said, he thought their Lordships must be indebted to the noble Lord for having brought this interesting subject before the House. He should have been glad to meet the views of the noble Lord and to advise their Lordships to accept the Amendment in its entirety were it not for the difficulty of mentioning one article alone and excluding others. Since this Bill had been brought forward he had received models and inventions of a great many useful appliances; in fact, his room was more like a section of the Inventions Exhibition than a gentleman's study. Those persons would feel aggrieved if any particular article was mentioned specifically in the Schedule. He was quite pepared to bring up words on Report and to leave it to the Committee which would have to decide as to the equipments to be carried by boats, and also the appliances to be carried by ships, to say whether they would include oil. He hoped that when the noble Lord saw the words on Report they would meet his views.

Amendment *negatived;* Schedule *agreed to.*

The Report of Amendments to be received on *Friday* next; and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 96.)

TIMBER ACTS (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 69.)

(*The Lord Privy Seal.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he had caused to be circulated a Memorandum explanatory of the provisions of the Bill amongst their Lordships. The Bill was an amendment of the Irish Timber Act of 1783. The Act of 1783 encouraged the planting of trees by two classes of persons. The first class was that of tenants for lives renewable for ever; and it was provided that when they planted trees they should be the absolute owners of the property as tenants in fee. The second class was that of tenants for life, or lives, or any term of years, of which 12 years were still unexpired. It was proposed to extend these provisions to a new class—namely, the tenants for statutory terms, which, as their Lordships knew, were for 15 years' renewal. There was one other class to which it was proposed to extend the Bill, subject to registration —namely, the class of tenants holding under a lease of not less than 31 years. He would like to say, in reply to several communications which he had received, that the Bill was not to be of a retrospective character, and that it would be obligatory that registration should take place within 12 months after the planting of the trees. It would be evident that it would not be possible for any tenant to claim compensation for trees that had been planted more than 12 months before the registration; and he further had to say that under the Bill there was no change made as to the right of tenants to plant trees. The only change which the Bill made was as to those who were to be permitted to cut them down, or to claim the property in them as their own. He begged to move the second reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Privy Seal.*)

THE MARQUESS OF WATERFORD said, he was not quite clear that the description given of the Bill by the noble Earl (Earl Cadogan) was quite accurate. This Bill embodied in itself a great number of Acts of Parliament which were passed in the last century, and he believed it was most difficult to read those Acts of Parliament together. He ventured to suggest to their Lordships that they might be passing a Bill which contained a great deal more drastic concessions than they would wish to give. They were aware that under the Act of 1870 there had been a great number of concessions given, which they were told afterwards necessitated the Act of 1881, and they were told that the Act of 1881 necessitated the Act of 1887. Therefore, they were accustomed to what were called "germs" in these Bills. He wanted to suggest to the noble Earl that instead of embodying these numerous Acts of Parliament, they should embody the one Act of 1783 which he named. He (the Marquess of Waterford) had read that Act, and could say—speaking only as a layman—that that Act gave the whole of the powers which the noble Earl had mentioned. It was not an amending Act, so far as he could understand it; and it referred to no other Acts. He was afraid if they passed the Bill in its present shape their Lordships would be embodying a number of Acts of Parliament of which they knew nothing. He did not wish to prevent judicial tenants obtaining all the rights which the Memorandum stated the Bill would give them; but why embody a number of Acts when one Act which clearly expressed what was meant would suffice?

Lord INCHIQUIN said, he thought it was singularly inconvenient to anybody who was interested in Irish legislation to have a Bill of this nature brought before their Lordships. It was quite impossible by looking into the Bill to make out what it meant. He went to several people for an explanation of its provisions, but without avail. What he was afraid of was, that this Memorandum might not be quite so accurate as the noble Earl (Earl Cadogan) hoped it was. If it was perfectly accurate, then he had no objection to the Bill. But what he should have thought would have been much simpler than that, was to have repealed all those numerous Acts which, he might tell their Lordships, were so bulky that they would stand three or four feet from the ground if piled on top of each other, and which would take a lawyer a very considerable time to examine; as for a layman, it was absolutely impossible. The simplest way would have been to have repealed all those old Acts, and to have brought in one sole Act which would explain exactly what was meant, so that they might understand exactly what they were doing; because such an Act as this might be used in a way in which it was not intended that it should be used in Ireland, especially now, as their Lordships knew, that there was another Bill called a Timber Bill in the other House, which would come up to their Lordships in a later period of the Session, and which might undo what they were trying to do by this Bill. That Bill might never come up; but if it did come up, it would be a second amending Bill in the same Session of Parliament. The noble Earl, he thought, would do well to have the Bill recast.

Lord FITZGERALD, in a minute criticism of the Bill, said, it was wholly unnecessary to incorporate all those Acts which had been mentioned relating to the planting of trees in Ireland. They are very difficult to interpret, and he was afraid that if they incorporated them all in the present Bill it would only lead to confusion and embarrassment. He was entirely favourable to promoting the cultivation of trees in Ireland. What he intended to propose was that the Committee stage of the Bill should be postponed until after the Whitsuntide Recess, so as to give them full time for its consideration. He was afraid he could not accept all the statements of the noble Earl (Earl Cadogan) with regard to the rights of planting trees and their ownership in Ireland. The noble Earl had told them that it was perfectly settled law that the right of planting trees, quite irrespective of registration, had been established under the Land Acts. He could not accept that statement, and should like the noble Earl to mention the cases in which it had become settled law. He (Lord Fitzgerald) would point out that the statutory terms of 15 years, though of a shorter may be of a more continuous character than the terms contemplated by the ancient Acts, as at the end of every 15 years the rights of the landlord and tenant were liable to re-adjustment. At the same time, he should be glad that the statutory tenants in Ireland should have the benefit of some such enactment as was proposed by the present Bill, if it could be done with proper safeguards. But they knew from experience that legislation of the kind if unguarded was very apt to end in paring off or tearing up some rights of the landlords.

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury) said, it was very gratifying to observe the horror with which the noble and learned Lord (Lord Fitzgerald) regarded the tearing up of the rights of the landlords. He could only regret that it had come rather late. The noble and learned Lord had not been quite so sensitive in the matter when measures of a very different character from the Bill for liberty to plant trees in Ireland were under discussion.

Lord FITZGERALD said, he was not a Member of the House while those measures were under discussion.

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, he believed that was so; and he supposed that if the noble and learned Lord had been here during all the time the legislation would have been very different from what it was. It seemed to him that the real scope and object of the Bill was not thoroughly understood. It was a perfectly reasonable proposal that the Committee stage should be postponed till after Whitsuntide, which, he hoped, would afford their Lordships ample time for sufficient examination of this perfectly innocent and harmless piece of legislation.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury), in explanation, said, for the information of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Waterford) and others, that the present Bill did not propose to repeal any of the provisions of the ancient Acts. It was merely intended to give a most distinct intimation of what the Irish Timber Acts were, and it left them at large just as they were; but those Acts had been enumerated in the Bill in order that what they meant might not be left out of mind. There were no new rights created by the Bill.

Earl CADOGAN said, he would remind their Lordships that a Bill precisely similar to this one had been amended in their Lordships' House in 1886; but, as differences of opinion had been found to exist upon its discussion, it had been dropped in the House of Commons. It provided, like this Bill, that tenants of statutory terms should have the same privileges as tenants for life, or lives renewable for ever.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (BALLYMONEY, &c.) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Ballymoney, Clones, and Tuam; was *presented* by The Lord Privy Seal; read 1ª; and *referred* to the Examiners. (N° 97.)

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 7th May, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—*Special Report* — Committee of Selection (Standing Committees).

Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment* [233].

Committee—Criminal Evidence [132]—r.p.

Committee—Report—Local Government (England and Wales) Electors [181-253].

Third Reading — Glebe Lands* [180], and *passed.*

Provisional Order Bills — *Ordered — First Reading*—Tramways (No. 2)* [242]; Tramways (No. 3)* [243]; Gas (No. 1)* [244]; Gas (No. 2)* [245]; Water (No. 2)* [246]; Gas and Water* [247]; Pier and Harbour (No. 2)* [248]; Local Government (No. 3)* [249]; Local Government (No. 4)* [250]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 6)* [251]; Local Government (Gas)* [252].

Second Reading—Metropolitan Police* [212].

QUESTIONS.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1886—CLAUSE 6, SEC. 2—FAIR RENTS.

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether fair rents payable by crofters are, by Clause 6, Section 2, of the Act of 1886, declared to run as from the first term of Whit Sunday or Martinmas next succeeding the decision of the Crofters' Commissioners; whether the decision of the Commissioners as regards the estate of South Uist occurred on the 10th of October, 1887; whether, so early as the term of Martinmas, 1887, arrears on the estate of South Uist could under the Act be dealt with or demanded; whether he is aware that in the case of Dugald Walker, crofter, Kilphedder, of South Uist, whose rent was reduced from £5 to £3, and arrears amounting to £52 5*s.* 3*d.* cancelled, except as to £6 payable in half-yearly payments of £1, Walker was asked for the first half-yearly instalment within two months of the Commissioners' decree?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The words of Sub-section 2, Clause 6, are that the rent fixed by the Commission shall be deemed to be the rent payable by the crofter as from the first term of Whit Sunday or Martinmas next succeeding the decision.

The decision of the Commission on the South Uist rents was dated October 10, 1887. The Commission hold that they are entitled to order payment of the first instalment of arrears found due by them at the next ensuing term. Dugald Walker was asked for the first instalment of arrears found due — namely, £1—at Martinmas, 1887, which was within two months of the decision; but the proprietor did not, as she was entitled to do, require that the stipulated rent as for the previous term should be paid, but intimated that he need only for that term pay the same rent as would in future be paid under the decision of the Commission, and accordingly only £1 10*s*., instead of £2 10*s*., of rent was charged.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1886—CLAUSE 1, SEC. 4—SUB-DIVISION AND SUB-LETTING.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether a crofter who may for the season allow a cottar or relative the privilege of planting a few potatoes on a patch of the croft thereby incurs the penalty against sub-division and sub-let, under Clause 1, Section 4, of the Crofters Act of 1886; whether he is aware that crofters on the estate of South Uist have been warned against granting the privilege; and, in particular, whether Angus Morrison, crofter in Kilphedder, of South Uist, was warned by the ground officer on the estate, on the 3rd of February, 1888, that if he permitted his brother, John Morrison, with 10 of a family, to plant a single potato, he (Angus) would be removed from the croft?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Without knowing the facts, and exact facts, of any case, it is impossible to expect an opinion on the legal question in the first paragraph, which is stated entirely hypothetically. Crofters have been warned against subletting crofts or parts of crofts in South Uist; and the general body of the crofters there have themselves expressed their dissatisfaction at the common pasture being overrun by stock belonging to cottars to whom parts of crofts have been illegally sub-let, to the injury of the township, and threatened the withholding of rent unless steps are taken by the proprietor against these unauthorized sub-tenants. Angus Morrison, who is referred to in the last paragraph, allowed his brother, John Morrison, to build a house on his croft, and to house a family of 10 in it; and this brother now has planted six barrels of potatoes, and feeds three cattle and four sheep on the township pasture. The ground officer had no authority to make any such threat as is referred to in the last paragraph, and did not do so.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON WARLIKE STORES—THE REPORT ON THE "COLLINGWOOD" GUN.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he is aware that the Royal Commission on Warlike Stores requested Colonel Hope to report on the Collingwood gun; that the Report in question was finished in October; the Commission ceased to exist in December; and that the Report was not yet before the public; and whether he will cause it to be published?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) (who replied) said: I am still expecting to receive from the Royal Commission the Supplemental Report referred to. I shall be exceedingly glad when the Papers on this subject can be published.

FRANCE—CASE OF JAMES WILLIAMS, OF HACKNEY.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in reference to a communication addressed to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on the 15th of December last, by Mr. Bennett, editor of *The Hackney Standard* newspaper, Whether inquiry has been made from the French Government as to the case of James Williams, of Hackney, alleged to have been wrongfully imprisoned in France, and who was afterwards released on the intervention of the late Lord Lyons; and, if so, what is the result of such inquiry?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): James Williams was convicted on March 1, 1886, of complicity in an attempted robbery in Paris, and sentenced to three years' imprisonment. It was represented by the prisoner's friends that he was innocent, and would have been acquitted had he not been mistaken at the trial for one William Chapman, who had been condemned in 1872 to three years' imprisonment for a similar offence. After appeals from Her Majesty's Embassy at Paris in his behalf, the prisoner was released on November 14, 1887, on the ground of his bad health and complete prostration, of his satisfactory conduct in prison, and in consequence of Lord Lyons's recommendation. But the French Authorities considered that Williams was guilty of the offence with which he was charged; and, although he was at first mistaken for another man of bad character, they denied that the severity of his sentence was thereby increased. Inquiries in this country showed Williams's former character to be bad, and that he had been imprisoned three times in previous years.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ALLEGED ASSAULT AT LETTERKENNY.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact, as stated in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 20th of April, that a few little girls were laughing at the police at Letterkenny, when a constable threw down and trampled on a Gweedore orphan, who became unconscious and was carried bleeding into the hospital; and, whether he will inquire into the circumstances of this case and the conduct of the police in question?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Inspector General of Constabulary reports that there is no truth in the accusation against the police contained in *The Freeman's Journal*. The girl informed the District Inspector of Constabulary, in presence of the doctor, that she fell over a stone and was stumbled on by another girl. She did not allege that she had been ill-used by any policeman. Two days after the occurrence the doctor told the District Inspector that the girl was then quite well, and that the injuries which she had received were very slight.

VALUATION ROLL—WORKMEN OCCUPANTS (SCOTLAND).

Mr. PRESTON BRUCE (Fifeshire, W.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether householders who are workmen occupying houses belonging to their employers on a tenancy determinable with their employment, but for which they pay rent in the shape of a deduction made from their wages, are entitled to have their names inserted in the "tenant" or in the "inhabitant occupier" column of the Valuation Roll; whether a difference of practice prevails as to this, the names of such householders being in some counties inserted as "tenants," in others as "inhabitant occupiers;" whether, when their names are inserted as "tenants," large numbers of such householders are qualified for and enjoy School Board and municipal franchises; whereas, being inserted as "inhabitant occupiers," they are wholly disqualified for these franchises; and, whether, if these anomalies exist, he will, in preparing a Local Government Bill for Scotland, provide a remedy, so as to place the local franchises on a broad and equal basis?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The hon. Member's Question involves more than one point of law, as to which I can give no authoritative opinion. Where a deduction from wages is made in respect of the occupation of a house owned by the employer, the usual practice is, I understand, to enter the occupiers in the Valuation Roll as tenants. But the difficulty does not arise from the name given to the occupier in the Roll. If the rental of the house is entered in the Roll, then the occupier is placed on the School Board Roll. I shall inquire whether a difference of practice prevails in the making up of the Roll in the case of the class of occupiers referred to in the Question; and if there is I will endeavour to remedy the anomaly.

WAR OFFICE (AUXILIARY FORCES)—WARRANT AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ON MILITIA SERVICE—SERGEANTS' MESSES.

Captain M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the case that Warrant and Non-Commissioned Officers on Army engagement, serving with the permanent Staffs of brigades and battalions of Militia at stations outside the depôt centres, are denied the privilege of a sergeants' mess establishment, with allowance of fuel and light; and, if so, whether he will consider the desirability of redressing this grievance?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: Sergeants' messes have not been considered necessary for Militia brigades or battalions during the non-training period; and as the sergeants of the permanent staff are for the most part married men, no grievance on such a ground is known to exist. In case of battalions at the headquarters of regimental districts the depôt mess is available.

CEYLON—RAILWAY TO HAPUTALE.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is intended to construct a railway to Haputalé, in Ceylon; and, if so, is it to be constructed on the broad or five and a-half feet gauge, at the estimated rate of £17,500 per mile; is the proposed railway to be constructed departmentally, or will the contract be let to an experienced contractor; and, whether, in the interests of economy, he will invite contractors to tender for broad and narrow gauge lines, the light character of the traffic in the Colony not requiring a heavy and costly line of railway?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: The Secretary of State has sanctioned an extension of the existing Ceylon Railway, from its present terminus at Nanuoya to Haputalé, a distance of 25½ miles. It has been decided, on the strong recommendation of the Governor and the consulting engineer, not to introduce a break of gauge on this, the last section of a line 158 miles long. The estimated cost of the extension, if executed by contract, is £17,500 per mile; but the consulting engineer anticipates that this will be reduced to £17,100 per mile, if the work is executed departmentally. The conditions in this instance are specially favourable to the departmental system, the adoption of which has been forcibly advocated by the Governor on the grounds of economy and expedition. In these circumstances, there is no intention of inviting tenders for broad and narrow gauge lines.

Captain M'Calmont,

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, CLASS II. —COMPULSORY RETIREMENT OF WRITERS.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Government to compel the retirement of any Civil Service writers pending the Report of the Royal Commission; and, if not, what is the cause of the increase of £4,000 in the Estimates (Class II., Vote II., Civil Service Commission), under the heading "Bonuses and Gratuities to Copyists?"

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I am not aware of any intention to compel the retirement of copyists; but I must not be understood to pledge the Departments in any way to take, or avoid taking, any action which may seem necessary in the Public Service; but there is no connection between this question and the £4,000 for bonuses and gratuities, this being the amount which is expected will be required to meet arrangements already sanctioned.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—SUDBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the hon. Member for Cumberland (Penrith Division), Whether the Charity Commissioners are aware that the Governors of the Sudbury Grammar School have not acted upon the limitations in the occupation of the Head Master, as conveyed to them by the Charity Commissioners in March last; and, whether they intend to take steps to ensure that the scheme laid down by them in regard to this school be no longer violated?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The Governors of Sudbury Grammar School have acted upon an interpretation of the scheme regulating that foundation which, in the opinion of the Commissioners, is not correct; and the Commissioners, in a letter of the 28th of March, informed the Governors of this opinion. The Governors have subsequently been in correspondence with the Commissioners, with a view to justifying their own interpretation of the scheme; but the Commissioners have informed them that, after consideration of those explanations, they adhere to the opinion expressed on the 28th of March. The Commissioners entertain no doubt that the Governors will now conform to that opinion, and will administer the Foundation accordingly.

LIMERICK LUNATIC ASYLUM — APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNORS.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick, City) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, having regard to the correspondence that has taken place between the Corporation of Limerick and the Irish Government, seeking direct representation of the Board of the Limerick Lunatic Asylum, and to the concession of that principle, acknowledged by letters of Sir Redvers Buller, while Under Secretary for Ireland, For what reasons the Irish Government now refuse to ratify the appointment as Governors of the two names submitted by the Corporation for approval; whether the Corporation have intimated that the selections were the best in their interest from their Body, and disclaiming any intention to limit the Lord Lieutenant's selection, that, requiring them to nominate other names, would now be an affront on their part to the gentlemen already named; and, whether, having regard to the fact that one of the gentlemen named by the Corporation has since been appointed High Sheriff of Limerick by His Excellency, and the other is a medical doctor, the Lord Lieutenant will now consent to the appointment of these gentlemen, not relying on a strict interpretation of his letter, and which, in the first instance, was misconstrued by the Limerick Town Council?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Lord Lieutenant, in expressing his readiness to accord the privilege of increased representation to the Limerick Town Council on the Board of Governors of the district lunatic asylum, stated that he would be prepared to consider the names of any gentlemen sent forward by them, with a view to the appointment of two out of the number of gentlemen so selected. The Town Council met this by sending forward two names only, thereby endeavouring to remove from the Lord Lieutenant any discretion in the matter. The subsequent appointment to be High Sheriff of one of the persons named by the Town Council was due to the fact that under the Municipal Privileges Act His Excellency had no option. A strict interpretation of the letter referred to requires a list of names to be sent forward by the Town Council, who have never alleged that they misconstrued it, nor does it appear how they could have misconstrued it. The Lord Lieutenant is responsible by statute for the appointments in question, and cannot divest himself of that responsibility.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Would the right hon. Gentleman tell us how many names the Lord Lieutenant would like to have?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Certainly more than two.

MR. O'KEEFFE: The right hon. Gentleman has not replied to the third paragraph of the Question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir; I think I have. The Lord Lieutenant cannot accept the nomination of two gentlemen under present circumstances.

THE CROFTER COMMISSIONERS—THE ISLAND OF SYKE.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Secretary for Scotland possesses or exercises any control over the sittings of the Crofter Commissioners; and, if so, whether he can explain why the Commissioners visited in 1887 one estate and part of another only in the Island of Skye; whether there are other estates in Skye in the same position as regards crofters and crofter applications as those visited; whether he has received complaints from the non-visited estates in Skye of the course adopted by the Commissioners; and, whether, if he have the power, the Secretary for Scotland will issue instructions that if a well-defined district, such as Skye, is once taken up by the Commissioners they shall continue their investigations until complete?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): It is provided by Section 17 of the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1886, that the Crofters Commission—

> "Shall hold sittings in such places to which the Act applies, and in such order and subject to such regulations as the Secretary for Scotland may prescribe."

The Commission, having disposed of over 600 cases, left Skye on 7th June, 1887, (1) because their services were urgently required elsewhere; and (2) because large numbers of the crofters interested in the proceedings of the Commission had left for the fishing elsewhere. There are, no doubt, other estates in Skye requiring the attendance of the Commission as well as those visited already; and the Secretary for Scotland has received complaints from some of them that they had not been attended to before the Commission left the Island. But it was considered that the public interest would be more efficiently served by the Commissioners giving some of their time to other districts having pressing claims than by their returning at once to Skye, where considerable headway had been made. The Secretary for Scotland cannot give any general undertaking as to the movements of the Commissioners. The arrangements for their sittings have invariably been decided on with reference to the requirements of the districts from which applications have been received; and with the view of dealing with them in such manner as was considered best in the interest of the whole crofter area.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—SERVICE OF LIME JUICE.

Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, as the statute governing the serving out of lime juice to the crews of merchant vessels only applies to vessels navigating between the United Kingdom and any port out of the same, he will take steps to amend the Act so as to include every voyage taken by such vessels?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): I am not prepared to propose an alteration in the law in the sense the hon. Member suggests; because I think it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to carry such a proposal into effect.

EXCISE DUTIES (LOCAL PURPOSES) BILL—STEAM PLOUGHS AND THRESHING MACHINES.

Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether steam ploughs and threshing machines will be exempted from duty under Clause 2 of the Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill?

Mr. TOWNSEND (Warwickshire, Stratford-on-Avon) had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether steam ploughing engines, used only for agricultural purposes, and using the roads only when going from the homestead to the fields, or from one field or one farm to another, will be exempt from the £5 duty on locomotives, under Clause 1 of the Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill?

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) also had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is intended that threshing drums, straw elevators, chaff cutters, and four-wheel trollies used for conveying mowing machines from farm to farm shall be exempted from the Wheel Tax?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I will answer this Question and those of the hon. Members for the Stratford-on-Avon and Eye Divisions together, if they will allow me. But I must warn them that my answer must be taken as explanatory only of my proposals in the Bill, and not as an authoritative declaration of the interpretation they are to place upon the terms of the Act when it becomes law. According to the terms and intention of the Bill a licence will not be required for a steam plough, threshing machine, elevator, trolley, or any other implement used solely in agriculture. But locomotives or traction engines used at all on the roads will be chargeable to duty.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS — THE CART AND WHEEL TAX — "TRADE CARTS."

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether lorries or other vessels used exclusively within the boundaries of docks for transferring timber from steamers to railway trucks, canal barges, or stacking yards within the docks, would come under the designation of "Trade Carts" or waggons used for the conveyance of any goods or burden in the course of trade; and, whether such vehicles would be liable to the new Cart Tax if it can be shown that they never use the roads in the course of trade?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square: A licence will not be required for the vehicles referred to, if never used on the roads.

INLAND REVENUE — INCOME TAX — PROFITS ARISING FROM ABROAD

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, under present Regulations, persons resident in the United Kingdom are liable for Income Tax on all profits arising or accruing from any profession, trade, employment, or vocation carried on outside the United Kingdom, whether such profits are remitted to the United Kingdom or not; whether residents in the United Kingdom are not liable for Income Tax on incomes derived from interest on Government or other securities, or from possessions held outside the United Kingdom, unless such incomes are transmitted to the United Kingdom; and, whether there is any reason for the continuance of this differential treatment under the several schedules?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The question of the liability of persons residing in the United Kingdom to be charged Income Tax on profits derived from the sources named, whether remitted to this country or not, has been recently the subject of a case stated for the opinion of the High Court. The High Court held that they were liable; but the Court of Appeal reversed the decision of the Court below, and the case is still under the consideration of the Inland Revenue Commissioners. Persons residing in the United Kingdom who are the owners of Foreign or Colonial Securities or Possessions are liable to Income Tax only on the amounts received in this country. Whether there be any differential treatment in the two cases depends upon the ultimate settlement of the point of law involved.

THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS — INSPECTION OF ENDOWED SCHOOLS.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham) asked the hon. Member for Cumberland (Penrith Division), Whether the Charity Commissioners make any, and, if so, what, inspection of those endowed schools for which they have established schemes; and, whether such inspection, if any, is an inspection of the educational work or of the administration of the schemes of such schools?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The Charity Commissioners, having regard to the evidence given in 1886 and 1887 before the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed to inquire into the operations of the Endowed Schools Act and to the Report of that Committee, proceeded in the course of last autumn to take measures for the systematic inspection of all the endowed schools for which they had established schemes in the four following counties of England: — namely, Devonshire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, and Staffordshire. This is the utmost amount of such inspection that, without such an increase in their staff —by the appointment of additional Assistant Commissioners—as the Select Committee recommended for the purpose, the Commissioners felt able to attempt for the present. This inspection is not an inspection of the educational work of these schools, in the sense that it implies listening to the teaching or criticism of the methods of instruction adopted by the teachers or examination of the scholars for the purpose of testing the results of that instruction. In that sense it is not an educational inspection. The inspection which the Commissioners have set on foot is directed more particularly towards ascertaining whether in each case the school is in a satisfactory condition as regards buildings, finance, number of scholars in attendance, and staff of teachers; whether the provisions of the scheme, educational as well as administrative, are duly carried into effect; and what, if any, modifications in those provisions are rendered necessary by experience or by change of circumstances. And it is evident that an inspection of this kind is not merely an inspection of the administration of the school, but is likely also to afford information of much value in respect of its educational work. The Commissioners hope to be able, in their Report to the Queen at the beginning of next year, to make known some of the results of their proceedings in this matter.

TRADE AND WAGES—THE MASONS' LABOURERS AT THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he is aware that the present contractors for the Houses of Parliament have recently reduced the wages of their masons' labourers 25 per cent, say from 6*d*. per hour to 4½*d*. per hour, and that some of the masons' labourers are often suspended in a cradle, repairing the tower, at a height of between 200 and 300 feet; whether the Government get the benefit of any portion of this reduction in the cost of labour, or whether such reduction was taken into account when fixing the terms of the contract; and, whether this reduction in the rate of wages was made with the sanction of the Government?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): I am sorry to say that I cannot give the hon. Member the information he desires, as I have no official knowledge as to the rate of wages paid by the contractor to the stonemason's labourers employed at the Houses of Parliament; nor have I any right to inquire into the subject. How far the contractor took into account the possibility of making reductions in the wages he pays his men I cannot say; but the Government certainly would not directly derive any advantage from such reductions, and their sanction has not been given or asked. In the case of men working in dangerous places we pay our contractor 50 per cent additional; and I be sorry to think that the men so employed did not receive a corresponding benefit.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): Will the First Commissioner make some inquiry into the matter?

Mr. PLUNKET: I am afraid that in the nature of the contract I have no right to inquire.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS: Will he consider the advisability of seeing to it in future contracts?

Mr. PLUNKET: That raises a large question, which I could hardly enter upon in reply to a Question across the Table of the House.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—QUARTERMASTERS OF MILITIA.

Colonel HILL (Bristol, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, since by Article 1,060 of the Royal Warrant, dated December, 1887, Quartermasters of the Militia, after 30 years of total service, were granted pensions according to Line rates, or a maximum of £200 a-year, and that the duties performed by the old Adjutants of Auxiliary Forces are as important as those of the Quartermasters, the same boon will be conceded to these officers, permitting them to reckon service in similar manner, so as to enable them to get their maximum pension of £183?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. Brodrick) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: I am not prepared to admit any analogy between the cases of the old Adjutants of Auxiliary Forces and the Quartermasters. In the case of the latter, their retired pay is the sole acknowledgment in regard to their past service from the time they first entered the Army. The retired pay of the Adjutants has only reference to their service in the Auxiliary Forces, and is larger than they could have looked forward to when they accepted their appointments. Before becoming Adjutants they had received for their Line service, by the sale of their commissions or otherwise, whatever they were entitled to in respect of that service. I cannot hold out any hope of an alteration in the terms offered.

ADMIRALTY (SHIPS, &c.)—H.M.S. "INFLEXIBLE."

Sir WILLIAM PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the *Inflexible*, turret ship, 11,880 tons, costing upwards of £900,000, has been reported unfit to send to the Mediterranean, the cast-iron pathways under her turret rollers having shown signs of weakness and wear; whether these pathways were known or reported to be defective more than eight months ago; whether their state was known to the authorities before and during the repairs, amounting, it is reported, to over £60,000, which this vessel recently received in the Portsmouth Dockyard; what will it cost to replace these defective cast-iron pathways by others made of steel, or of other metal, and what time it will take; who is responsible for the fact that a vessel costing nearly £1,000,000, that has undergone in the yards recently a thorough repair at a cost of £60,000, and has been passed into the first class steam reserve, is now reported, so it is publicly stated, to be unfit to go to the Mediterranean; and, to which branch of the Admiralty or Dockyard does the responsibility attach?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The roller-paths of the *Inflexible* have become somewhat worn during the time she has been at Portsmouth and since she was passed into the First Reserve, owing to her having been used for drill purposes by the *Excellent's* training classes; but not so much so as to prevent her being sent to the Mediterranean if required. As the period of commission abroad would be three years, it was determined not to send this ship to a foreign station, if there was a likelihood of her requiring repairs before that period of time had been passed. The state of the roller-paths was perfectly well known when the ship was under repair; but as they were efficient for some time longer it was decided not to replace them until it was necessary to remove the guns for re-lining, when the work would be much simplified. The recent expenditure on the ship has not been on repairs merely, but mainly in carrying out extensive alterations. The cost of replacing the roller-paths will be about £3,000, if the time chosen for so doing is coincident with the removal of the guns.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—THE RETURN.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the presentation of the Return relating to the Royal Irish Constabulary for the year ending 31st March, 1888, ordered 20th February last, may be expected?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Inspector General of Constabulary reported that this Return was in hand, and would be presented as soon as possible; but he was at present unable to specify the exact date. It was a difficult Return to prepare, as it differed from the form in which the accounts of the Department were kept; but it would be laid on the Table at as early a date as was possible.

EXCISE—TOBACCO GROWERS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the cultivators of tobacco in the United Kingdom will be grated any further concessions this season than were allowed last year?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am quite ready to grant any further facilities that appear to be reasonably required; but, so far, I have been asked for no specific concessions except one. The deputation who recently waited on me only urged me to allow the growth of tobacco duty free in this country for a series of years, till the industry was firmly established. Apart from the other objections that might be brought against such a proposal, I did not feel that, in the interests of the Revenue, I should be justified in acceding to their request. It would be a serious thing to do anything to imperil the very large revenue we receive from tobacco.

ARMY—PRIZE MONEY.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the next of kin are entitled to receive prize money due to soldiers who have died previous to the distribution of it?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: Prize money forms part of the personal estate of a soldier, and is subject to the same rules of distribution. It is not necessary that the soldier should live till the prize is distributed.

WAR OFFICE (SMALL ARMS)—THE NEW REPEATING RIFLE.

SIR HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he can state to the House, approximately, at what time the new repeating rifle lately decided upon for the Army will be in the hands of all the soldiers of the First and also of the Second Army Corps respectively; and, what probability there is of a further sufficient reserve being in store by the end of the present year for the rest of the Army?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Until a magazine rifle is recommended to me by my military advisers as suitable for adoption it is impossible to commence its manufacture. A certain number are just about to be issued to the troops for trial; and, in the meantime, preparations are being made for its manufacture if approved. There shall be no delay in pushing on the manufacture as soon as the rifle is finally adopted.

ADMIRALTY—THE VICTUALLING DEPARTMENT—A NEW OFFICE.

MR. JENNINGS (Stockport) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether it is intended to create a new office in the Victualling Department of the Admiralty, at a salary of £1,000 a-year; and, whether it is to be given to an official who in 1878 was a writer in the Secretary's Department of the Admiralty, and who has already received, in an unusually short space of time, promotion to one office of £600 a-year, and to another of £850 a-year?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): There is no intention to create a new office in the Victualling Department of the Admiralty carrying a salary of £1,000.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONERS, KANTURK, CO. CORK.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is now more than two years since the Land Sub-Commissioners sat in Kanturk District, County Cork, to hear fair rent applications; whether he is aware that a large number of these applications in this district under the Act of 1881 have been listed for a considerable time, and have not yet been heard, also that a large number of leaseholders' applications under the Act of 1887 have been listed, and not yet heard; and, whether, under these circumstances, the Land Commission will arrange for a sitting of the Sub-Commissioners at Kanturk on an early day?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me it is the case that a Sub-Commission last sat at Kanturk in April, 1886. All cases listed were then heard, with the exception of one which was adjourned. There are at present, including leaseholders' applications, 500 cases unheard. It is probable a Sub-Commission will sit in the Kanturk Union next July.

NATIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION (IRELAND)—SALARIES OF TEACHERS.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can state what is the rule of the National Board of Education as regards the payment of salaries to teachers or assistant teachers of National Schools in cases where such teachers or assistant teachers had not entered on their duties until a date subsequent to the first school day of a month; is it customary to pay result fees to a teacher for a period of time greater than that for which he can claim salary; and, whether any cases of such payment of result fees for a period greater than that for which salary was claimed have occurred within the past six months?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the salaries of teachers are computed from the date upon which they enter on their duties. It is not customary to pay result fees for a period of time greater than that for which salary can be claimed. These fees are computed, not like salaries according to days, but according to months. In exceptional cases the Commissioners may sanction result fees in respect of a month for the entire of which service has not been given and salary is paid for part thereof only. Some cases of this kind have occurred within the past six months.

INLAND REVENUE—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—CARRIAGE, CART, AND WHEEL TAX—HACKNEY CARRIAGES.

COLONEL DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether hackney carriages in London, which have to pay an annual police licence of £2, may be considered trade vehicles, and pay a tax of 5*s.* instead of 15*s*?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Question of the hon. and gallant Gentleman mixes up two different classes of vehicles—trade carts or vans, which are used to carry burdens, and hackney carriages, which are used to carry persons. The latter have for some time past been subject to duty as carriages; and the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, which has just passed this House, deals with that duty. I see no reason, even if it were now practicable, for classing them as carts and subjecting them as such to the new duty, which will be levied under the Bill now before the House, when it becomes law.

INLAND REVENUE—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—HAWKERS' LICENCES.

COLONEL DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether tradesmen, who paid rates and taxes on their shops, may be exempt from taking out a hawker's licence when they also sent out vans or carts from which sales are made on application by customers in the streets?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Tradesmen whose vans and carts do not go from town to town, or to other persons' houses, are not liable to Hawker's Licence Duty. Sales made on applications by customers in the streets of the town where the tradesmen reside will not render a licence necessary.

CROFTERS—COLONIZATION.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, What is the amount which the Government require to be raised by private subscription for colonization of crofters against the £10,000 proposed to be provided by Vote of the House of Commons; what are the conditions on which such private subscriptions are to be advanced, and is their repayment to be secured *pari passu* with the advances of the Government, or otherwise; what is the rate of interest included in the eight equal annual repayments of £20 17*s.* 8*d.* each; what is it estimated will be the effective capital which each crofter family (understood as five persons) will have at command out of the £120 advanced, after paying their passage and building their house and furnishing it; and will it be paid to them in money or in implements and cattle, and first year's rations, and in what proportion; will the Government circulate Papers giving full information on the subject before the Vote is taken, and be willing to receive suggestions for insuring success in this first experiment in State colonization; and, is the Government willing to receive proposals, on similar lines, for similar experiments in other Colonies as well as Canada?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) (who replied) said: (1) The amount is £2,000; (2) the repayment of the private subscriptions will be made at such times, and subject to such conditions, as may from time to time be prescribed with reference to the advances from the Treasury; (3) it is proposed that the repayments shall be collected by eight equal instalments, commencing the fifth year, at £11 5*s.* 8*d.* of capital and £9 12*s.* interest, and so on; (4) it is proposed that the £120 shall be expended in paying the passage money, and in buying the necessary implements and cattle, and supply, accommodation, &c., for the reception of the settlers on their homesteads; but it is not possible at this moment to give an accurate estimate of what amount, if any, will be handed over to the settler; (5) the Government will be prepared to lay on the Table of the House any necessary information before the Vote is taken, and are willing to receive any suggestions to insure the success of the scheme; but they cannot postpone the operation of the scheme in order to consider such suggestions, as delay would defeat the object in view; (6) the Government will be willing to receive any such proposal for consideration.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—THE BELFAST TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNTS OF 1885-6 — THE ROYAL VISIT.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Has the attention of the Local Government Board been given to the following items of expenditure objected to before their auditor, Colonel R. M. Studdart, as appearing in the accounts of the Belfast Town Council in the years 1885 and 1886, in connection with the visits of His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant and of their Royal

Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and amounting altogether to the sum of £1,370 4*s.* 3*d.*:—1. Payment of £30 for decorating Ulster Hall; 2. Payment of £200 for decorating and illuminating the Town Hall; 3. Payment of £217 16*s.* for decorations; 4. Payment of £180 for furniture and fitting up rooms for their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales; 5. Payment of £85 for decorating Town Hall; 6. Payment of £75 for decorating and illuminating Albert Memorial Clock; 7. The balance for expenditure of a kindred nature; did the auditor report that the Corporation was justified in this expenditure; and, if so, will he state under what Statute was the expenditure legal; was it the fact that the auditor, Colonel R. M. Studdart, was the hon. treasury of a public subscription fund raised to celebrate the Prince of Wales's visit; and, will instructions be given to the Belfast auditor to maintain an independent position in regard to such matters in future?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I have been promised a full Report on the subject of this Question to be forwarded from Dublin by post to-morrow. I will, therefore, ask the hon. Member to defer the Question until Thursday next.

COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS—APPOINTMENTS TO CLERKSHIPS, &c.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, How appointments to clerkships, &c., in the offices of the Commissioners of Irish Lights are obtained; if not by open competitive examinations held by the Civil Service Commissioners, why; and, whether there is any, and, if so, what, objection to throwing these appointments open to public competition?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): Appointments to the establishment of the Commissioners of Irish Lights are made by the Commissioners, who have not adopted the competitive system of the Civil Service. The Board of Trade have no control over the Commissioners in the matter.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL FUNDS—SEAMEN PENSIONERS' RESERVE.

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether any representations have been made to the Treasury, as to the injustice of remunerating the Seamen Pensioners' Reserve out of the Funds of Greenwich Hospital instead of out of the Consolidated Fund?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The Admiralty has been in correspondence with the Treasury; but the Treasury does not see its way to sanctioning the transfer to the Navy Votes of the remuneration paid out of the Funds of Greenwich Hospital to the Seamen Pensioners' Reserve.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL FUNDS—PENSIONS TO NAVAL RESERVE MEN.

SIR WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the Law Officers of the Crown have been consulted as to whether, by the terms of the Charter of Greenwich Hospital, it is legal to use any of the funds of that Institution, which were mainly intended for the relief of men disabled or too old for further service, in giving pensions to men of the Naval Reserve, who form part of the Effective Forces of the country?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): I am unaware of any reference having been made to the Law Officers of the Crown on the subject.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND)—RELIEF OF IRISH TAXATION.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will consider, in conjunction with the Irish Government, the advisability of devoting a portion of the £127,000 granted in relief of Irish taxation to the improvement of the position of the National School Teachers of Ireland?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) (who replied) said: I am afraid it would be impossible to carry out the scheme suggested; and if it were carried out the inhabitants of the localities, whose rates are intended to be relieved by this £127,000, would have good reason to complain.

AFRICA (CENTRAL) — THE ROYAL NIGER COMPANY—EXPORT OF ALCOHOLIC LIQUORS.

Mr. LAFONE (Southwark, Bermondsey) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can state the quantity of alcoholic liquors received by, or shipped on account of the Niger Company, for consumption in the territories comprised in their Charter, during each quarter of the years 1886, 1887, and to the 31st of March, 1888, inclusive?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): I must first point out to my hon. Friend that the Returns for which he asks are of the private trade of the Royal Niger Company, which they are not bound to make public, and which is different from their revenue raised for administrative purposes. The figures which I lately gave in answer to the hon. Member for Liverpool (Sir George Baden-Powell) were taken from the Table of Imports taxed for administrative purposes. But the Directors of the Company have furnished me with the statement which I am about to read; at the same time, I must guard against their doing so being taken as a precedent for the details of their private commerce being subject to inquiry:—1886.—First quarter, 25,375 gallons; second quarter, 38,265 gallons; third quarter, 39,500 gallons; fourth quarter, 42,800 gallons—total, 145,940 gallons. 1887.—First quarter, *nil*; second quarter, 36,690 gallons; third quarter, 12,250 gallons; fourth quarter, 24,976 gallons. 1888.—First quarter, 20,125 gallons. I should, at the same time, mention that these quantities, which even now appear large, are distributed among a population of at least 5,000,000. They have been rapidly reduced from 1886; but I am informed that the import in that year was only half that in 1884.

CROWN LAND REVENUE (WALES)—RETURN.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will grant a Return of the produce of the Crown Land Revenue in Wales arising from fee farm rents, leasehold rents, quit rents from mines, quarries, &c., from manors, castles, and royalties, distinguishing the amount realized each year from royalties on gold mining, from each year from 1836 to 1888 (in part continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 468, of Session 1835)?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) Leeds, N.): The hon. Member will find full particulars regarding the Land Revenue of the Crown in Wales in the Annual Reports of the Commissioners of Woods; but these figures do not show separately the receipts from gold royalties. The total amount of these royalties received in the years 1836 to 1888 is £4,657 17*s.* 6¼*d.*; and I shall be happy to show the hon. Member the figures for each separate year if desired.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—EVICTION OF THE BRENNAN FAMILY AT COOLNARISKA, QUEEN'S CO.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the report in *The Freeman's Journal* of an eviction at Coolnariska, Queen's County, on the property of Major Fitzmaurice, under the following circumstances: the evicted tenant, Michael Brennan, is 78 years of age, and his family consists of a wife and eight children, four of whom are suffering from measles. The tenant asked to be left in possession for a week or two, till the children were convalescent; but Mr. Stokes, the agent, refused to give any time, and ordered the bailiffs to proceed. That Brennan then offered to pay a year's rent down, and get security for the balance due; but this offer was also rejected. That the bailiffs then carried the sick children out, without giving them time to put on their clothes, and left them sitting on a dunghill, and afterwards threw out the furniture and bedclothes, and locked the house; whether the facts are as above stated; whether, shortly after, Brennan was arrested under an order of the Court of Chancery, and that both he and his wife were imprisoned some months ago in Tullamore Gaol by the same Court for attempting to regain the shelter of his house for his sick children; and, whether he will inquire into the circumstances of the case?

Mr. LALOR (Queen's Co., Leix) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the eviction of Michael Brennan, 78 years of age, his wife, and eight children, four of the latter in measles, on the property of Major Fitzmaurice, in the Queen's County; whether he will inquire if it is true, as stated in the report, that Mr. Stokes, the agent, refused the request of the man, who offered a year's rent down and security for the balance, to give a fortnight's time, until the children would be convalescent; whether the bailiffs carried the sick children out, as alleged, without giving them time to put on their clothes, and left them sitting on the dunghill; and, whether, as President of the Local Government Board, he can say what has become of this family?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I find that Michael Brennan was arrested in August last under a writ of attachment issued by the Court of Land Judges in consequence of his refusing to obey their order directing him to give up possession to Mr. Stokes, the receiver under that Court, of his holding. Immediately on regaining his liberty in January last he again took possession. A further conditional order was thereupon made for an attachment against him. He did not offer to pay a year's rent down and give security for the balance. On the contrary, he distinctly stated in his affidavit that he was wholly unable to pay his arrears; but that he hoped, with the assistance of his friends, he might be able to pay a year's rent. His wife was never imprisoned by the Court. The Constabulary report that they arrived an hour after the turning out of these people, having casually heard of it. The family were standing in the yard, dressed. They would not proceed to the workhouse, but have entered into the occupation of an outhouse, where they are at present living, and are reported to be all now quite well. In connection with the newspaper report on which these Questions appear to be based, I may mention that Major Fitzmaurice had no control whatever in the matter, the property being in Chancery, and that Mr. Stokes was not the agent of the landlord, but an official under the Court. I should further add that Brennan does not appear to have paid rent for a good many years.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—FISH-REARING STATIONS.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the attention of the Government has been called to the great success attending the hatching and rearing of sea fish by the Governments of the United States and Norway; whether the Government are prepared to recommend the establishment of hatching and rearing stations in Scotland, for the purpose of increasing by artificial means the supply of sea fish and lobsters; and, if so, whether he will consider the suitability of the Moray Firth or the Cromarty Firth for such an experimental station; would the cost of such a station with all the necessary appliances exceed £1,000, or some such sum; and, will the Government recommend a Supplementary Vote for this purpose?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The Government are not at present prepared to extend the grant of £2,000 given to Scotland for scientific purposes in connection with the Scotch Fisheries. It is estimated that a station of the kind indicated would cost from £1,000 to £1,500.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND)—DISTRICT FISHERY BOARDS.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Government have prepared a measure for the purpose of carrying out the recommendations of the Scotch Fishery Board, at page 24 of their Report for 1886—

> "That a general measure should be passed to enable fishermen from amongst themselves to organize, under the name of District Fishery Boards, a Local Authority which should be empowered to manage harbours and levy dues, to be expended in their repair and maintenance;"

and, at page 25—

> "it is obvious such a measure would be a great boon to fishermen;"

and, if so, when it will be introduced; when will the Report of the Scotch Fishery Board be laid upon the Table of the House; and, will the Government undertake that the Report shall be circulated amongst Members a reasonable time before the Vote on the Scotch Fishery Board is considered in Committee of Supply?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The whole question of the constitution and powers of the Scotch Fishery Board and the development of the fishing interest are at present anxiously engaging the attention of Her Majesty's Government, as was intimated by the First Lord of the Treasury on the 25th of April; and it is not thought advisable to proceed with any measure relating to Local Boards, even if considered desirable, until it has been determined what are the steps to be taken to make the central management of the Scotch Fisheries more efficient. The Report of the Board will be laid on the Table before the end of June. The Government will take care that opportunity is given for discussion on this matter after the Report is in the hands of Members.

IRELAND—INQUEST ON JOHN MADDEN, AN INMATE OF THE CRANNA ORPHANAGE, NEAR NENAGH, CO. TIPPERARY.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has yet received the Report in answer to the full inquiry which he promised into the circumstances of the case of the Cranna Orphanage, in County Tipperary; whether it is in accordance with the facts as reported at the coroner's inquest on the body of the boy Madden; whether the remaining children in that Institution are still on the dietary, the nature of which was then disclosed; and, whether he will take steps to have this and similar Institutions in Ireland visited at intervals by authorized Government Inspectors, so as to afford some protection to the orphan children therein confined, and to prevent the recurrence of such inhuman treatment as has been proved in the case of the Cranna orphans?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The local Constabulary authorities have furnished a copy of the verdict at the inquest on the body of the boy Madden, from which it appears that he died from weakness or syncope; but neither the jury nor the Coroner appears to have attached blame to any individual. The jury, however, in their verdict pointed out certain defects which, in their opinion, existed in the Institution as regards clothing, dietary, and attendance. A letter has been received from the Bishop of Killaloe stating that steps have been taken to carry out the recommendations put forward by the Coroner's Jury in order to remedy the existing defects.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN: The right hon. Gentleman did not answer the last part of the Question. I understand the Bishop of Killaloe very rarely visits the Institution.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think a Government Inspector would be at all an improvement.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—JOHN MORRIS, A LUNATIC IN DORCHESTER GAOL.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true that a lunatic called John Morris, who had committed a murder in Poole, was placed in Dorchester Gaol, to the annoyance of the other prisoners, and that as he left there he threatened the life of one William Clunes, who was an inmate of that prison?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have made inquiry of the prison authorities, and am informed by them that the Governor of Dorchester Gaol has no knowledge or record of an incident such as that referred to having occurred in that prison. If the hon. Member will furnish me with the date of the occurrence, and further particulars, I will make further inquiry.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS — THE SATURDAY HALF-HOLIDAY.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, as no Regulations have been laid down recognizing the principle of the Saturday half-holiday in Government offices, the Treasury object to the Heads of Departments granting the half-holiday to Civil Service writers (without loss of pay) in those offices where that privilege is allowed to the established clerks?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I must ask the hon. Member not to press this Question. I am not able to make any statement in anticipation of the Report of the Royal Commission. I would only point out that writers are not in the same position as established clerks, writers being paid either by the hour or by piece work.

ISLANDS OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC—SAMOA.

Mr. W. A. M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the agreements of 1879 and 1883 between Great Britain, Germany, the United States, and Samoa were all signed by Mahitoa as King of Samoa; whether the Government have ever had any reason to complain of the non-fulfilment by Mahitoa of any part of those agreements; whether the attention of the Government has been called to a Proclamation issued to the Samoans on the 25th of August, 1887, and signed by the British pro-Consul, Mr. H. Wilson, in which occurred these words—

> "Now, therefore, we, the undersigned representatives of the United States of America and Great Britain, hereby give notice that we and our Governments do not and never have recognized Tamasese as King of Samoa, but continue as heretofore to recognize Mahitoa;"

whether the consent of the British and United States Governments was asked for by Germany prior to the seizure and deportation of Mahitoa by a German ship of war; whether the Government propose to acquiesce in the action of Germany; whether they know that a large majority of the Samoan people are in favour of Mahitoa as against Tamasese; whether Mahitoa has repeatedly wished to take measures with regard to Tamasese, but has been restrained by the repeated assurances of the English Consul that if peace were kept in the Island the influence of England should always be used to preserve Mahitoa's right to the Throne; whether the British Government have ceased to recognize Mahitoa as King of Samoa; if so, when and why; and, whether the Government regard the Convention as being still in force as between Great Britain, the United States, and Samoa?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): The first, second, and fourth Questions of the hon. Gentleman must be answered in the negative. Her Majesty's Government have seen no cause to take part on either side in the differences between King Mahitoa and the Emperor of Germany. At present Tamasese is the King *de facto*, and will be recognized as such in practice by Her Majesty's Government, according to the ordinary Rules. No change has taken place in the Treaty relations between England, Germany, and the United States in regard to Samoa.

Mr. W. A. M'ARTHUR inquired, whether Her Majesty's Government had no cognizance of the agreement that had been come to not to recognize Tamasese?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: No, Sir. Well, Sir, Her Majesty's Government were informed in this country of the intention of the Government of Germany to ask for satisfaction from King Mahitoa.

Mr. W. A. M'ARTHUR: Yes, Sir; but what I want to know is, whether Her Majesty's Government propose to disavow the action of their Representative?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: I may say that, owing to the delay of the telegram informing the Consul, he took action on his own responsibility. Owing to the delay in sending the telegram from New Zealand to Samoa, he was not informed of the intentions of Germany.

LAW AND POLICE—SENTENCE ON TWO GIRLS AT WESTMINSTER POLICE COURT.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been directed to the sentence of a month's hard labour inflicted by Mr. Partridge on two girls called Macdonald for sleeping on a doorstep in Westminster; and, what steps the Government propose to take in the matter?

Mr. F. W. MACLEAN (Oxford, Woodstock) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the fact that on Thursday last two young women, named respectively Clara and Annie Macdonold, described as governesses, and charged with sleeping in the open air, and having no visible means of subsistence, were sentenced on that charge by Mr. Partridge, the sitting magistrate at Westminster, to one month's hard labour; and, whether there are any, and, if so, what circumstances in the case not disclosed in the reports justifying the sentence; and, if there be no such circumstances, whether he is prepared to materially mitigate the sentence?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I will answer this Question and that of the hon. Member for the Woodstock Division of Oxfordshire at the same time. I have received a Report from the magistrate on the case, from which it appears that these women had been several times convicted, both for breaking windows and under the Vagrant Act. The magistrate suggested that they should go to the workhouse. Both prisoners declined to avail themselves of this suggestion; and, under these circumstances, the magistrate thought it best, in the interests of the young women themselves, to give them a sentence sufficiently long to enable the chaplain of the gaol to use his influence upon them, and, if possible, get them into a suitable home. Should it be found possible to do this, I am prepared to advise the remission of the sentence.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Does the right hon. Gentleman approve of the sentence of hard labour?

MR. MATTHEWS: It is really no part of my duty to express an opinion on the discretion exercised by the magistrate. I will only add that under two previous convictions—I am now speaking from memory—their sentences included hard labour.

MR. CONYBEARE: With a view of giving them more time to listen to the ministrations of the chaplain, will not the right hon. Gentleman order the hard labour to be remitted?

[No reply.]

HIS HOLINESS THE POPE—POLITICAL COMMUNICATIONS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any unofficial communications of a political character have passed between Her Majesty's Government and the Pope of Rome?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): No, Sir.

WAR OFFICE—ARMY CLOTHING DEPARTMENT—SWEATING.

MR. FLOWER (Bedford, Luton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Government have recently had brought to their notice a case of "sweating" in connection with the preparation of Army clothing at Woolwich; whether any change in the tailoring or clothing staff at Woolwich has recently been made; and, for what period of time the system now adopted at Woolwich has been in force?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): No such case has been brought to notice. The only shops for making clothing at Woolwich are those established for regimental purposes under the military master tailors; and the payments for military and civil labour are those laid down by Regulation. No change has been made in the system; and it is not apparent how the "sweating" system can enter in.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—TRANSFER OF METROPOLITAN MAIN ROADS AND BRIDGES.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is proposed, under Clause 15 of the Local Government Bill, to transfer to the Council of the County of London the care, management, and repair of the main roads in the Metropolis, which are at present vested in the Vestries and District Boards of Works, and, if so, in what manner a main road is to be defined; what executive duties, at present performed by the Common Council and other Authorities of the City of London, is it proposed to transfer to the Council of the County of London; and, whether the effect of Clause 37 of the Local Government Bill will be to constitute London, Southwark, and Blackfriars Bridges, county bridges, and place them under the control of the Council of the County of London; or whether these bridges will continue to be under the control of the Corporation of the City of London?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The duty of maintaining and repairing main roads in the Metropolis will be transferred to the County Council of London, subject to the provisions in Clause 37 (4) of the Bill; but it is intended that the Vestries and District Boards shall have the same power as an Urban Sanitary Authority under Clause 15 (2) of the Bill. Main roads for the purposes of the Bill will include roads disturnpiked since December 31, 1870, and any road which may be declared to be a main road by the County Council in pursuance of section 15 of the Highways and Locomotives (Amendment) Act, 1878. There are certain duties now performed by the Aldermen of London which the Bill transfers to the County Council. The Liverymen elect the Sheriff of Middlesex, the appointment of whom is transferred to the Crown. The only duties transferred to the County Council of London are those connected with licensing. The London, Southwark, and Blackfriars Bridges are at present maintained by the Corporation out of the proceeds of the Bridge House Estates; and there is no intention to make them county bridges, or to transfer the control of them to the County Council.

Sir TREVOR LAWRENCE (Surrey, Reigate) inquired what was the intention of the Government with regard to bridges in the County of Surrey—Putney, Wandsworth, Hammersmith, and several others?

Mr. RITCHIE asked for Notice of the Question.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—SENTENCE ON S. R. KINGSTON AND WIFE, AT SKIBBEREEN, FOR FORCIBLE POSSESSION.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has seen the report in the London *Daily Telegraph* of the 3rd instant, of proceedings under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," at Skibbereen on the 2nd instant, stating that a man named Samuel Paul Kingston, who is 80 years of age, and his wife, were brought before Messrs Warburton and Major Caddell, Resident Magistrates, charged with taking forcible possession; that from the evidence it appeared that the defendants were evicted from their farm on the 20th of February last, and that they went back into one of the outhouses, and when asked to leave said they had no place to go to but the roadside; that, notwithstanding the request of Dr. Lewis, J.P., the landlord, that the defendants might be dealt with leniently, and the entreaties of Mrs. Kingston to the magistrates not to send the old man to gaol for the first time in his life, as he was very delicate, the Bench sentenced the old man to one month and his wife to a fortnight in Cork Gaol; and, whether, taking the circumstances into account, he will consider the propriety of advising the Lord Lieutenant to exercise the prerogative in this case, and remit the sentence on this old man and his wife?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he had been asked a similar Question by the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) a night or two since. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was sorry that he had not yet obtained the necessary information that would enable him to reply, but he hoped to have it to-morrow.

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—THE DERBYSHIRE REGIMENT—COLLISION AT LIMERICK.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he had seen the following paragraph in *The Daily News* of Tuesday, 1st May:—

> "A collision occurred in Limerick on Sunday night between civilians and some men of the Derbyshire Regiment. The soldiers have been confined for some time past, but a dozen of them broke out and paraded with belts in hand. A crowd quickly surrounded them, and some stones were thrown. The soldiers were taken back to barracks by the police. A collision also occurred at Clare Castle, near Ennis, between the Militia now in training and the Derbyshires. One Militiaman was badly injured. Several arrests have been made;"

whether this is the same regiment that sang *Rule Britannia* going through the streets of Ennis while the people were at Mass, on the occasion of the late suppression of a public meeting in that town; how often have the men of this regiment come into collision with the people of Limerick and Clare; and, whether, having regard to their general conduct, he will have them removed to other quarters?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Derbyshire Regiment is the regiment which sang *Rule Britannia* as it marched through Ennis. The inhabitants of Limerick are reported to have come into collision with men of the regiment on nine occasions, and those of Clare on six. As far as appears, the assaults on the soldiers were unprovoked. The corps is well-behaved generally; and I do not see that the fact of its men having been assaulted constitutes a reason for disturbing the military arrangements by its removal to other quarters.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: I desire to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, a Question arising out of this case. Can the right hon. Gentleman give any reason why two Resident Magistrates — Major Warburton and Major Rolleston—were imported into Limerick to try the cases arising out of these assaults?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I can give no special reasons to the hon. Gentleman. I suppose it is in the ordinary course.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I would ask whether there is any rotation?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There is a certain principle adopted, I believe.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Would it be possible to give the House some indication of what the principle is?

[No reply.]

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: I wish to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether he has seen a report in the newspapers that another collision between the police and the military has occurred in Limerick?

Mr. E. STANHOPE: No, Sir; I have not.

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—DISTURBANCES AT CASTLEREA.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has seen a report in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 3rd instant, to the following effect, that—

> "In Castlerea, on Saturday last, on the occasion of Mr. John Fitzgibbons's trial, a number of little boys with whistles went through the town, the eldest not being over 14 years of age. One of the policemen, who were very excited, attacked a boy only 12 years old, and struck him with a baton on the head, inflicting a severe wound. So much blood flowed that it was deemed desirable to bring him to the barrack and have the wound washed before showing him to the magistrates;"

are the facts as stated; who was in command of the police, and were they ordered to charge the boys and baton them; what was the result of this boy being brought before the magistrates; and, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the conduct of the police on this occasion?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have not had time to get particulars of the case referred to, but I hope to be able to answer to-morrow.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—VISITING JUSTICES AT GALWAY AND DERRY GAOLS.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can yet state the result of his inquiry into the alleged absence for several days of any Visiting Justices at Galway Gaol; whether any Visiting Justices have recently, and when, visited the prisoners in Derry Gaol; and, whether, having regard to the well-known weak health and impaired constitution of Mr. Blane, M.P., now confined in that prison, he will direct the Visiting Justices and the medical officials to pay particular regard to that gentleman's health?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, that the General Prisons Board informed him that there was no rule requiring the Visiting Justices to visit the prisons at stated times. The matter was left to their own discretion. The Visiting Justices visited the prison on the 12th of last month. The Board were of opinion that there was nothing in the state of the health of the hon. Member for South Armagh (Mr. Blane) that called for any special treatment.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—CONVICTION OF 14 MEN AT FRANKFORD.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the proceedings at Frankford, on Friday last, when 14 men were tried, convicted, and sentenced to a month's imprisonment each, on a charge of taking part in an unlawful assembly on the 7th of April; whether it appeared from the evidence that a tenant, Rod. Dooley, having been evicted on the estate of Mr. C. J. Banon, and the agent having given him time to remove his effects, the prisoners, and others, gathered to give him assistance, and till his ground; whether this was the unlawful assembly with which the defendants were charged; whether it is the fact that the police witnesses testified to the complete peacefulness and order of the proceedings on the eviction farm; and whether he can state under what provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act the said proceedings were indicted as illegal?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Inspector General of Constabulary reports that Dooley, a tenant on the estate of Mr. C. J. Banon, was evicted on March 28, owing six years' rent. He had declined to come to a settlement, notwithstanding a most liberal offer made by his landlord. The agent did give him time to move his effects up to April 7. On that day over 100 persons assembled with ploughs, harrows, and other implements; and instead of assisting in the removal of the effects they tilled the farm from which Dooley had been evicted, and to which accordingly he had no claim.

MR. CONYBEARE: I wish to know, when that assembly benefited the landlord, whether it can be regarded as a statutable offence?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; but I apprehend that they did not assemble for the purpose of assisting the landlord.

ADMIRALTY—DEVONPORT DOCKYARD —RESIDENCES OF OFFICIALS.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he can now state the result of the local reference which he stated would be necessary to enable him to ascertain whether any, and what, alterations in the accommodation provided for persons whose duty required them to reside or to sleep within the gates of the Devonport Dockyard had been made within the last seven years?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Twenty pounds was expended in 1886 in improving the sleeping accommodation and ventilation. The sleeping accommodation now provided is ample, as the numbers have been reduced, and the men are satisfied.

ARMY (INDIA)—LICENSING OF IMMORALITY.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, with respect to a Paper to which his attention has been called, which purports to be a copy of a Memorandum issued from the Office of the Quartermaster General in India relating to the subject of prostitution, Whether he is now able to state if such a document, or any document substantially of that character, has been issued from that or any other Government Office?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): No; but I am able to state that the Secretary of State has taken such steps that the document, if authentic, will be forthwith cancelled; and orders have, as I have already frequently stated, been sent out to India which will put an absolute stop to such practices if they have existed.

MR. JAMES STUART asked whether, seeing the very serious and important character of the document in question, the hon. Gentleman would lay it upon the Table of the House if it existed?

SIR JOHN GORST: When I find out whether the document exists or not, I will say whether I will lay it upon the Table.

MR. JAMES STUART asked, if the hon. Gentleman would take immediate steps to telegraph to India to ascertain whether it existed or not?

[No reply.]

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ASSAULT ON A POLICEMAN AT MACROOM.

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following paragraph in *The Cork Herald* of the 3rd instant, commenting on the sentence of four months' imprisonment passed on Wednesday last at Macroom on a man named Creedon, for a murderous assault committed upon Police Sergeant O'Shea:—

> "The young man Creedon, who very properly broke a policeman's head to save his own on the occasion of the late suppressed meeting, was sentenced to four months' imprisonment by

two removables yesterday. Irwin, in giving the decision, practically admitted the whole case against the Crown; but because (so we gather from his speech) Creedon hit the policeman too hard he sent him to gaol. We are glad Creedon hit the ruffian hard. We hardly think, too, that the outrageous doctrine that a policeman should not be well beaten (or killed if necessary for the preservation of life) when he is breaking the law, will be upheld on appeal:"

and, whether he will institute proceedings against the editor of this paper, on the ground that the paragraph in question is an incitement to violent assaults on the police?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): My attention has been called to the paragraph in question; and that paragraph, with the other papers, are now before the Attorney General of Ireland for his direction.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked, whether the Resident Magistrate who tried the case did not say that he was not there to justify the magistrates, but that he was there to suppress the meeting; and if he did not go on to say that even supposing the meeting was legal the defendant had no right to resist; also, if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that no attempt was made by the prosecuting counsel to make out that the meeting was illegal?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot answer that Question without Notice.

RAILWAYS (IRELAND)—INSPECTION OF CARRIAGES.

MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he could say if there is at present in Ireland any system of inspection of railway carriages carried out by persons under the control of the Government; and, if not, if he could suggest what steps should be taken to remedy the condition of things which exposes that section of the public which uses the third class carriages on Irish railways to inconveniences and discomfort which would not be tolerated on any line in England or Scotland?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): As far as I am aware, there is no systematic inspection of railway carriages in Ireland by any officer appointed by a Government Department. No formal complaint has reached the Board of Trade of the condition of the third-class carriages in Ireland since 1884, when an inspection was ordered of the carriages on a line of railway in the South of Ireland. If any well-founded complaint is submitted to the Board of Trade I will consider the expediency of ordering an inspection of the rolling stock in respect of which it is made under the provisions of the Regulation of Railways Act, 1871.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the reason that these complaints have been discontinued by the public is that they find it is no use making them?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: It is very difficult indeed for me to answer that Question. If a well-founded complaint is made, it will receive prompt consideration from me.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 — DEPUTY OFFICIAL RECEIVER FOR THE GUILDFORD DISTRICT.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether Mr. Britten has long been, and still is, in the habit of discharging the duties of the Official Receiver at the Guildford and other District Courts upon the public examinations of, and applications for discharge by, debtors, without being nominated by the Board as deputy; and, whether he will take steps to prevent the performance by such unauthorized persons of the duties imposed by the Bankruptcy Act on the Official Receivers?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The Bankruptcy Rule, 328, authorizes the Board of Trade—

> "By general or special directions to determine what acts or duties shall be performed by the Official Receiver in person, and in what cases he may discharge his functions through the agency of his clerks."

Under this Rule the Board of Trade have authorized the Official Receiver of the Guildford District (who is also Official Receiver of the Kingston-on-Thames, Barnet, Edmonton, and Brentford Bankruptcy Districts) to perform certain of his functions, including those mentioned in the above Question, through the agency of his Chief Bankruptcy Clerk, Mr. Britten, in such cases as he may be unable to perform them personally. But it is the duty of the Official Receiver personally to report upon all applications by debtors for their discharge; and he is responsible, in the fullest manner, for the discharge of all duties thus delegated to Mr. Britten. Mr. Britten has not been in the habit of acting in this matter without authority.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—GUARDIANS.

Mr. HENRY CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether persons in receipt of salaries from the Local Government Board, or from Poor Law Unions, are ineligible to become Poor Law Guardians or members of dispensary committees in Ireland?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): Under Section 22 of 25 & 26 *Vict.* c. 83, no person in receipt of a salary from the Local Government Board is capable of serving as a Guardian; nor is any person receiving a fixed salary or emolument from the poor rates in any Union capable of serving as a Guardian therein. I am not aware of any legal obstacle in the way of any such person becoming a member of a Dispensary Committee.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Does that observation apply to *ex officio* Guardians?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a legal Question I should be reluctant to answer without Notice. I should think, however, that it would.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—MR. WILLIAM GOULD, OF MITCHELSTOWN.

Mr. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there is any foundation for the statement contained in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 3rd of May, that Mr. William Gould, of Mitchelstown, a prisoner in Cork Gaol, has been informed by the Governor of the Gaol that—

> "He would be released if he would petition the Lord Lieutenant, and promise to abstain from politics?"

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Governor of the prison reports that there is no foundation for the statement made in *The Freeman's Journal* to which the Question refers.

INDIA—CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS —THE CORRESPONDENCE.

Mr. STANSFELD (Halifax) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether, having regard to the Notice of Motion given by the hon. Member for Honiton (Sir John Kennaway) for Tuesday, the 15th instant, he will undertake to lay upon the Table of the House before that date the Correspondence between the Government of India and the India Office on the subject of the Contagious Diseases Acts, which he has already promised to produce?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): If the hon. Member will move for the Correspondence there is no objection, although it is not yet complete, to its production so far as it goes.

Mr. STANSFELD asked, with reference to the debate that was to take place on Tuesday, the 15th, whether the hon. Gentleman would before that time be able to state to the House what steps the Government were prepared to take to carry out the decision of the House against the compulsory examination of women?

Sir JOHN GORST asked for Notice of the Question.

WAR OFFICE—THE FIRST AND SECOND ARMY CORPS.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he feels himself in a position to state to the House what progress has been made with the field equipment of the Second Army Corps, as regards its transport, horses, ammunition, columns; also as to its auxiliary arms—such as Commissariat Staff Corps and Army Hospital Corps; whether the Army Medical Department is in a position to supply the necessary number of companies of Army Hospital Corps, equipped as field bearers, for the needs of the First and the Second Army Corps respectively; and, whether the supply of horses for the Second Corps has been sufficiently provided for.

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I have explained, in the Memorandum attached to the Estimates, that the equipment of the Second Army Corps for foreign service is not complete. For Home defence there would be hardly any difficulty in providing it, especially if the House grants us the powers which we are now seeking in the National Defence Bill. The Army Medical Department is in a position to supply the necessary bearers.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE—OCCUPATION AND SERVICE FRANCHISE.

Mr. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the borough occupation franchise includes the service franchise or not; and, if not, how it is excluded?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): If, as I imagine, the Question of the hon. Member refers to the municipal franchise, the service franchise is not included in the occupation franchise. The reason is that the service franchise was created by the Act of 1884; and the language, as the hon. Member will find, is different from that of the Municipal Corporation Act of 1882.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND)—LEGISLATION.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government still contemplates the introduction, during the present Session, of the measure described in Her Majesty's Speech on the 9th of February as "intended to facilitate an increase in the number of the proprietors of the soil" in Ireland; and, if so, when it will be introduced?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Yes, Sir; the Government still contemplate the introduction of a measure dealing with the subject; but the period of its introduction must depend upon the course of Public Business.

DEPRESSION OF TRADE—THE GUN TRADE AT BIRMINGHAM.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been directed to the proceedings at a meeting of the gun trade, held in Birmingham on the 1st of May, whereat it was stated that that industry was in a condition of extreme depression; and, if any steps have been taken, or are in contemplation, to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commissioners appointed in 1885 to inquire into the depression of trade, and more particularly with reference to the foreign tariffs and bounties, which were unanimously denounced by the Commission as very prejudicially limiting the markets for the production of British industry?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The attention of Her Majesty's Government has not been drawn to the proceedings at a meeting of the gun trade at Birmingham; but I have no doubt that that trade, in common, I regret to say, with many others, has been passing through a period of depression. I am glad to state, however, that there are clear signs of a revival of trade; and the number of men out of employment this year will compare favourably to those of last year and of the preceding one. Under these circumstances, I think we must look to trade being revived, not by the adoption of the heroic measures suggested by my hon. Friend, but by the renewal of confidence in the stability of the institutions of the country and the maintenance of the peace of the world.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When will the Public Trustee Bill be introduced?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The Bill is in preparation, but I am unable to say when it will be introduced.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE WHITSUNTIDE RECESS.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury will be able to inform the House what Business will be taken on Friday, and what arrangements he contemplates with regard to the Whitsuntide holidays?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I have already informed the House that any arrangements with regard to the Whitsuntide holidays must depend upon the passing of the Local Government (Electors) Bill before the Recess, as the

Register must be got into order before the 20th of June. But in the event of the Bill passing before the Whitsuntide Recess, and other measures being advanced, we propose that the House should rise on Friday, the 18th, after a Morning Sitting, and return on Thursday, the 31st of May. I hope the labours of the Committee on the Local Government (Electors) Bill will be completed this evening; but in case any accident should prevent it, I should ask the House to sit to-morrow at 2 o'clock to proceed with the Bill in Committee. I think it right to give this intimation to the House, though the contingency to which I refer is most improbable. On Thursday we propose to take the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill for second reading.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked whether, in case there should be a Morning Sitting to proceed with the Committee on the Local Government (Electors) Bill to-morrow, the right hon. Gentleman would give a pledge that he would take no other Government Business at the Morning Sitting?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I can give no such pledge. If other Business should be put down, it would be our duty to proceed with it.

In reply to Sir CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.),

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he did not intend to proceed with the Attorney General's Resolution on the subject of the High Court of Justice Chancery Division (Additional Judge) to-night, after half-past 10.

In reply to Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.),

MR. W. H. SMITH declined to give any pledge that the Bill dealing with the Wheel and Van Tax should not be taken before the Whitsuntide Recess.

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER — HOUSE OF COMMONS—ADMISSION OF STRANGERS.

In reply to Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar),

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had stated on Friday that he should feel bound to take an opportunity of consulting the feelings of the House before making any change with regard to the admission of strangers.

MR. BUXTON gave Notice that when the subject came before the House he would move to reject the Committee's recommendation with reference to the distribution of tickets.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL.

In reply to Mr. BURT (Morpeth),

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he hoped the House would read the Bill a second time before the Recess.

WASTE LANDS—THE DEBATE OF THURSDAY, MAY 1.

MR. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye): With the indulgence of the House I desire to make a short personal explanation. A few nights ago, owing to the operation of the "count out," I was prevented from answering the very serious and absolutely inaccurate allegation made by the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) as to the existence of 100,000 acres of waste land in the County (Sussex), one of the Divisions of which I have the honour to represent.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! The question of 100,000 acres of waste land is not a subject of personal explanation on the part of the hon. Member. If he were permitted to make a statement on that point it would be a continuation of the debate.

MR. BROOKFIELD: I was just coming, Sir, to the ——

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is out of Order.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) ELECTORS BILL.—[BILL 181.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 3rd May.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2 (Extension of burgess franchise to county electors outside Municipal boroughs),

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) said, that in the absence of the hon. Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvon (Mr. Rathbone) he wished to move the Amendment which stood in the name of that hon. Member—namely, in page 1, line 19, to leave out from "the burgess," to end of clause, and insert—

> "Every person entitled to vote in Parliamentary elections in respect of any qualification in any part of a county not within the limits of a borough, shall be entitled to be registered to vote as a county elector in the parish in which the qualifying property is situate: Provided, that a person having more than one qualification in the same county shall not vote more than once in the election of the same county authority.
>
> (2.) "For the said purpose there shall be added to the lists of Parliamentary electors in counties separate lists of persons who are disqualified for being registered as voters in Parliamentary elections only by reason that they are peers or women, and those persons shall be entitled to be registered as county electors under this Act."

The principle of the Amendment, which substituted the Parliamentary for the municipal franchise, had been supported by various Committees of Quarter Sessions and Chambers of Agriculture throughout the country. Perhaps he might be permitted to trouble the House with a short quotation, which gave in more concise and forcible language than he could use the opinions of a noble Lord in favour of a single register—Lord Thring, who was a high authority on local government reform as well as a strong supporter of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). That noble Lord, in *The Nineteenth Century* for the present month, said—

> "The Parliamentary franchise is universal; the other, the municipal, is confined to the boroughs. Select the first, and you will have one revision, one register—practically, one system of law. Take the second, and you have a country overlaid with two systems, and not the less difficult to carry into execution that, as regards the lowest qualification, the one is only distinguishable from the other by an almost microscopic examination."

That put in a very few words the disadvantages of the course that the Government proposed to take in reference to the Bill. They proposed to create, for the first time in country districts, a new register, different altogether from the register which already existed for Parliamentary purposes in those districts. He would first point out to the Committee that the case of the country districts differed widely from that of the great towns, and his Amendment did not affect the franchise in municipal boroughs at all. There were good reasons why the municipal boroughs should be treated differently from country districts. The franchise possessed by the boroughs had existed for more than 50 years, while in the country districts they were creating a new municipal franchise for the first time. In regard to the Metropolis, the House had decided the other night that a new municipal franchise should be created within the Metropolis. That decision ought not to prejudice the present Amendment. There might be reasons why the Metropolis should be treated as if it were not part of a country district, but a municipal borough. It was the largest town in the Kingdom, and the Government might fairly treat the Metropolis on the same footing as municipal boroughs, while they treated the country districts very differently. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) had somewhat misled hon. Members on that side of the House, at all events, as to the nature of the new register which would exist in the country districts when this Bill was passed. He had given a description of the ingenious manner in which the double register was made up for municipal boroughs under the Act of 1878. He had pointed out that the list was made up in three divisions, the first of which included those who were entitled to vote for Parliamentary and municipal purposes, while the other two divisions included those who had a vote for one of those purposes. He (Mr. Hobhouse) wished to point out that under this Bill a double register, made up, no doubt, on this ingenious system, was proposed to be extended to the country districts. This system did not make one register out of two; but was calculated to save cost in printing and in mechanical matters rather than to save trouble to the overseers, who had to make out the lists. Hon. Members had only to study the precepts contained in the Schedules to the Registration Act of 1885, in order to see that the task of the overseers in making up the register was not an inviting one for any person. Each of these precepts covered a space of no less than 30 pages of the large edition of the Statutes; and the person, whether he was a trained lawyer or a layman, who had to make out one of these precepts, was certainly not a person to be envied. In the next place, he (Mr. Hobhouse) desired to point out, in regard to the divisions, that the first division was simple enough, because it included every person who had a vote for Parliamentary elections, and also for municipal purposes. But the second division included a class of voters who might not be very numerous, but whose qualifications it was extremely difficult to detect and to classify without very considerable trouble. In the second division, which contained Parliamentary voters only, there were such classes as £10 lodgers, service voters, occupiers of £10 houses who did not pay borough rates, and certain householders who sublet for short periods. Then there was a third division, containing the names of Peers, women, persons who were occupiers of buildings that were not dwelling houses, and other perons who had no right to vote for Parliamentary purposes. He mentioned these facts, to show how difficult it was to make up the double lists, even under the present system of divisions, and he would suggest that it would be infinitely more simple to have a single register for both election purposes, with the addition of Peers and women ratepayers as was suggested in the Amendment. It would be a far more simple matter to add Peers and women to the roll for Parliamentary elections than to make up double registers as was at present done in municipal boroughs. The change would also give great popular satisfaction. It was certainly impossible to bring home to the mind of the ordinary voter why he should have a vote for a Member of Parliament, and be denied a vote for the members of the new County Council. There was another great argument in favour of a single register. As the Bill now stood, they were practically disfranchising those who had been enfranchised for Parliamentary purposes. The Parliamentary franchise at present excluded Peers and women, who were qualified to vote at municipal elections. No Member of the House objected to these persons being admitted to the franchise under the present Bill. On the other hand, many persons were included in the Parliamentary franchise who were excluded from the municipal franchise—such as lodgers, owners who were not in occupation of dwelling houses, and service tenants. None of these persons, however, were so numerous that hon. Members need be afraid that any of them would swamp the rest of the constituency. Take the case of the lodgers. As a rule, they constituted a superior class of voters, and he could not see why they should be denied a vote for a member of the County Council when they had a right to vote for a Member of Parliament. Take, also, the service tenant. He had been considered specially worthy of enfranchisement by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) three years ago, and the admission of that class created a new distinction between the Parliamentary and municipal franchise. He thought the Government would be well advised if they would include the service tenants. Then came another class—the freeholders. He maintained that that class had a very strong claim to be enrolled upon the list of electors—certainly a much stronger claim than they had to vote for Members of Parliament. It was confessed by financial authorities on both sides of the House that the owners of land were large ratepayers. He had referred the other night to the able Memorandum of his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer on that subject, and there were also high authorities to the same effect on that—the Opposition—side of the House. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) told them the other day that in the rural districts land ultimately bore the weight of the rates, and he also showed by elaborate calculation that all over the country the owners of property bore more than one-half of the rates. It was an undoubted fact that in the present condition of the agricultural districts the rates very soon, if not immediately, found their way on to the shoulders of the owners of property. Surely that was a convincing proof that the owners of land were vitally interested in the question of local taxation. He wished to put this question to Her Majesty's Government. Was not an owner of a large estate, who resided more than seven miles from the county in which he owned property, quite as much interested in the wealth of that county as the occupier of a very small holding, on which the landlord paid the rates, but who happened to reside within the county? He would take the two cases—that of a landlord who owned property and paid the rates, but who did not reside in the county, and the other of a tenant who occupied a holding and did not pay the rates, but did reside in the county. In the one case the Government disfranchised the owner of the property who had by far the largest interest in it, while they enfranchised the man who had a comparatively insignificant interest in it. The disfranchisement also involved disqualification because none of the men to whom the privilege of a vote was denied had any right to sit on the County Councils, either as elected or selected Councillors. That was a very serious matter. That disqualification as regarded the owner was an entirely new thing. At present he had a right to vote for and sit on Boards of Guardians, Local Boards, and Boards of Improvement Commissioners; and he was only disfranchised in municipal boroughs, where the incidence of rate-paying was very different. If the owners of property were entitled to vote at the election of Members of Parliament for the country districts, surely they ought to have a voice in voting for those who were to conduct the local administration, and a right also to become local administrators themselves upon questions in which they had so much interest. No one who had listened to the debate on the question of the Poor Law on Thursday night could doubt that within a few years the new Authority would exercise Poor Law powers; and surely they would not deny to the owner as such the right to have a voice in the administration of those Poor Law burdens which had always been regarded as hereditary burdens on the land. He trusted the Committee would allow him to refer to one or two objections which might be raised to his hon. Friend's (Mr. Rathbone's) proposal. In the first place, the Government might say that this was a small matter; that very few persons would be qualified under the Parliamentary franchise, as proposed, who would not be qualified under the present Bill. He granted that, but it did not affect the principle in the least. No doubt, there were very few women who would be qualified to vote under the Bill; but that was not a reason why they should deny them the right of voting, or declare that their names should not appear upon the register. Then, again, there was a certain class of persons who had, to his mind, a strong claim to the right now proposed to be denied them. He knew a gentleman who, at that moment, was compelled to serve the office of High Sheriff of a county, on the ground of holding large property in the county; but, nevertheless, he did not reside in the county, and would, therefore, not be allowed to vote for members of the County Council, or sit upon it, notwithstanding he was considered fully competent to serve a responsible and most burdensome office. Then, again, there were hon. Members in that House who took an active part in local business who would not be qualified under the Bill to sit on the County Council of their county. He maintained that it was most undesirable to exclude Members of that House from taking an active part in the administration of local affairs. The Bill affected not only large owners, but small owners who did not happen to live in the county. It affected a large class of elder sons, who were at present magistrates, and many others who, if it passed in its present shape, would have no *status* either to vote or to sit as County Councillors. He warned the Government that, unless they made a concession in the matter, six months hence there would be a considerable outcry; because in many counties it would be found that very useful and active men, who ought to be candidates for seats on the County and District Councils, were prevented by the Bill from standing for election, and serving the public interests. It was said that these could easily manufacture a qualification by occupying some portion of their property; but he maintained that that suggestion was preposterous, and only worthy of the time of rotten boroughs and faggot votes. Even if an owner of property were to sleep for a few nights upon some portion of his property, it would not meet the case, because it was impossible under the Bill to get a qualification to sit on the County Council for the first period of three years, unless the person seeking the qualification had been in occupation for 12 months preceding a certain date in June next. It must be remembered that the first session of the County Councils would be the most important session in their history, seeing that they would have to lay down broad lines of administration, and determine what their future should be—whether for good or for evil. It was most important, therefore, that good men should not be disqualified for taking part in the first election of the County Councils. Another important point was whether or not the Parliamentary franchise was inconsistent with the doctrine of "One man one vote." He would put it to his hon. Friends who believed in that doctrine, that it either meant that no man should vote more than once for the same representative Body—[*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] He was glad to receive the assent of his hon. Friends. If that was the real meaning of the doctrine, it was certainly embodied in the Amendment. It was, however, quite possible that some hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House might desire a further and more sweeping provision, and might say that no man ought to vote for more than one County Council. If that was not accepted as the meaning in any part of the House, it was not necessary to argue the point. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] Then he looked upon that argument as being entirely disposed of, and he would put it to the House that the true test of qualification was this—that every man possessing a substantial interest of any kind, whether as occupier or lodger, service tenant or freeholder, within a county or district, should have a full qualification both to vote and sit on the local Councils under the provisions of the Bill. For all those reasons, because of the inconvenience and utter want of necessity for setting up a new register, because it was unjust to disfranchise and disqualify the classes he had referred to; and, lastly, because it was extremely unwise to limit the field from which the local constituencies should choose their administrators in future, he urged the Government to give their best consideration to the Amendment which he now begged to move.

Amendment proposed,

In page 19, to leave out the words from "the burgess" to the end of the Clause, and insert—"Every person entitled to vote in parliamentary elections in respect of any qualification in any part of a county not within the limits of a borough shall be entitled to be registered to vote as a county elector in the parish in which the qualifying property is situate: Provided that a person having more than one qualification in the same county shall not vote more than once in the election of the same county authority.

(2) "For the said purpose there shall be added to the lists of parliamentary electors in counties separate lists of persons who are disqualified for being registered as voters in parliamentary elections only by reason that they are peers or women, and those persons shall be entitled to be registered as county electors under this Act."—(*Mr. Hobhouse.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, the hon. and learned Gentleman who moved the Amendment (Mr. Hobhouse) had done so on two grounds, the principal of which was that if the Amendment were adopted, there would only be one register, and that more than one register would be extremely inconvenient in the country districts. The hon. and learned Gentleman also advocated the acceptance of the Amendment on the ground of the injustice to those who would be excluded if his proposal were not adopted. Upon the question of a single register, the hon. and learned Gentleman implied that he (Mr. Ritchie) had somewhat unintentionally misled the House as to the effect the Bill would have if it were passed in the way it had been proposed. He did not think, however, although he might be a prejudiced person in the matter, that the hon. and learned Gentleman had fairly pointed out in what way he (Mr. Ritchie) had misled the House, when he said that the effect of the provisions of the Bill would be to establish a single register in the country districts in precisely the same way as it was now established in boroughs. The only difference between the proposal of the hon. and learned Gentleman and the plan of the Government, so far as simplifying the list was concerned, was that there would be two lists according to the former, and three according to the latter. It was quite clear, unless the hon. and learned Gentleman proposed that the Parliamentary franchise and the municipal franchise should be identical, that it would be impossible to have only one list, and he did not propose to give to Peers and women the power of voting for Parliamentary purposes. Therefore, in any case, the only difference between the proposal of the hon. and learned

Gentleman and that of the Government was that there should be two lists according to the hon. and learned Member's proposal, instead of three lists now. He could only repeat what he had said on a former occasion, that if the Bill passed as it now stood, the register which was now prepared in all the boroughs would be the same register, neither more nor less, as would be prepared for all the country districts. One curious part of the hon. and learned Gentleman's proposal, and he (Mr. Ritchie) did not think the hon. and learned Gentleman justified it, was that it would leave the borough register exactly as it was now, and would create in country districts a totally different register for the same purposes as that which was now in existence in boroughs. The hon. and learned Gentleman justified that by saying that the borough franchise had been in existence for 50 years. He (Mr. Ritchie) did not understand by what process of reasoning the hon. and learned Gentleman arrived at that conclusion. He (Mr. Ritchie) should certainly arrive at a totally different conclusion from the facts the hon. and learned Member had adduced. If it were the case that the borough franchise had existed in the boroughs for 50 years, and had been successful in operation for that period, surely it would be to cast an unnecessary slur upon that franchise which had existed so long, if they were not to take advantage of it when they were extending municipal franchise to the whole country. The proposition was that the municipal duties, which had been so long and so well performed by Municipal Councils throughout the length and breadth of the land, should be extended to the whole country. They said that to do that it was necessary to extend the qualifications. The municipal franchise was a ratepaying occupation franchise, and that was the franchise which the Government proposed to extend to the counties. So far as the register was concerned, he thought he had shown that if the proposal of the hon. and learned Gentleman was adopted, it was not likely to simplify the register; whereas if the register, as proposed by the Government, were adopted, the fact that it would not be a complicated or expensive register was amply shown by what the hon. and learned Gentleman had himself said. He would point out what the state of things would be if the proposal of the hon. and learned Member were adopted. There would be a different franchise within the borough from that which existed outside the borough—that was to say, that if an elector lived outside a borough, and happened to be a service voter, or a lodger, or an owner, and not an occupier, he was outside the limits of the borough, and would have a vote for the County Council; whereas those persons who lived inside the borough, and were under the same conditions, would not have a vote in the election of County Councils. He (Mr. Ritchie) confessed that he did not know how it was possible to justify the retention of two franchises for the same purpose. Then, again, there would be this further anomaly—that the proposal of the hon. Gentleman would establish two franchises for elections to the County Councils, which could not in any way simplify matters. In one district, there would be a totally different franchise from that which would exist in another district. Then the hon. and learned Member said, why not give the franchise for lodgers in the country districts, and he gave this curious argument in favour of making a difference between an inside borough and an outside borough. He said that in places outside the boroughs, lodgers were not numerous. What did that mean? Inside the boroughs they were numerous, and there the hon. and learned Member did not propose to enfranchise them; outside they were not numerous, and he would give them a vote.

Mr. HOBHOUSE said, he was sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman; but as a matter of fact, he had never discussed the question of enfranchising lodgers inside boroughs.

Mr. RITCHIE said, the hon. and learned Member had certainly used that argument indirectly by saying that lodgers were not numerous in the country districts, while they were numerous in the boroughs. In the one case, he was not going to enfranchise them for municipal purposes, although they were numerous, and outside the boroughs, where they were not numerous, he proposed to enfranchise them. What he would say in reference to the point and others, was that it might be all right and proper to consider the whole question of the municipal franchise, in order to see whether it ought to be amended so as to include some of those who were not now included in it; but he maintained that that question ought to be dealt with as a whole, and that what was done in the country districts should also be done at the same time in the boroughs. The hon. and learned Gentleman proposed also to give the owner in the country districts a vote. He (Mr. Ritchie) was not prepared to argue that there was not much force in what the hon. and learned Gentleman had said as to the share in the rates borne by owners; but he would point out that the number of unoccupying owners in the counties was exceedingly small, and, therefore, as far as the unoccupying owners were concerned they were in the same position as the lodgers, and it was a very small matter. [*Cries of* "No!"] He ventured to say that the number who would get the franchise, and who did not possess it at present, would, in the counties, be very small indeed. In the boroughs, however, there was a large number, and yet the hon. and learned Gentleman proposed to exclude them. By the distinct words in the Amendment they were excluded in the boroughs. Why was that? Because he knew very well if he proposed to give the municipal franchise to owners in boroughs, the boroughs would at once raise a great outcry against the proposal. If no other argument could be adduced in support of the proposal, it was certainly not desirable to extend the provisions of the Bill simply for the very small advantage which owners outside the boroughs would obtain, while it was withheld from owners inside the boroughs. It might be a very proper thing to consider hereafter; but he was perfectly certain that if they entertained that great question now, it would endanger the success of the Bill. He knew that his hon. and learned Friend who had moved the Amendment, and his hon. Friend the Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvon (Mr. Rathbone), who originally put it down on the Paper, had been for a great number of years staunch supporters of the principle of the division of rates between the owner and the occupier. On that side of the House, no doubt, there were many hon. Members who were not prepared to accept that principle. There was not much force in the argument used as to the division of rates, and he did not think that if due consideration were given to the question of the representation of owners, there were few Members on that side of the House who would not be prepared to accept the doctrine of the division of rates. What was said was that if the owners were to be made liable for the payment of half the rates, they should have an adequate share of direct representation on the County Councils. This giving of a vote to owners would undoubtedly raise the whole question of the insufficiency of the representation of owners, notwithstanding that they were saddled with the liability of paying one-half of the rates. It would undoubtedly create and raise the point whether, if the owners were represented, it would not be a strong argument for dividing the rates equally between the owners and occupiers. One of the arguments used by the hon. and learned Gentleman was worthy of the attention and consideration of the Committee. The hon. and learned Member said that the owners, if they were not also occupiers, would not be capable of being elected to the County Council under the provisions of the present Bill. He (Mr. Ritchie) acknowledged that that was so, and he was quite prepared to say that he thought it was a point which ought to be remedied, but the Government could not, consistently with the lines of the present Bill, accept a franchise other than the franchise they had laid down—namely, a municipal franchise. He did think, however, that there was a strong argument in favour of saying that owners of property in counties, whether ratepayers or not, should be qualified to be elected to the County Council of the county in which they held property. That, however, was a matter which did not arise on this Bill, but would arise on the larger Bill, and the Government would be glad to give a most favourable consideration to any proposal to that effect, which might be suggested by the hon. and learned Gentleman when they came to discuss the larger measure. He thought he had now disposed of all the points which had been raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman, and he would repeat that the proposals contained in the Bill were proposals to extend municipal rights and privileges throughout counties, and that they took the municipal franchise as they found it. That franchise had been in existence for a great many years. It had been wisely exercised, and the Government could not ask the House to depart from the principle they had laid down.

Sir RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) said, he thought there was one point raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman who moved the Amendment (Mr. Hobhouse), which had not been answered by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. One of the arguments raised by the hon. and learned Member had reference to the incidence of the service franchise, and he (Sir Richard Paget) wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman if, when this Bill was extended to Scotland, or when it was applied to England, where the service franchise was operative to a large extent, those who now voted under the service franchise, such as agricultural labourers, would be disqualified under the municipal franchise. He thought they might look forward to the time when the provisions of the Bill would be extended to Scotland, and what he wanted to know was whether, in that case, those who voted under the service franchise would enjoy none of the privileges of the electors under the Bill. That was an important point, and he should be glad to hear what the right hon. Gentleman had to say in regard to the matter. Reference had been made to the question of divided rates, and it was admitted on all sides that it would be impossible to divide the rates between the owner and the occupier without giving the owner proper representation. The question of divided rates, however, was not at that moment properly before the House, and when it came up for consideration would be the proper time for saying whether the franchise ought to remain in its present condition. His point was, that when the question of divided rates came up for consideration, then would be the moment to say whether the franchise was such as it ought to be, and whether the owners ought not to be fully represented. If they were going to divide the rates, it might be fairly contended that the owners should be adequately represented on the Council. The point raised by the Amendment had reference more particularly to the adoption of a single register, and he was strongly of opinion that something in the nature of the Amendment should be adopted. Certainly, the matter was one which required a little more consideration than had been given to it.

Mr. RATHBONE (Carnarvon, Arfon) said, he did not think it of much use to prolong the present discussion, because it was clear that it would arise in a better form afterwards. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had rightly stated that one great reason why he (Mr. Rathbone) was anxious to raise the question now was that, to his mind, it was of great importance that there should be a division of rates between the owners and occupiers, and that taxation and representation ought to go together. He thought a great many of those who did not take much share in local administration themselves were not aware of the danger which might arise from the withdrawal of the owners of property from taking their fair share in Local County Government. It was not, however, in the County Councils that the danger would arise, but in the local Councils they were now multiplying. As the Bill now stood, with two bodies dividing the work now done by one, and owners not directly taxed or represented, he believed that in the District Councils it would be found extremely difficult to get them to look after the interests of the locality until they found debts and difficulties tied round their necks for generations. He should certainly raise this question again when they came to the other Bill, and he hoped that those who valued good administration, and thought it ought not to be in the hands of a single class, but of all classes of the community, would agree with him as to the necessity of bringing the experience and qualifications of all to bear upon the question of Local Government. It was only in that way that they could get any approach to efficient and economical Local Government, and he repeated that the present industrial position of Great Britain was what made the question of rating, taxation, and debt a very serious one in the country. He thought his hon. and learned Friend would do well not to press the Amendment at the present moment, but to reserve it until the larger Bill was reached.

Mr. GURDON (Norfolk, Mid) said, he was sorry that the hon. Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvon recommended the hon. and learned Member for East Somerset (Mr. Hobhouse) to withdraw the Amendment. It related to a question which had been much discussed in the country, and he could assure the hon. Member that there had not been a dissentient voice raised against it. In his opinion, it would be of great advantage only to have two registers instead of three, and he trusted the Government would reconsider the matter, and that, while doing so, they would remember the class of men to whom it was proposed to hand over the County Government.

Commander BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, he did not think the argument of his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board, that because the municipal franchise had worked advantageously in the boroughs for 50 years, it would, therefore, be a good franchise for the counties, was altogether a sound argument. He was inclined to think that, whether property was rightly or wrongly shut out from the exercise of a vote in the boroughs, at any rate it was much more important that it should be enjoyed by property in the counties. He was strongly disposed to think that property ought to have full representation upon and a large voice in the construction of the various County Councils. He said this not in favour of property as such, but rather in favour of the rates that were to be paid by property. He could not understand how hon. Members could resist a proposal to give a vote to men who now paid the rates, whom they hoped to compel to pay the rates, and on whom all the rates would ultimately fall. In spite of the difficulties which might be experienced in recasting the Bill so as to give property a vote, he maintained that those who were in favour of that principle ought upon the present occasion to vote against property being excluded altogether by the Bill from a voice in the new county government. He trusted that the hon. and learned Member who moved the Amendment (Mr. Hobhouse) would take a Division in order, at this early stage in their proceedings, to decide definitely whether it was proper or not to extend the municipal franchise over the whole country. If the hon. and learned Member pressed the Amendment to a Division, he would certainly vote with him.

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT (Roxburgh) said, he wished to record his voice in favour of the acceptance of this proposal by the Government. He had not gathered from the hon. Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) any adequate reason why the Amendment should not be pressed to a Division. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board declared that, as a matter of convenience, it was desirable to retain the register which already existed in municipal boroughs; but he had always been given to understand that it was most desirable to have one register for all purposes, both Imperial and local, Parliamentary and municipal. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman, before going further, to reconsider the decision he had arrived at, with a view of establishing one register without following the principle of a household franchise in boroughs, which practically excluded many thousands of persons from the enjoyment of the vote. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, in the remarks he made, had certainly grappled with the reasons given by his hon. and learned Friend for making this proposal. It was highly improper to exclude from any voice in the management of county affairs those who contributed very largely to the rates. If there was anything to be said against the proposition of his hon. and learned Friend, it ought to be fully stated and properly discussed. The right hon. Gentleman told them that the question of giving the franchise to owners did not arise under the present Bill.

Mr. RITCHIE: No; I did not say that. What I said was that the question of the owners being qualified to sit on the County Councils was one which did not arise under this Bill, but under the other.

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, he was sorry if he had confused the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman. He would only add that those who resisted the proposal of his hon. and learned Friend were disqualifying those who very largely contributed to the rates from taking part in the future municipal government of the country and the administration of the local funds. He should have no hesitation in supporting his hon. and learned Friend if he took the Bill into the Lobby.

MR. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow) said, he should support the Amendment to the extent that it gave the owners of property a vote in connection with the management of the county affairs. The hon. Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone), however, placed the Committee in this difficulty. He had associated the owner franchise with the lodger and service franchise, and many hon. Members on that side of the House—certainly he, for one—were of opinion that such franchises could scarcely be recognized in purely county questions. Surely lodgers and service tenants were not entitled to have a voice in the management of roads and county property. Therefore, he could not vote for the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member, although he was anxious to accept an owner franchise.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he had taken part in Local Board elections as a resident owner, but under this Bill that privilege would be taken away, and he could never vote except as a resident. At present, in the election of Boards of Guardians, the owners' suffrage existed. If the Bill passed, however, the character of Local Board elections would be entirely changed. They would be conducted under the provisions of the Bill, and those who now voted as owners would no longer vote as such. In other words, in every Local Board district owners would be actually disqualified from voting. As an owner he had enjoyed the privilege of taking part in various Local Board elections; but hereafter he would have no voice in the management of local affairs, except he happened to be a resident. He hoped he had made the position sufficiently clear to the Committee. They were now, as the Bill stood, taking away a right and a privilege which had been confirmed as recently as 1875 by the Public Health Act. He quite agreed that at this particular moment it would not be convenient to continue the discussion; but he trusted that, though it might not be discussed now, the question would be revived hereafter. Speaking for himself alone, he was not absolutely sure that the Municipal Corporations, and those who took part in municipal elections, would be unwilling to add an owner suffrage to the other suffrages now in existence in the boroughs. In his opinion, a certain amount of owner suffrage would give solidity and character to municipal elections, and he thought the experiment was worth trying by a Conservative Government. He did not think that any loss would be incurred by it, and he was sure that such a proposal would be regarded by Members of the House with great satisfaction, and would be cordially welcomed by those who were in the habit of supporting the Government. In regard to the other point, which had been alluded to by his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board, he hoped provisions would be made in the other Bill for establishing an ownership qualification for a seat on the new County Councils. He believed that such a provision would give very great satisfaction to the electors, and he was also of opinion that the new institution about to be created by the Bill would thereby be materially strengthened.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) expressed a hope that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would reconsider the provisions of the Bill, because, if they were passed in their present shape, as he understood them, an owner of property might be rated at any sum; but unless he actually lived on the property he would be disfranchised, and have no voice in the elections in that part of the county where his property was situated. It was absurd that the possessor of a highly rated property for woods, fishing, and shooting should be deprived of a voice in the government of a county in which it was situated merely because he lived elsewhere. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would correct that statement if it was inaccurate.

MR. T. ROBINSON (Gloucester) said, he understood the Government proposed to adopt the same franchise for the election of county councillors as now existed in the municipal boroughs, which he thought was right; but the Amendment before the House proposed, among other things, that freeholders should be added to the burgess list, but to this he objected, and he thought this suggestion would not give satisfaction to those who lived in towns. He had taken an active part in the borough management, and he knew that the existing borough qualification gave satisfaction. When the revising barrister came round to revise the Parliamentary list of voters, he also revised the municipal list, and all those who occupied land, or buildings to the value of £10, or were householders within the borough, were put on the list with a double qualification, both Parliamentary and municipal. Then at the end of the list came those who were rated under £10 and the women who were entitled to vote as occupiers were added. He had found that system to work exceedingly well; but by the Amendment, as it stood, every owner would have a vote whether he was a resident or not. He opposed that provision, also any system of plural voting; and if a Division was taken, he should support the Government.

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON (Devon, South Molton) said, he was afraid that it was impossible for him to support the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for East Somerset. In the first place, although this was not an argument he would press upon the Committee, there would hardly be an excuse for the Government, after having introduced a measure in a certain popular direction, that they should be willing to make provision in it for the special representation of owners of property. As a matter of fact and experience, he did not believe that the number of owners who would be disqualified owing to their having no residence would be sufficient to justify the introduction of such an Amendment. He gathered from what fell from the hon. Member for Harrow (Mr. Ambrose) that he and others would be prepared to vote for the Amendment as far as it conferred a vote upon the owners of property; but, on the other hand, that he and others were not prepared to support, or would unwillingly support, the Amendment as it stood, because it involved the introduction of the service and lodger franchise. He thought that the Committee, before they accepted the Amendment, ought to weigh carefully all that it involved. It involved the creation of gross anomalies. If it were agreed to, municipal boroughs and rural districts would be placed under totally different systems of franchise. With all deference to hon. Members who had spoken in the debate with great authority and experience, he should like to ask them whether they supposed that the boroughs of England would approve of any proposal which would have the effect of conferring upon the ground landlords in towns who paid no rates a direct vote on municipal matters. Having been a Representative of a borough for some time, he could entirely endorse from his own experience what fell from the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. T. Robinson)—that such a provision would be strenuously opposed by the towns. Another reason why he (Viscount Lymington) objected to the proposal was that it would introduce the lodger and service franchise. There were many lodgers in the towns, but very few lodgers in the rural districts, and while the lodgers in the counties would be enfranchised those in the towns would still remain disqualified. Did hon. Members who supported the Amendment on Conservative grounds, and with the knowledge that the Metropolis would in any case be excluded from its operation, wish to swamp the ratepayers' vote in the boroughs with a low-class lodger franchise? So far as the service franchise was concerned, it might be a very proper franchise for the election of Members of Parliament, but he did not think that one's butler or gardener ought to have the right to vote upon rural questions. He would, therefore, support the Government in their resistance to the Amendment, but he hoped it would not be pressed.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he did not know whether the discussion was purely academic or whether it was to result in a Division. He had only risen for the purpose of saying that if the Amendment went to a Division he should vote with the Government, because he looked upon the proposal as distinctly retrogressive.

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, that if the Amendment went to a Division, as he hoped it would, he would support it on this ground—that the anomalies it was intended to remove were anomalies which might be dealt with in different stages of the progress of the Bill. The Government and the country were embarking under the Bill in an entirely new system of Local Government administration. They were sure to have anomalies arising in any attempt to introduce an entirely new condition of things, and as they arose an attempt must be made to deal with them, and, undoubtedly, it would be necessary to sweep others away on a future occasion. They were now striving to assimilate and bring into an intelligible and homogeneous form the local administration of the Imperial administration of the country, and he should certainly support the Amendment, as it was a step in the direction in which they wanted to go. He could not sympathize with the argument of the noble Lord the Member for the South Molton Division of Devon (Viscount Lymington) that one's butler or gardener was perfectly fit to vote upon matters affecting Imperial policy, but was not fit to vote upon the question of a county loan or a county rate. He (Mr. Waddy) should have thought that, so far as the question of interest was concerned, it would be all the other way. In small matters there could be no harm in letting the butler have his vote, but in matters of Imperial policy and legislation it was desirable that more provision, information, and a deeper sense of responsibility should be brought to bear. Sooner or later it would become necessary to assimilate the two existing franchises, and in so doing he trusted that they would greatly improve them wherever they needed improvement, and that they would get rid of that monstrous absurdity, the plurality of votes. He entirely approved of the principle which they were about to inaugurate in the new legislation—namely, that they were going to assimilate the government of the country in Imperial matters in Parliament with the government of the country in local matters elsewhere. He was prepared to support and carry out that principle wherever it might lead him, and, therefore, he should vote for the Amendment moved by his hon. and learned Friend.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he hoped that hon. Members were quite alive to the results which were likely to ensue—according to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Brigg Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Waddy)—if the Amendment were passed. What they had to do was one of two things—either of accepting the proposal to create great anomalies which could not possibly be defended, or to introduce a series of changes which would practically amount to municipal reform. It was extremely undesirable, that in a measure of this kind, they should do either the one or the other. It had already been pointed out that the anomalies would be extremely great, and that in endeavouring to remedy an evil in one part of the district they would be creating a far larger grievance in the municipal boroughs. There was another point he mentioned to which no hon. Gentleman had alluded, and that was that at two different parts of a country district there would exist different franchises relating to the same county government. That was an anomaly which could not possibly be defended, and if it were extended to the boroughs they would be practically introducing municipal reform. His hon. Friend the Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell) said, that the extension of the ownership vote to boroughs would be acceptable. All he could say was that he believed any proposal of that kind to extend the ownership vote to boroughs would be refused by the municipalities. He recollected that when Sir Charles Dilke was proposing a Bill of this kind in a speech which he made at Halifax, he said that, although there was a desire that the rates should be divided between the owner and occupier, he greatly feared that even with such a boon as that the boroughs would not consent to have the ownership vote extended to their municipal life. The hon. and learned Member for Roxburgh (Mr. A. R. D. Elliot) asked what it was proposed to do with the service vote in Scotland. All that he could say was that the Government did not propose in the present Bill to disqualify or disfranchise any person. They did not confer a new franchise upon anybody, nor did they disqualify or disfranchise anybody. As to Scotland their aim and belief was that no occupier of a cottage should be disqualified from having a vote. Of course, the gardener and the butler and so on would be disqualified, but if he was disqualified for the enjoyment of the county franchise, surely it would be necessary to disqualify him for the enjoyment of the borough franchise also; and the Government certainly did not contemplate the introduction of a measure which would entail such consequences. They had taken the municipal franchise as the basis upon which the Bill should proceed. That was the franchise upon which municipal privileges were based at present, and the Government felt it was the only safe ground they could stand upon. If they were to depart from it they would find themselves embarked on all manner of disputable points, and it would be seen from the discussion which had already taken place that whilst some other hon. Members were prepared to vote for the Amendment, because it would do certain things, others were prepared to vote for it because it would not do other things. He asked the Government, therefore, to assent to the proposals contained in the Bill and not to adopt the Amendment.

MR. HOBHOUSE said, he was grateful for the concession which the Government had made, which he understood to mean that they would introduce into the second Local Government Bill a provision to give to the owners of property, whether registered as county voters or not, a qualification for sitting on the County and District Councils. In consideration of that concession, and impressed as he was with the desirability of not unnecessarily occupying the time of the House, he would not put the House to the trouble of a Division, but would withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. AMBROSE, referring to the Amendment standing in his name, in page 1, line 19, after "the," leave out to end of Clause, and insert—

> "Qualification of electors for members of Local Boards under 'The Public Health Act, 1875,' and the scale of voting prescribed by section eight, and rules 10, 11, 12, and 13 of schedule 2 to that Act, shall extend to every part of a county not within the limits of a borough, and a person possessing in any part of a county outside the limits of a borough the qualification specified in rules 10, 11, 12, and 13 of schedule 2 to the said Act, shall be entitled to be registered under this Act as a county elector, in the parish in which the qualifying property is situate, in accordance with the scale of voting prescribed by such rules,"

said, that he did not intend to move the Amendment in that form. His intention had been, if he was successful enough to secure the omission of the original words of the clause, that the Amendment should then become a Substantive Motion, and it would be competent for hon. Members to move such Amendments to it as they deemed proper. The Amendment involved two principles—one was that the owners and occupiers of cottage property should have a vote, and the other was the abolition of the plural vote, against which a strong opinion had already been expressed by an hon. Member opposite. He proposed, therefore, to break up the Amendment as originally drawn, and to deal, in the first instance, only with ownership votes. As regarded the ownership vote for Parliamentary purposes, it consisted of a freehold of the value of 40*s.* per annum, or a freehold of £5, or a leasehold for a specified number of years of a certain value. These qualifications practically minimized the property rights and reduced them to next to nothing, and it was well known that in dealing with questions of that kind many difficulties would be placed in the way of persons claiming the right to vote upon a property qualification. According to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, these owners were to have no sort of voice in the election of Councils, by whom they might be subjected to the heavy penalties under the Local Government Bill. His right hon. Friend said the question was only a small one. He (Mr. Ambrose) admitted that in respect of the election of Parliamentary Representatives it was a small matter; but he denied that it was small if they dealt with property owners in the sense in which they were to be used by the Local Government Bill. He would ask his right hon. Friend, who told them that this Bill was to be on a popular basis, how he established his proposition? In what respect was it on a popular basis if he began by narrowing the electoral basis, and striking out a portion of those who were entitled to vote? His right hon. Friend said there were not many persons who would be affected. But he (Mr. Ambrose) had considered how the Bill would act with regard to one parish out of six in his Division—namely, Willesden, and in that parish alone there were no less than 640 registered owners who were entitled to vote on the election of members of the Local Board, every one of whom would be disfranchised by this Bill. Only a quarter of the number entitled to vote were at present on the register. They had heard something about coachmen and gardeners being entitled to vote. He did not say that those in service should not have a vote at all. If they were ratepayers, or if they occupied houses, they would have their vote; but that was quite another matter. His point was that the service franchise holder who lived in another man's house, and the lodger franchise holder also, might be very proper persons to be on the Parliamentary Election Register; but in this case they would have to do with the expenditure of local funds. In the parish of Willesden, again, there were no less than 1,805 tenants at weekly rents. Not one of those tenants paid rates directly; not one of them was affected by the amount of the rates; all of them might with a light heart vote for any policy, or any councillors who might be in favour of extravagance, and they would not be affected by it. Let the Committee consider how unjust it would be that the 1,805 weekly tenants should have each a vote, although they paid no rates, and that not one of the owners of the property, although they paid the rates, would be entitled to vote in respect of this franchise. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had announced that this was to be a popular measure. He (Mr. Ambrose) wanted it to be so, and he would make it popular by extending its basis, and including a large number of persons who would otherwise be shut out. It was said it would be an anomaly if they gave owners a right to vote, because it would be side by side with the borough franchise. But he would point out that there was a very considerable distinction between the management of boroughs and that of districts which were partly urban and partly rural. The borough was an area with a dense population; you might draw a line around it, and the population would be found to be inclosed within a very small circumference; there was in a borough a community of interest, and what suited one part of the people was likely to suit another part. By means of newspapers everyone knew what was taking place, and public opinion was thus brought to bear upon the Town Council, and there was some security that good measures would be passed. But in a rural, or partly rural and partly urban district, there was nothing like homogeneity; there might be a very large and straggling area, and a large number of people liable for rates from which they derived no benefit. He could refer to a case where in consequence of a sewage scheme the rates of an owner were increased by £20 a-year, although the work, having proceeded a certain distance, was stopped because it was found that at a particular part there were only a few gentlemen's houses who would be served by it. He mentioned that to show that there was not in these districts the same community of interest which existed in boroughs. The borough franchise which was created in 1836 was a considerable extension of the franchise then existing, and it was a popular measure within the meaning of the right hon. Gentleman. But the case now was very different. He only asked by his Amendment the maintenance of what was the *status quo;* in other words that there should be no disfranchisement, and he thought it only fair to press upon the right hon. Gentleman the second part of his Amendment which dealt only with the ownership vote.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 19, to leave out all the words after the word "England," to the end of the Clause, and insert the words "Every owner and also every ratepayer as defined by Rules 10 and 11 of Schedule 2 to 'The Public Health Act, 1875,' in respect of property situated within any part of a county, and within the limits of a borough, shall be entitled to be registered under this Act to vote as a county elector in the parish in which the qualifying property is situate,"—(*Mr. Ambrose,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'The' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. RITCHIE said, he hoped his hon. and learned Friend would not think him desirous of saying anything disrespectful in regard to his views, if he did not follow him in the discussion raised, because he understood that his hon. and learned Friend proposed by his Amendment to do practically that which the Committee had just decided should not be done, that was at least the effect of the withdrawal of the Amendment. His hon. and learned Friend now proposed to give to owners a vote as county electors, and he was going to follow that by proposing another Amendment which would give the owner, if he were an occupier in both capacities, a plural vote. That he (Mr. Ritchie) took to be entirely antagonistic to the principle of the Bill, and he regretted for the reasons already given in reply to the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Hobhouse) that the Government were unable to accept the proposal.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Lancashire, Darwen) said, the Amendment of the hon. Member for East Somerset (Mr. Hobhouse) was withdrawn upon his own responsibility, and he pointed out that hon. Members on those Benches sympathized with the object which the hon. Gentleman had in view. He did not think his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board had given any real answer at all to this request that the ownership vote should be considered. The right hon. Gentleman had avowed this in his last speech; but it was true that in his former speech he had given what went for an answer, although he did not think it would satisfy hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman said that the principle of the Bill was the extension of municipal Government to counties, and that, therefore, it was necessary to make no difference in the franchise proposed for the boroughs and that of the counties. But, if they were to appeal to precedent, it would be seen that the House had always looked on boroughs and counties as being in a different position. He thought that something in the nature of principle of ownership election might be extended to the County Councils they were now proposing to establish. He would be glad if it were possible to extend the ownership vote to boroughs, but he recognized that it was impossible to disturb the municipal franchise in boroughs. The right hon. Gentleman said that this was not in any way a disfranchising measure, but he submitted that this proposal to give the whole control of the elections to occupiers was to a certain extent a disfranchising of owners. It was provided in the Local Government Bill that many of the powers of various departments were to be handed over to the County Council. The Government were proposing to hand over the control, which owners as well as occupiers now had, to the occupiers alone. Therefore, he said that in principle there was no doubt that his hon. and learned Friend was perfectly right in his contention. As to the particular ownership franchise he wished to establish, he submitted that he was right in proposing to establish the franchise which now existed under the Public Health Act, and which was possessed by owners as well as occupiers. The right hon. Gentleman said that he did not intend this to be the final franchise, and that it might in the future be altered.

MR. RITCHIE said, the noble Lord had misunderstood him. He was arguing that they could not in this Bill propose to amend the Municipal Corporations Act, and he contended that it must form the subject of another measure.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE said, the right hon. Gentleman would see that this did not affect his hon. Friend's argument, because he did not propose to interfere with that Act. The argument, at any rate, might be held that it was possible that in future they might alter the franchise as they pleased. He submitted that unless the owners did not get the vote now they would not get it at all. The service franchise might be established among electors for the County Council; but he ventured to prophesy that if at that moment the owners' franchise were recognized it would never be recognized, and, therefore, it should be secured now. It might be true, as the right hon. Gentleman said, that it would not make much difference whether owners were admitted or not; but, supposing it to be true, there was all the more reason why his hon. and learned Friend's proposal should be accepted. Owners of property considered—wrongly, as he believed—that they ran an enormous risk in passing this Bill, and it would therefore be well to concede this little point which would gratify them and make them believe the Government had their interest at heart. He hoped, for these reasons, that the right hon. Gentleman would consent to give his hon. and learned Friend some hope that the proposal would be considered, because, otherwise, he should be obliged to support the Amendment by going into the Lobby with him.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had told them, when he introduced the Local Government Bill, that as "they all entered by one gate," the Government would not propose to have any complicated suffrage in this matter. They proposed in the counties precisely the same suffrage which had worked so well in the boroughs. He (Mr. J. E. Ellis) thought it would be admitted to be desirable that they should take no backward step. What they all desired was to approach simplicity of qualification. He resolutely set his face against the introduction of any complicated franchises, whether the plural vote, the cumulative device, or ownership suffrage; and he should on this occasion support the Government in what he believed to be the vital part of the Bill—namely, the introduction of simple residential household suffrage.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.) said, that up to the present time he had never had any doubt that the ownership vote ought to carry with it more weight than it had done. When the last Act was passing through the House he had put down an Amendment to the effect that no one should have a vote who did not pay his own rates. No doubt, the time had gone by when they could go back on the measure passed by hon. Gentlemen opposite; but it was a reasonable proposition to say that taxation and representation should go together. And he ventured to say that it was an omission on the part of his right hon. Friend and the Government that this principle had not been embodied in the present Bill. As his hon. and learned Friend had pointed out, a county was not like a borough, where people were close together and often of one way of thinking. It extended over a very large area, and to get the inhabitants to agree to one course of action might be a matter of extreme difficulty; and, under the circumstances, it was a very little thing to ask that where a man had property he should be allowed to vote for a County Councillor in each division in which that property was situated. It seemed to him that a great injustice would be done to owners of property unless they were more fairly represented than was proposed in the Bill.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) said, he was sorry the Government had not treated this Amendment with a little more consideration. They were now establishing a new franchise for counties, and he urged on the Committee to make it as good as it could be made. The Parliamentary franchise was conferred upon the people because they were taxed; but here the question was that of rating property, and owners of rated property ought surely to have the right to vote. The hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis) seemed to consider this a retrograde proposal; it was the first time he had ever heard the extension of the suffrage called a retrograde step. They wanted to make the franchise as large as possible; but this exclusion of owners would make the Bill to a very large extent a disfranchising measure. Hon. Gentlemen who were in favour of this Amendment asked that non-resident freeholders should have a voice in the taxation of their own property. There was nothing retrogressive or contrary to the principles of political economy in the Amendment.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, he thought the Government were not quite aware of the strong feeling which existed on this subject, much stronger than would be shown by the division. There was a large number of Members on those Benches who, while they felt strongly on the point, were yet very unwilling to press the Government if they could help it, knowing that almost any provision in the Bill would be better than that they should be turned out of Office and the maintenance of the Union endangered. He thought that those who were in favour of the Amendment were entitled to something more in the way of reply than they had received from the Government Bench. As the matter now stood owners were to have no vote at all, while their money was to be voted away by those who had no property. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to give a little more consideration to this matter. As he (Mr. Gedge) had said, they felt very strongly that ownership should carry with it the right of voting, and if they found that principle recognized by the Government, they should regard the Bill with a very different feeling from that with which they regarded it at present.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I understand the sympathy shown by hon. Gentlemen with the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Harrow Division of Middlesex (Mr. Ambrose), but I trust they will feel that Her Majesty's Government were only doing their duty by adhering to the principle laid down in the Bill. We are fully conscious of the importance of securing the representation of property; but we believe that representation will be secured by the legislation now proposed, although, at the same time, we feel that it would be impossible to introduce plural voting. We have taken the borough franchise as a model for the counties, and we have made no alteration in the existing system to show that, in our opinion, no danger is to be apprehended. Those who possess property will retain the influence which I believe they very worthily exercise among their neighbours and friends, and I have no fear whatever that property will be unfavourably affected or taxed unduly and improperly by the exercise of the franchise which will be conferred upon a large number of persons. While we respect the motives of hon. Gentlemen who support the Amendment, and while we are ready to go as far as we possibly can to meet their wishes, we are bound, however, under all the circumstances, to abide by the principle of the Bill.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, that the danger of an attack upon property was not what was apprehended; but it was feared that there would be among the councillors selected under the proposed franchise without any direct property representation, an imperfect sense of the necessity for economy in administration.

Mr. AMBROSE said, he wished it to be perfectly understood that his Amendment did not include plural voting; it tended only to give to owners of property a voice in questions of rating. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) had stated that while the expense of management in rural districts had only increased during 30 years to the extent of 12 or 13 per cent, the rates in London had increased by 69 per cent, and in other Municipal Corporations by 59 per cent; and whatever might be said with regard to the economical administration in boroughs, it could not be denied that, on the whole, there had been a very large outlay. He had hoped for a more favourable reception from Her Majesty's Government, and he felt bound, under the circumstances, to press the Amendment to a Division. He assured his right hon. Friend that he should do so with great reluctance and pain; but he felt it was an absolute duty upon him, and every Member of the Conservative Party, to protest against the exclusion of owners of property. They were on the point of handing over the levying of taxes to people who did not pay those taxes. That, he said, could not be good for the country; and he was convinced that if the Bill was passed in its present form, bad results would follow in respect of expenditure and management. The country would find out that the Bill was absolutely inadequate for the protection of property, and mischievous, not only to the Conservative Party, but to the country at large.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he wished to make two observations on what had fallen from the hon. and learned Member for the Harrow Division of Middlesex (Mr. Ambrose). First of all, he wished to state that he was glad to hear the hon. and learned Member was going to divide the Committee, because the Division would be of extreme importance both with regard to the Amendment itself and the future; secondly, he was glad to hear that, in order to put the matter in a clear shape, the hon. and learned Member was going to withdraw that part of it which related to plural voting. The Division was, therefore, going to take place on the question whether property owners should be separately represented or have a residential franchise. He was glad to hear the words of true wisdom which had been spoken from the Treasury Bench. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had stated that property owners might consider themselves to be sufficiently and properly represented by residential franchise. That was the issue upon which they were about to vote, and it was a principle of which the last had not been heard, but which would be appealed to with effect on other and future occasions;

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, he thought the Government were quite right in adhering to the principle of the Bill; but, at the same time, he thought his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Ambrose) was also right in standing by his principle, and he (Commander Bethell) was very glad to hear that he would divide the Committee on his Amendment.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 259; Noes 52: Majority 207.—(Div. List, No. 94.)

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he rose to move the Amendment standing in his name, which provided that those entitled to be registered under this Act should be ratepayers. The Bill, in declaring the qualification of voters, adopted the qualification enacted by the 9th section of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882; and nothing could be better than the clause which governed the qualification in that case. The condition was that the elector should be rated in respect of poor rates made in the last 12 months. He had no objection whatever to that qualification; the payment of rates was therein made a condition precedent to the administration of rates. But that Act was governed by another Act of Parliament, which provided that the Vestry of any parish might from time to time order that the owner, instead of the occupier, of rateable hereditaments under £8, should be rated to the poor. The effect of that was that every occupier of a house at a rent under £8 would not pay directly one farthing towards the rates; the whole of the rates would be paid by the owner, and not by the occupier of property, and yet the occupier would have a direct voice in the administration of the rates. Now, what became of the principle about which they had heard so much from the Front Bench, and from the right hon. Gentleman, particularly, who brought in the Local Government Bill, as to taxation and representation going together, if those who did not pay one farthing towards the rates were to have an equal voice in their administration with those who directly paid them. It had been suggested during the debate that it would be a good thing for the rates to be divided between owners and occupiers. But the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) himself had said that it would be impossible to divide the rates between owner and occupier, unless at the same time the representation was equally divided. But this was not a question of dividing the rates between ratepayers and owners; it was a question of the whole of the rates being paid by the owner. [An hon. MEMBER: And occupier.] No! under the compounding Acts the occupier would not pay anything at all. The result of this would be that in some places one-half of the electors, and in others two-thirds, would not pay rates directly at all; they would have no interest whatever in the amount of the rates; they would never hear at their doors the tap of the collector asking for their contributions. In many places they would entirely out-vote all the other electors put together; and it was possible under this Bill that the whole of the District Council, and almost the whole of the County Council, should be composed of men who did not contribute a single farthing to local taxation. That, surely, was a grave matter, and one which deserved some attention at the hands of the House. They all knew perfectly well that the only check upon reckless expenditure in the matter of rates was that those who imposed the burdens had themselves to pay for them. Some argument might be raised possibly upon the fact that the Parliamentary franchise was based upon a non-direct rate-paying qualification. Why should it not be? The Parliamentary franchise was quite a different thing to the franchise which affected the administration of rates. Everyone was taxed by Parliament, and therefore everyone should be represented in the House of Commons; Parliament was a legislative assembly, and everybody was interested in the laws of his country. Therefore, he dismissed at once the argument founded upon Parliamentary franchise, which found no parallel in the franchise to be created under the Bill. Next as to the municipal franchise, which was based upon the compounding Acts. Was the example of the boroughs deserving of imitation? He altogether contradicted the statement that the borough administration had been economical. Boroughs, they all knew, under the present franchise, had been influenced by political considerations, and that influence had, to a great extent, drawn the Municipal Councils into extravagance, which had sometimes culminated in corruption. Therefore, if it was said that the franchise worked well in boroughs, he replied at once that it had produced extravagance to such an extent that the rates were now rising by leaps and bounds at about £800,000 a-year; and if they went on thus, the whole of the sum granted by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, amounting to £3,000,000, in aid of the rates, would be consumed in additional taxation in four years' time. They all knew that the state of indebtedness of the boroughs was such that many of them were on the verge of bankruptcy, and that the debts amounted altogether to £180,000,000. Therefore, if the success of the municipal franchise was brought forward as a reason for extending it to the counties, he said that it had not worked so well that they should pass it on to the counties without consideration. He (Mr. Stanley Leighton) hoped he should not be met by a *non possumus*; where there was a will there was a way; and he trusted that argument would not be used against his Amendment. He feared more the *ignoramus* argument, because the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) had told the House that he knew nothing of the numbers of the non-ratepaying electors who were to be placed on the electorate—that is to say, the right hon. Gentleman had not considered it worth while to take into account the number of those who did not pay rates directly, but who would by this Bill share in the administration of the rates. If they accepted the principle that taxation should accompany representation, why should they not in some way or other limit the Compounding Act. His object was, not to propose disfranchisement, but to give the Government an opportunity of declaring whether they would not in some way limit that Act. He suggested that the operation of the Act should be limited to those places where it was at present in force, and that it should be amended by confining it to those short tenancies of one month where the tenant was, so to speak, here to-day and gone to-morrow. But whatever the Government might do with regard to this matter, he wished strongly to point out the extreme hardship with which this Compounding Act bore upon the freeholder. The occupying freeholder was rated to the full amount of his property, yet every owner of a number of cottages could compound under the Act at a remission of 30 per cent; the result was that every freeholder was charged so much more because the Compounding Act allowed the owner of many cottages to pay 30 per cent less than his due share of the rates. That appeared to him to be a strong argument in favour of limiting the operation of the Compounding Act. They ought to try to place the franchise on a sound basis, because they knew that further functions would shortly be placed in the hands of the County Councils. Poor relief was certain soon to be placed in their hands. What could be more injurious to the independence of the agricultural labourer, and more disadvantageous to the maintenance of the standard of wages, than to have a number of persons administering outdoor relief who did not pay one farthing towards the rates? That alone was a very good reason why they should take care that everyone who had a vote for the election of County Boards should feel directly the incidence of the rates. For these reasons he begged to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice; and he trusted the Government would be able to suggest some way of limiting the operation of the Compounding Act to some extent, even if they could not go the full length of his proposal.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 22, after the word "person," to insert the words "being a ratepayer."—(*Mr. Stanley Leighton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, he had listened with great interest and attention to the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down, and he regretted that it was not possible for the Government in the present Bill to make the concession which he desired. The argument of his hon. Friend was to the effect that it was very desirable that taxation and representation should go together, and that the franchise should only be in the hands of those who paid rates. As a general principle, he did not mean to dispute the truth of the proposition which his hon. Friend put forward, but he asked the Committee for a few moments to listen to the details of his hon. Friend's arguments. His hon. Friend was obliged to admit that the present municipal franchise did not involve the necessity of payment of rates by the occupier. His hon. Friend said that the municipal franchise had led to great extravagance in towns. He (Sir Richard Webster) was not able to say positively whether that proposition was true or not, but it had been stated by the Representatives of urban districts during the present Session that there had been no extravagance in the sense to which the hon. Gentleman referred. They had to consider what the towns received for the money expended. They had public buildings, free libraries, washhouses, paved streets and other conveniences. The argument used by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) was not that the rates were too heavy, but that the rural districts would get more than their share of the grant as between the urban and rural districts. He was not aware that anyone had had the courage to suggest that the Compounding Act should be repealed or modified in regard to the exercise of the municipal franchise. They must therefore either proceed on the principle of assimilating the municipal franchise to the rural franchise or upon some other principle. He sympathised to this extent with his hon. Friend, that, if it should be established that the result of this legislation was undue extravagance, and if that was shown to be caused by those who voted, and yet did not pay the rates, then a strong case would have been made out for Parliamentary consideration. No one suggested that the rural taxation would be as high a rate in the pound as was now levied in boroughs, and that it would involve the same amount of extravagance as that alleged to have taken place in urban districts. His hon. Friend had made a suggestion which, if it were possible to see how it would turn out, they might be able to adopt; but he had given them no means of arriving at such a conclusion, and, in reply to his suggestion with regard to the limitation of the Compounding Act, he said that this also depended on the same argument which he had ventured to put forward—namely, if it could be shown that the municipal franchise had worked badly, then a proposition might be put forward for an Amendment, but as long as it was their duty to recognize the municipal franchise of 1882 to be statutory, it seemed to him impossible to depart from the principle of the franchise adopted in this Bill. He could only again assure his hon. Friend that it was not from any wish on the part of Her Majesty's Government not to deal with this question if it were possible to do so, that they could not consent to his proposal, but because when they were dealing with the present state of affairs with regard to counties they found it absolutely necessary to adopt the municipal principle.

Mr. WHITLEY (Liverpool, Everton) said, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had stated that it was intended to apply the municipal principle in this Bill. Under the Municipal Corporations Act the ratepayers had the power of exercising control with regard to expenditure; it was distinctly provided that, before the principle of the Municipal Corporations Act came into operation, there must be a poll of the ratepayers, and he knew that when there had been extravagance a poll of the ratepayers had been had. He asked whether it was the intention of the Government to give the ratepayers in the counties the same powers as the ratepayers in the boroughs possessed? It was a serious matter to deprive of their votes men on whom the burden of taxation fell, and if that was the intention of the Government, he asked that the same provision might be made between owners and ratepayers as now existed under the Municipal Corporations Act.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that of course his hon. Friend would see that this question did not arise on the Bill before the Committee. He should be glad if his hon. Friend would not think it necessary to press that point upon this occasion. The Government, however, would certainly look into the matter.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, he hoped he was not to understand that the right hon. Gentleman had committed himself by his last answer to the Amendment. [Mr. Ritchie: No, no!]

Question put, and *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Registration of County electors).

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendment made:—In page 2, line 19, after the word "repealed," to insert the words, "and revising assessor for such borough shall not be elected."

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 23, after the word "applies," insert the words, "and the said lists of county electors and of occupation voters for Parliamentary elections in such parish shall be made out in divisions, as provided in the said Act: Provided, that a person whose name appears in any list of county electors or burgesses in a county may object to the name of any other person on a list of county electors or burgesses for a parish in that county, and may oppose the claim of a person to have his name inscribed in any such list."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked, whether the Government would give an assurance that with regard to London some provision would be made for drawing up the register by streets?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, that the Amendment before the Committee did not touch that question at all. The Amendment was with reference to making out the list in three divisions.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 1, before the word "section," to insert the words "where such parish is not within a Parliamentary borough." —(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. LAWSON said, that in London they wanted to get a uniform and simple system of registration. At present it was optional whether the registers should be made out alphabetically or by streets, so far as the Parliamentary elections were concerned. It depended on the will of the magistrates in the different boroughs of London. Municipal boroughs were dealt with as a whole by the Town Council, not in parts. They were now about to establish one authority for London, and it was quite clear that there should be a uniform system of registration. The street plan had been adopted in St. Pancras, where those engaged in the practical work of registration found that they could work much more easily from the street lists than the alphabetical list. He should not press the Amendment of which he had given notice to a Division, because it would be out of Order if the Amendment of the hon. and learned Attorney General was carried; but he would be satisfied if his proposal were embodied in some other part of the Bill. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) was not opposed to the Amendment; but he would point out that the confusion and the expense resulting from the existing system would be a serious difficulty in the way of the Local Government Board.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) said, that in his district, they had found great convenience from having a street register; because it was sometimes impossible to get access to individuals by means of the alphabetical system. The question was not a Party one; on the contrary, the principle was approved by persons of all shades of politics in London, and, therefore, he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would see his way to adopt the proposal of his hon. Colleague (Mr. Lawson).

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said, he believed that the plan of having the register by streets had been found of great convenience to all parties connected with this work, and it had prevented people from being put on the register who ought not to be there. He hoped the Government would agree to the Amendment.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, the only difficulty was whether it was desirable to make it compulsory that the register should be made out according to streets. No doubt, it would be very desirable to have one uniform system; but the Committee were aware that the question with regard to places within London was very carefully considered by a Committee in 1885, which came to the conclusion that it was not desirable in other than Parliamentary boroughs that there should be street lists. The Government, however, would consider between that time and Report whether the principle should be made compulsory.

Mr. LAWSON said, the Committee of 1885 made no Report with regard to the Metropolis.

Mr. FIRTH (Dundee) said, he understood that the hon. and learned Attorney General was in favour of the principle being made compulsory if it could be included in the Bill. The system had been applied in Kensington after considerable opposition; but now there was no difference of opinion whatever on the subject.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. Attorney General, the following Amendments made:—In page 3, line 11, leave out "Parliamentary;" and in line 14, leave out from beginning of line to "Clerk of the Peace," in line 18, and insert—

"The Town Clerk shall cause to be printed such number of copies of the revised lists as the Clerk of the Peace may require, and shall transmit the same to."

Mr. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) said, the Amendment which stood next in his name, had for its object the making of better provision for the registration of voters in the country districts. There were many small parishes where there was no paid assistant overseer, and where, at present, no assistant overseer was required to do the Poor Law work. Since 1885 the registration duties of the overseers had become more complicated, and now that it was proposed to make them still more so by adding a Municipal to the Parliamentary register, it became necessary that there should be in each parish a proper officer to perform these registration duties. The sub-section which he had put on the Paper was merely in the nature of a suggestion to the Government. If they had a better plan for meeting the difficulty, he should only be too glad to accept it. He would, however, impress on the Government the necessity of making better provision, and that speedily, for registration in the future. Great dissatisfaction would be felt if, under the new register, voters were not properly registered. He had suggested the Guardians of the Union as a suitable body to appoint a registration officer, because they were the only existing authority in a position to appoint an officer in more parishes than one. He sincerely hoped that, when we had the District Councils, the Government would deal with the general question of reforming the registration law; but, in the meantime, some temporary provision must be made, and he submitted that that temporary provision could not be effected more cheaply or expeditiously than by the system he proposed.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, at end, add,—(h.) For the purpose of making better provision for the registration of voters in rural districts, the guardians of a union may, with the consent of the overseers of any parish within their union for which an assistant overseer has not been appointed under the provisions of the Poor Law Amendment Acts, annually appoint a fit person to act as registration officer for one or more such parishes. Such registration officer shall perform all the duties of overseers of the parish or parishes for which he is appointed in respect of the registration of voters, and the provisions of the Registration of Electors Acts relating to overseers shall apply to him accordingly:

"Provided that his remuneration shall be fixed by the guardians of the union, and charged on the poor rates of the said parish or parishes, and (if he acts for more than one parish) in proportion to the number of persons on the list of voters for each parish."—(*Mr. Hobhouse.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, he had listened very attentively to what the hon. and learned Gentleman had said, and he could not doubt that the hon. and learned Member had some reason for stating, as he did, that there was some fear that, unless some other arrangement than that now existing were adopted, the registers would not be prepared as they would all like to see them prepared. But the question whether or not the work should be done by a paid officer was a large and important question, and he doubted whether, if anything could be done, it could be done in this Bill. He was doubtful whether it was not a matter to be dealt with when they took in hand the question of registration, which was a subject which he thought must come before the House before long. He (Mr. Ritchie) confessed he had no objection in principle to the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman; but what appeared to him was that, perhaps, it was better that they should wait before dealing with the question until they took in hand the whole question of registration.

Mr. STANSFELD (Halifax) said, he was glad the right hon. Gentleman opposite had received the suggestion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for East Somerset (Mr. Hobhouse) so favourably. He wished to point out, however, that there was another occasion when the question might come on, for he (Mr. Stansfeld) himself had a Registration Bill before the House which contained provisions of this nature, and which, if passed, would simplify the registration of the country.

Mr. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.) said, that when the Bill got thoroughly to work, it would be found that the appointment of some official in many parishes for preparing the register was necessary. In many small parishes at present the work was done by the overseers themselves, in order that the localities might not be put to the expense of assistant overseers; but it would come very hard upon them if they were required at the busiest time of all the year to undertake the work of preparing the Local Government Registers. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had stated that he would consider how the difficulty could be met, and that statement was all they could expect at present. But, unless something was done to get the registers properly prepared, it would be found that there was a serious omission in the measure. In a great many parishes an assistant overseer was not necessary; but still it would be necessary that someone should be appointed in those parishes to do the work of preparing the registers, as that was work which it was essential should be properly carried out.

Mr. RITCHIE said, after what had fallen from his hon. Friend who had just sat down (Mr. Llewellyn), and as the Amendment which the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Hobhouse) proposed was merely a permissive proposal, the Government would accept it on the understanding that when they came to the Report stage of the Bill, if they found that it required any Amendment, Amendments would be accepted to that extent.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause as amended, *agreed to.*

Mr. Ritchie

Clause 4 (Roll of county electors).

On the Motion of Mr. Attorney General, the following Amendments made:—In page 3, line 39, leave out "roll," and insert "register;" line 42, leave out "copies," and insert "such number of copies as the clerk of the peace may require;" in page 4, line 1, after "delivered," insert "by the town clerk;" line 2, leave out "roll" and insert "register;" and in page 4, line 4, leave out "forty-nine."

Mr. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.), in moving in page 4, line 6, to insert the words "of county fund for borough fund," said the Amendment was only a matter of drafting.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 6, after the words "town clerk" to insert the words "of county fund for borough fund."—(*Mr. Hobhouse.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight) said, the object the hon. and learned Gentleman had in view would be better carried out by an Amendment which he (Sir Richard Webster) intended to propose in line 8.

Mr. HOBHOUSE: Then I will withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. Attorney General, the following Amendment made:—In page 4, line 7, leave out the word "roll" in the first two cases where it occurs, and insert the word "register."

On the Motion of Mr. Attorney General, the following Amendment made:—In page 4, line 8, after the word "ward" insert the words "and of county fund for borough fund."

Commander BETHELL (York, E. R. Holderness) said, he wished to ask a question of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, and to put himself in Order, he would move the omission of Sub-section 3, which was as follows:—

"If district councils are established under any Act of the present session of Parliament, the clerk of every such council, not being the council of a borough, shall make up a roll of all persons registered as county electors in his district, and where there are wards in a district, of all county electors in each ward, and the above-mentioned Acts and sections shall apply for that purpose with the substitution of 'clerk of the district council' for 'town clerk,' and of 'district roll' for 'burgess roll' respectively.'

It was essential that the electoral rolls should be made equally for the districts and the counties. Hon. Gentlemen who were familiar with the formation of the registers would agree with him that it would seem under this sub-section that double expense was to be entailed by registers being prepared under the direction not only of the clerk to the District Councils, but of clerks of the peace.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, to leave out Sub-section (3).—*Commander Bethell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster (Isle of Wight) said, that this point had not been overlooked by Her Majesty's Government, and he had handed in a verbal Amendment in line 13 to provide that there should be no duplicate printing and that the clerks of the District Councils should send a sufficient number of copies to the clerks of the peace.

Mr. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) asked whether the persons qualified to vote in a district for the County Council would always be qualified to vote for the District Council?

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, that was so.

Mr. HOBHOUSE said, the limit as to residence was made to run from the limit of the district in the one case and from the limit of the county in the other.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): No; the limits would be the same.

Commander BETHELL said, he begged leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. Attorney General, the following Amendments made:—In page 4, line 11, leave out "roll" and insert "register;" line 16, leave out "roll" in the first case where it occurs, and insert "register."

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) said, he begged to move to leave out Sub-section 4 as follows;—

"Provided that nothing in this section shall prevent a county elector from being enrolled n more than one division roll."

It was quite possible that he might attach undue importance to this Amendment he was moving, because he was not as versed in the law as the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General and many hon. Gentlemen opposite, but this Sub-section in the Bill certainly struck him as a strong exception to the application of Clause 45 of the Act of 1882, which dealt with the Register of County voters. Sub-section 6, of Clause 45, provided that an elector could not be enrolled on more than one roll. In Section 51, Sub-section 2, it was stated that no person should subscribe to a nomination paper for more than one ward, or vote in more than one ward, and when he found that a county elector was to be enrolled in more than one Division of the Roll, it suggested to him that an exception might be made to the Section of the Act of 1882, excluding a person from voting in more than one Division, and he should regret to see that. The application of the Register of 1882 to the new county election was not clear. If this Sub-section were left out, it would appear they were not going to allow dual voting in counties which they did not at present allow in boroughs. In a few words such was his difficulty, and he begged to move that the sub-section be left out.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 17, to leave out Sub-section (4).—(*Mr. Picton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. RITCHIE said, he thought he should be able to give the hon. Gentleman a very good reason why this Subsection was put in. The roll would, of course, be also the new burgess roll for the new District Council, and unless an elector, who was qualified to vote for more than one District Council, should have his name put down on the Register for each of the Divisions for which he was entitled to vote, he would be disqualified for giving his vote for more than one District. It was obvious that a person qualified in one rural district ought to be entitled to vote for the District Council of that District. There was no doubt that a person qualified in more than one Division should vote for each of the Districts of the County Council. That would be equally provided for in the other Bill. A man would be entitled to have his name down for the District in which he had a qualification, as otherwise a person would not be entitled to vote for more than one of the District Councils for which he might really be entitled to vote.

MR. PICTON said, he understood that it was not intended that a man qualified in two Divisions of a County should be entitled to vote for each Division.

MR. RITCHIE: Certainly not.

MR. PICTON: Then I withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendments made:—In page 4, line 18, leave out "enrolled," and insert "registered;' same line, leave out "roll," and add "register;" and at end, add,—

"Where in pursuance of section four of 'The Registration Act, 1885,' the Revising Barrister has power to erase the name of any person as a Parliamentary voter from Division One of the occupiers' list, such barrister, in lieu of erasing the name, shall place an asterisk or other mark against the name, and, in printing such lists, the name shall be numbered consecutively with the other names, but an asterisk or other mark shall be printed against the name, and a person against whose name such asterisk or other mark is placed shall not be entitled to vote in respect of such entry at a Parliamentary election, but shall have the same right of voting at an election of a county authority as he would have if no such mark were placed against his name.

If under any Act of the present Session of Parliament establishing a council for a county any portion of another county is added to that county for the purpose of such election, such portion of the county register as relates to the electors having qualifying property in the said part so added shall be deemed to be part of the county register of the county for which such council is elected, and the clerk of the peace and other officers shall take such steps as may be necessary for giving effect to these enactments."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Expenses).

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERRL, the following Amendments made:—In page 4, line 26, after "peace," insert "or town clerk;" line 27, after "county," insert "or borough;" and in line 28, after "charges," insert "made and charged by him."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Contribution by county authorities towards the remuneration of revising barristers).

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, he wished to ask a question of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, before the next Amendment came on, and, to put himself in Order, he would move to omit the 1st Sub-section from the clause—namely:—

"There shall be annually paid by the county authority of every county out of the county fund into Her Majesty's Exchequer such sum as the Treasury certify to be *one-half* of the cost incurred for the payment of revising barristers at the then last revision of the lists of parliamentary electors, burgesses, and county electors in that county."

The question he wished to put was with reference to the revising barristers, and he desired to know whether it was essential that they should be introduced into the counties. Those who were familiar with the revision of the lists in boroughs informed him that the revising barristers had very little to do in connection with the municipal lists. That being the case, it would save expenditure if the revising barristers were not introduced into the counties, where the same simple franchise as existed in the boroughs would operate.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, to omit Sub-section (1). — (*Commander Bethell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he had in the Paper an Amendment to line 7, to add—

"And such payment in respect of the revision of the burgess lists shall in future be made by the Treasury out of Her Majesty's Exchequer,"

and, as this Amendment had some bearing on the Motion of the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Commander Bethell), he (Mr. Tomlinson) would here say what he had to say with regard to it. He would not move his own Amendment, and, with reference to what the hon. and gallant Gentleman had said, he begged to express the opinion that, having had opportunities of ascertaining the facts, he found that the revision in connection with the municipal lists added considerably to the time required by the revising barristers. He believed, under the proposed change, it was essential that the revising barristers should revise the lists for the counties as well as the municipalities. He understood that it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to carry out in substance his Amendment, and that they did not wish that the revising barrister should have additional work without receiving additional remuneration.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, it would probably assist the Committee if he were to inform them at that period what the Government intended to do in regard to the revising barristers. The Government could not agree to accept any system of registration which was not done by competent revising barristers. That matter was carefully considered in connection with the Act of 1882. There was a revising authority then in existence; but that authority, being made the subject of careful inquiry, was found unsatisfactory, and it was decided that after a certain date the revision should be by revising barristers. It was not correct to suppose that no legal questions could arise in connection with revision, and therefore it would not be desirable to have the work done by persons who were not competent to deal with such legal questions as might arise. No time would be saved in that way. With regard to the existing conditions under which the revising barristers were appointed, the Committee knew that they were paid 200 guineas a-year for Parliamentary work, paying their own expenses and doing their work within certain days. When called upon to do municipal work they were paid by the boroughs five guineas a day, for such time as they were engaged doing the work. It was found that those arrangements did not work satisfactorily, and one of the objects in view was to do away with this payment of five guineas per day. It was evident that there would be largely increased work—he did not mean in proportion to the number of new names put on the list—but still there would be largely increased work, and the Government provided in the Bill that one-half of the cost of the revision should be borne by the county, and one-half by the Treasury. Instead of being paid 200 guineas a-year, and a certain amount per day for the municipal work, it was proposed that the revising barristers should do the work once for all in connection with the municipal and county lists, and that they should be paid 250 guineas per annum for it, one-half to be borne by the Treasury, they paying their own expenses. That would effect a saving to the country—counties would not be heavily charged. Those who had looked into the question from the revising barristers' point of view, and also from the point of view of the Government, believed this to be a settlement by no means unfair to those who had to pay, and not an undue remuneration for those who had to do the work. He thought that, probably having regard to the pay which had been given in the past, some revising barristers might have been inclined to ask for a larger amount, but when they came to look into the matter they would admit, he thought, that the sum fixed upon by the Government was sufficient. It was highly important that there should be a uniform system of revision of the lists.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, he did not think the hon. and learned Gentleman's reference to the antiquated system which formerly prevailed was very much to the point, and whether the effect of paying these gentlemen £250 a-year would be economical or not he could not say, because he did not know how many five guineas a-piece had been paid to these gentlemen; but his (Mr. Conybeare's) method of getting over the difficulty would be to place the work of revision on the shoulders of the County Court Judges. According to a Return which was printed last year, and according to a discussion which took place in that House, it seemed that the County Court Judges had only half their time taken up with County Court work. That being so, and County Court Judges being quite as capable as the ordinary revising barristers for the work of revising the lists of voters, he thought that such work might very well be handed over to them. From his point of view, however, they would never get the thing satisfactorily managed until they had manhood suffrage. The difficulties in connection with revision in many cases rendered it impossible for working men to exercise the franchise, and until either one Party or the other in the House had the courage to deal manfully with the question, and declare for manhood suffrage, the difficulty would never be overcome.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, the hon. Member (Mr. Conybeare) was mistaken in supposing that there was any information before the House to the effect that the County Court Judges, or any large proportion of them, worked so little as the hon. Member said. There was a Bill now before the House to enable the Lord Chancellor to deal with cases where the County Court Judges had not sufficient work to do—giving him power to require those Judges who had too little to do to assist those who had too much to do; and, under the circumstances, it would be absurd—if the hon. Member would permit him to say so—to think of putting the work of registration upon the County Court Judges.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, the Bill the hon. Member referred to was before the Standing Committee, but was not technically before the House, and he was referring to what was at present the case. He was referring to a Return and a discussion which took place in the House last Session. He, therefore, ventured to say that the hon. Member's correction was hardly correct.

Mr. TOMLINSON said, the Bill in question was before the House, the Standing Committee being, by the Rules of the House, technically equivalent to the Committee stage of a Bill in Committee of the Whole House.

Mr. CONYBEARE: I know that.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining Clauses *agreed to.*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight) moved, after Clause 10, to insert the clause which stood in his name.

New Clause:—

(Transitory provisions as to the year 1888.)

"In the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, notwithstanding anything in the enactments applied by this Act, the revision of the lists of county electors may be later than the twelfth day of October, so that it be not later than the thirty-first day of October, and the register of county electors shall be completed on or before the thirty-first day of December in the said year, and shall come into operation on the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, and shall continue in operation until the next register of county electors comes into operation.

"In the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, notwithstanding anything in this Act or the enactments thereby applied, the Clerk of the Peace in a county may, if he thinks fit, instead of directing the occupiers' list to be made out in three divisions as provided by the Registration of Electors Acts, direct the overseers to make supplemental lists containing the names which would otherwise be contained in Division Two and Division Three of the occupiers' list, and the names so contained in the spplemental list corresponding to Division Two shall be struck by the Revising Barrister out of Division One of the list, and the supplemental list corresponding to Division Three shall be treated as if it were Division Three of the said list,"—(*Mr. Attorney General,*)

—*brought up,* and read a first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he took exception to the second part of the clause, as he thought it would lead to unnecessary confusion.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER asked, whether the hon. and learned Member had seen the alterations which it was proposed to effect ?

Mr. TOMLINSON said, he had not; but he was informed that the proposal in the new clause would lead to confusion.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, he did not know how otherwise the object in view could be carried out. They had passed a clause to the effect that there should be a revision of the lists, and it followed from that that the lists must be made to agree with each other. No doubt, it would be laborious to make three revisions of the lists effecting certain erasures in the case of one or other; but the alternative would lead to greater confusion, as it would be necessary to put certain marks against certain names, and to refer back to see what each mark meant. It would only be in this way that they could find out whether a man was to have a Parliamentary or municipal vote, or whether the name was that of a woman. That would be a very inconvenient course, and the Government were anxious that the revising barristers should be enabled to do their work thoroughly.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present, SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, he regretted he had not properly understood his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Tomlinson). If the hon. and learned Member thought the arrangement should be compulsory he would look into the matter; but he would point out that the subject had been before the Clerks of the Peace and others who were interested.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) asked why it was necessary to have a special provision for registration that year, which was not necessary other years?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, the arrangement was proposed inasmuch as they must get through the work that year. On other occasions there had been plenty of time. That had been the course adopted in 1885.

MR. HOBHOUSE said, he referred in particular to the 2nd sub-section.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, he would look into the point.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *added* to the Bill.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) said, he begged to move the following Amendment:—In page 2, after Clause 2, insert the following Clause:—

> "Every person who is entitled to be registered as a voter in respect of a ten pounds occupation qualification within the meaning of the provisions of 'The Registration Act, 1885,' which are set out in the Schedule to this Act, shall be entitled to be registered as a county elector, and to be enrolled as a burgess, in respect of such qualification, in like manner in all respects as if the sections of 'The Municipal Corporations Act, 1882,' relating to a burgess qualification, included the said ten pounds occupation qualification."

His object was to amend the occupation franchise. At present the matter stood thus. In the year 1885 the franchise in municipal boroughs was altered for Parliamentary purposes, so as to include under the qualification to vote land without buildings up to the value of £10. There was no such qualification for municipal purposes; therefore the effect of the Bill would be that in country districts occupiers of land of even considerable value would not have a right to vote, unless they had buildings on the land. He could assure the Committee that this was not an imaginary case. He had the details of one considerable estate, where a large quantity of grazing land was occupied by persons who did not reside in the immediate neighbourhood, and had no buildings whatever on the land. Those persons who had a substantial stake in the neighbourhood would have no right to vote as the Bill now stood, and he thought this proposal ought to be accepted, providing as it did that a person who had a *status* for Parliamentary purposes should be admitted to a *status* for municipal purposes. He intended to move a new Schedule later on, if this new clause were accepted.

New Clause (Occupation of land of the value of £10 to qualify,)—(*Mr. Hobhouse,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, the proposal was one which, as a matter of principle, he did not see very well how the Committee could resist. It was an occupation and a rating franchise, and he had been told that its omission from the Municipal Corporations Act of 1885 was really more of a mistake than anything else. He therefore hoped the Committee would accept the Amendment. The Government did not at all see why the occupier of land which was rated should not have a vote, although he did not possess a residence on the land. The occupier of the land was, no doubt, as much an occupying ratepayer as anything could make him.

MR. STANSFELD (Halifax) said, he did not think any objection could be taken to the clause.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *added* to the Bill.

On the Motion of Mr. HOBHOUSE, the following Schedule:—

(Ten pounds occupation qualification.)
Registration Act, 1885.

Definition of Ten Pounds Occupation Qualification.

"A person entitled to be registered as a voter in respect of a ten pounds occupation qualification in a borough, municipal or parliamentary—

(a) must during the whole twelve months immediately preceding the fifteenth day of July have been an occupier as owner or tenant of some land or tenement in a parish [or township] of the clear yearly value of not less than ten pounds; and (b.) must have resided in or within seven miles of the borough during six months immediately preceding the fifteenth day of July; and

(c.) Such person, or someone else must during the said twelve months have been rated to all poor rates made in respect of such land or tenement; and

(d.) All sums due in respect of the said land or tenement on account of any poor rate made and allowed during the twelve months immediately preceding the fifth day of January next before the registration, or on account of any assessed taxes due before the said fifth day of January, must have been paid on or before the twentieth day of July.

"If two or more persons jointly are such occupiers as above mentioned, and the value of the land or tenement is such as to give ten pounds or more for each occupier, each of such occupiers is entitled to be registered as a voter.

"If a person has occupied in the borough different lands or tenements of the requisite value in immediate succession during the said twelve months, he is entitled in respect of the occupation thereof to be registered as a voter in the parish [or township] in which the last occupied land or tenement is situate,"

—*agreed to*, and *added* to the Bill.

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Thursday*, and to be *printed.* [Bill 253.]

GLEBE LANDS BILL.—[Bill 180.]

(*Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Mr. Raikes, Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read (Queen's *Consent* and Prince of Wales's *Consent*, as Duke of Cornwall), signified.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Mr. Secretary Stanhope.*)

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central), in rising to move that the Bill be re-committed, in order, in Committee, to move the following new clauses:—

"The Commissioners, before giving their assent to the sale of any land under this Act, shall require the incumbent to issue public notice in the parish of the intended sale in such manner as they shall think fit, and they shall receive and consider objections from any ratepayer of the parish, and if any ten ratepayers of the parish shall ask for a public inquiry as to the expediency of such sale, they shall direct inquiry in such manner as they shall think fit."

"With a view to affording greater facilities for the acquisition of land in small parcels by cottagers, labourers, and others under Clause 8 of this Act, the Land Commissioners may, by agreement with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, frame a scheme for payment in such cases of three-fourths or less of the purchase money, with interest at the rate of three and a half per centum per annum, in equal annual instalments spread over a period of not more than thirty-five years; and they may make it a condition of their approval of the sale of any land under this Act, that it shall be sold in parcels subject to such payment; and in the case of such sales the Ecclesiastical Commissioners shall collect and receive the annual instalments, and shall pay so much of them as represents interest to the persons entitled to the same, and shall invest the residue representing the payment of capital as directed by Clause 4 of this Act."

"The Land Commissioners shall present an annual Return to Parliament of the sales effected under this Act, specifying in what cases land has been offered or sold in small parcels to cottagers, labourers, and others,"

said, he owed some apology to the House for attempting to move his Amendments at this stage; but the fact was that the Bill had slipped through to its present stage without his noticing it. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. E. Stanhope) who had charge of it had made no statement in introducing it nor on the second reading. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) did not complain of that. All he said was that the measure had reached its present stage without any remarks being made either by the Government or anyone else; and, secondly, he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) was not aware of its contents, and he believed many others were in the same condition in that respect as himself. The Bill, he would frankly admit, was a very important one, for it would enable the sale to take place of some and possibly of all the glebe lands in the country; and considering that these consisted of something like 600,000 acres, valued at £1,000,000 per annum, it was obvious that the Bill would produce an important effect. The objects of the measure were two-fold—in the first place, to relieve the clergy in many parts of the country where the depression in agriculture had been severe; and, in the second place, of a very serious burden in respect of their glebes. He believed that in many parts of the country, where the clergy were dependent wholly or in part on their glebes, they had during the past three or four years found themselves extremely embarrassed through the agricultural depression. They had either been unable to let their glebes without making serious reductions of rent, or they had been compelled to take them and farm them themselves, which was a thing many clergy were without the means to do. Another object of the Bill was to facilitate the acquisition of glebe lands by labourers and others of that class. Lord Salisbury not long ago made a speech on the Land Question in which he said it was the intention of the Government to facilitate land of this kind getting into the hands of labourers and artizans. That was an object they all very much wished for, and he believed that the object of bringing about a sale of glebe lands during a time of depression was that they might be sold in small lots with a view to their getting into the hands of artizans and labourers. But if the state of depression was such that no good rents could be obtained from the glebes, the same consideration must not be lost sight of when they contemplated the sale of the glebes for agricultural purposes. He believed, however, that if the glebes could be broken up into small parcels, so as to fall into the hands of agricultural labourers, it would be possible to get a fair price for them. The two motives, therefore, went together, and he was sure the House and the country would desire to relieve the clergy from the difficulty in which they found themselves; and, on the other hand, that it was a good opportunity to enable land of this kind to pass into the hands of agricultural labourers, so as to form a larger class of small owners than now existed in the agricultural districts. To the Bill, as it at present stood, he took two objections. In the first place, it appeared to him that it contemplated the sale of these glebe lands being only to the interest of the incumbents, the Bishops, and the Land Commission. A sale might take place with the consent of the incumbent, the Bishop, and the Land Commission, without any of the people in the parish being aware of what was going to be done. That seemed to him unsatisfactory. To his mind the sale of glebe lands was a matter of public interest, and the people of a parish, he thought, ought to be informed of what was intended. In his opinion nothing should take place without public notice, and if required there should be public inquiry on the part of the Land Commission in the parish as to whether the sale of the glebe land was desirable, and also whether the provision enabling the Land Commission to break up glebe lands into small parcels, so that labourers might have an opportunity of becoming possessors, was being properly carried out. He agreed with the proposal that the land should be broken up into small parcels, with a view to labourers and others becoming purchasers; but he was afraid that this provision would have very little effect, unless some arrangement was made in the Bill by which a portion of the purchase money would be left on mortgage, and the payment spread over a period of years. He, therefore, proposed to re-commit the Bill for three purposes. In the first place, to introduce a clause providing that due and proper notice should be given in the parish of a proposed sale to enable a certain number of ratepayers to require of the Land Commission that any inquiry should be held if they thought it necessary; secondly, for enabling the Land Commission to arrange a plan with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners under which three-fourths of the purchase money might be allowed to remain on mortgage to be repaid in instalments over a period of not more than 35 years. He proposed that the interest payable should be 3½ per cent per annum, and the payment of capital and interest was to be made by equal instalments within 35 years. There was a precedent for this in the action the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were now taking with regard to a great deal of their land. They were selling and had sold a considerable portion of their landed property in Wales and elsewhere to the tenants thereof, and had left a large portion of the purchase money on mortgage, payable by instalments in the manner he was now proposing. The principle, therefore, which he asked the Government to assent to was adopted by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and he, therefore, thought the Government would have no difficulty in carrying it out. All he could say was that he believed unless some facilities of this kind were given to the labourers they would never be able to take advantage of the provisions of the Bill. As his Amendment was in accordance with the provisions of the Bill, and particularly with that clause which directed the Land Commissioners to break the glebe lands up into parcels with a view to selling them to agricultural labourers and others of that class, he ventured to express a hope that the Government would accede to his proposal and allow the Bill to be re-committed for the purpose of inserting clauses to this effect. The last clause was one which would direct the Land

Commission to lay before Parliament an annual Return showing the number of sales they had effected under the Act, and also specifying in what cases they had offered the land to labourers in parcels under Clause 8 of the Bill. He could only again say that these three clauses he suggested were not opposed to the Bill in any shape, but were intended to carry out its principles and objects with which, so far as he was concerned, he thoroughly concurred. He should be extremely sorry if the glebes throughout the country were sold without an opportunity being afforded to the labourers for obtaining land in parcels suitable for cultivation by them, and he would only further say that if the Bill passed as it now stood the effect would be that the glebes would only be sold to the large land proprietors in the district, and the object of Clause 8 would not be effected.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "now read the third time," and add the words "re-committed in respect of Three New Clauses."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*")

Question proposed, "That the words 'now read the third time,' stand part of the Question."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said, that he could not complain of the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had brought this matter under the notice of the House, seeing that he had expressed a cordial approval of the principle of the Bill. So far from complaining of the intervention of the right hon. Gentleman, he (Mr. E. Stanhope) was very glad to have any suggestions which would make the Bill more workable. He would point out that there was already in the Bill a clause for preferential sale of glebe lands in small lots, and that there was an absolute condition that where practicable the Commissioners should offer the whole or some part of such lands for sale in small lots; and so far he and the right hon. Gentleman were in harmony. But on the specific proposals of the right hon. Gentleman he was afraid they must part company. It was true that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners sold their land in small lots, and allowed the purchase money to be spread over 30 years; but they were selling their own land, and could afford to wait for the money. The incumbent, however, was frequently in immediate want of his for the purpose of a prompt investment of the whole, yet, under the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who were to collect the annual instalments and interest, were only to give the incumbent the latter and keep the former until the whole 30 instalments had been paid.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he was quite misunderstood. He suggested that the Commissioners should receive the yearly payment, pay over the interest to the incumbent or the person entitled to receive it, and invest that portion of the yearly portion in the same manner directed under the Bill to apply the whole purchase money.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, that emphasized the objection he took. Then the incumbent would be kept out of the money for 30 years.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: But he gets the interest.

MR. E. STANHOPE: Yes; the interest. He did not think the suggestion could be entertained. The machinery was most cumbrous, and he could not assent to the proposal. As to the first clause (notice to be given of the intended sale) of the right hon. Gentleman, although not prepared to accept it, he should undertake that before the Bill passed through the House of Lords words should be inserted providing that public notice should be given.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he felt so strongly on this matter that, unless they relieved the labourers from paying the whole of the money and spread it over a considerable period, he should go to a Division on the third reading.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA (Monaghan, S.) said, he thought it would require but a very slight extension of the machinery of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to enable them to carry out the avowed object of the Bill, and that which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had in view.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, that as the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. E. Stanhope) showed a disposition to treat the suggestions which had been offered with a great deal of courteous fairness—if the right hon. Gentleman would permit him to say so—he (Mr. Bradlaugh) would ask the right hon.

Gentleman if it would not be possible to extend the concession he had made with regard to that portion of the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) dealing with the subject of the issue of notices? He (Mr. Bradlaugh) quite felt that they could not expect to have the Amendments accepted exactly as proposed. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners were persons who dealt with large sums of money, and surely it would not be impossible, before the Bill left the other House, to introduce some words which would make it possible to provide machinery by which an incumbent could have the purchase money for his land when he was in need of it for some special investment. It seemed to him (Mr. Bradlaugh) that the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford was not made in a spirit of hostility, but in a spirit of a desire to carry out the object of the measure. He would put it to the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill whether it would not be possible to give extended operation to the spirit of the 2nd clause, as he had undertaken to do in the case of the 1st clause?

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, he should be glad to consider whether it would be possible to do what the hon. Member for Northampton proposed; but, at any rate, he could not accept the present Amendment.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE here rose——

Mr. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman has already twice spoken.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (remaining seated, with head covered): Might I appeal to the Government, as they have made a concession in this matter, to allow the Bill to be re-committed, in order that the points in question might be there discussed?

Mr. E. STANHOPE: No; I cannot agree to that.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 100; Noes 57: Majority 43.—(Div. List, No. 95.)

Main Question, "That the Bill be now read the third time," again proposed.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that after the refusal of the Government to re-commit the Bill he should feel it his duty to vote against the measure. He should do so with some regret, because he approved the general idea of the Bill; but he was satisfied that an otherwise most valuable portion of the measure would be perfectly futile, and would never be carried into effect, unless some such proposal as he had suggested were adopted for spreading the payment of the purchase money over a term of years.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, he thought it somewhat remarkable that because the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevere) was not able to carry out a particular method for the sale of those lands in small plots, therefore the right hon. Gentleman should object to the Bill altogether. The Government desired that those lands should be sold in small plots, and he had no hesitation in saying that he believed that measure in many parts of the country would not only enable them to be sold in small plots, but would lead to their being acquired by labourers.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, it must be remembered that this Bill passed the second reading without any discussion whatever. The Bill dealt with a vast amount of public property; he did not call it—as his right hon. Friend the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) did—*quasi*-public property, for it was absolutely public property now diverted from national ecclesiastical purposes—it was as truly national property as any property in the ownership of the State. He would like to know whether the Government and those in charge of the Bill had given the House and the country any information as to the extent of this property, the number and acreage of these glebes? What had been put forward as a reason for this revolutionary proposal of the State dispossessing itself—dismantling itself—of an immense amount of real property? They were told that the income arising from glebes had been much reduced, and that the clergy found themselves much impoverished by the fall in rents and the non-letting of these glebes. That might be so, and, no doubt, was so; but, for his part, he thought it was an extraordinary proposal that on the initiative of a single beneficiary in each parish the nation should allow itself to be dispossessed of property amounting to thousands of plots in different parts of the country. He confessed that regard ought to be had to the position of the clergy; but if they were suffering, they were suffering in common with the rest of the community, and he failed to see what advantage was coming to them by the plan which was now being pushed through the House by the Government. What would happen? These glebes and plots of land were to be sold, the amount to be passed over to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and a fixed rate of interest was to come from the investment in that way. But if the income was reduced, so would the capital value of these lands be reduced; and, if so, there would be a reduced amount passed to the credit of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, from which 2¾ per cent, if the money were invested in Consols, would arise. Then, it seemed to him that the clergy of the country, as beneficiaries for the time being, would not be in a very improved condition—that was to say, it would be as much for their interest to take the value of the land at the moment. But if the House were agreed that these estates ought to be sold, clearly it was to the advantage of the community that the best possible price should be obtained; and if proper care was not taken to insure the obtaining of the highest possible price, there was a dereliction of duty on the part of someone concerned, and national property was being thrown away and wasted. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had indicated a way in which the best possible price could be obtained for these lands, and that was by widening the area of competition. If the agricultural labourer was assisted in the way suggested by the right hon. Gentleman, the probability was that 20, 30, or 40 per cent more would be obtained for the lands than would be obtained under the Bill, owing to the slovenly and careless way in which it was drawn. Suppose the glebe was in the centre, or formed a contiguous part of a very large property, it would fall into the hands of the adjoining owner for a very low price—indeed, competition would be almost out of the question. He thought that his right hon. Friend was perfectly justified in bringing his proposal before the House, and that he was further justified in doing so seeing that these securities had not been taken by the Government, who seemed to have charge of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman was perfectly justified in attempting to arrest the further progress of the Bill, and await an opportunity when the proposal could be placed before Parliament with all the advantages to the agricultural labourer and to those who might want to possess themselves of small areas of land of the facilities indicated by his right hon. Friend. If this had been an estate of a landowner that had to be sold—if it had been the estate of an Irish landowner, for instance—they would have had it publicly offered on the freest possible terms, to enable the tenant to buy land, and to give, it might be, an extravagant price for it. He wanted to know why the same precedent had not been closely followed in this case? Surely the agricultural labourers of this country were not in such a flourishing condition that—— The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War smiled; he did not know what there was to smile at, except that the right hon. Gentleman had a supreme contempt for the interests of agriculture.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, he was smiling because it was obvious that the hon. Gentleman had not read the Bill.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, that the right hon. Gentleman happened to be mistaken, for he had not only read the Bill, but he had closely studied its provisions; and he did not hesitate to say that if similar advantages and similar publicity and similar facilities had been given to the English agricultural labourer as would have been given in the case of the sale of an Irish estate in the interests of the landlord, they would have had a much better chance of making the most of this property. These glebe lands were of the greatest interest to the parishes in which they happened to be situated, and he considered that if advertised without the publicity which his right hon. Friend (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), by the clauses he had put on the Paper, sought to introduce, the most had not been done or attempted in order to do what would have been done in every other case, and that was to give the greatest and widest possible publicity, so as to obtain the highest possible price for the land. He should be most happy to give his support to his right hon. Friend if he went to a Division.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he fancied there was some slight misapprehension either on his part or on the part of other hon. Members as to what the Government were prepared to do. If it was possible to avoid a hostile Division on the third reading of the Bill, on which there was so much concurrence of opinion, it was well that they should do so. As to one point, he thought there was no doubt, and that was that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. E. Stanhope) in charge of the Bill consented that in "another place" there should be words introduced, so as to secure that notice should be required. Then he thought—but it appeared that there was some difference of opinion on the point—the right hon. Gentleman also admitted that there was some force in what he (Mr. Bradlaugh) had said in regard to the possibility of some arrangement with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners when the incumbent needed the *corpus* of the money for any of the purposes specified in the sub-sections of Clause 4, and he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say further that he would consider whether anything could be introduced before the Bill became law which would meet that point, so that there should be a means for the labourer to purchase and pay by instalments, and yet that provision should be made for the incumbent who needed the body of the money for the purposes set forth in the sub-sections of Clause 4. If he happened to be right in that, he did not think that the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) would be so necessary on the third reading of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman's view was that no concession at all was made by the Government upon the point. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill would make the matter clear.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he did not give any pledge at all but the Government would consider whether means could be devised for facilitating the acquisition of the land by labourers.

MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University) said, the extraordinary doctrine advanced by the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) had not been laid down in the House for the first time to-night. The hon. Gentleman seemed to be one of those politicians who repeated fallacies until they imagined they were the truth. The hon. Gentleman was never tired of speaking of this as national property. As a matter of fact, the property had never been given to the nation; it had never been bequeathed to the nation; in fact, it was in no sense national property. It was, no doubt, Church property, held for the benefit of the nation, just as the Church existed for the benefit of the nation. [*Ironical cheers.*] That was his (Mr. J. G. Talbot's) own conviction, and hon. Gentlemen could not expect to shake him in it. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Illingworth), in his zeal for this extraordinary fallacy, sought to stop the passage of a very innocent and useful Bill at its very last stage, and he seemed to think that because what he called national property was not to be put up to a sort of national auction they were not dealing with glebe lands in a right way. One of its objects was to benefit the unfortunate present occupants of these glebes, whose sufferings were exceptionally great, and certainly not a matter to be laughed out of court in that House or anywhere else.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, he expressed his sympathy with the sufferings of the clergy, but went on to say that they were only suffering with the rest of the community.

MR. J. G. TALBOT said, that they were suffering in excess of the greater part of the community. He knew from his own experience that that was so, but he was not there to plead *in formâ pauperis* on behalf of the clergy, although he maintained they were suffering in a most unparalleled degree, considering the position they were bound to occupy. The Bill provided that the lands might be taken out of the hands of the clergy and put into the hands of persons who could farm them properly and satisfactorily. It was said that these lands ought to be put into the hands of labourers. He did not object to labourers having them if they liked, but labourers could no more profitably occupy them than anybody else—they could only do so if they had capital. Hon. Gentlemen seemed to forget that in order to occupy land profitably people must have capital to work it. How were labourers to find capital to work this land? That was part of the subject which he thought hon. Gentlemen had never really faced. He thought land should be as much as possible occupied by every class of the community; but he maintained that to imagine that agricultural labourers could profitably occupy considerable portions of land was one of those extraordinary fallacies which could only proceed from an urban point of view. In order to cultivate land they must have capital, and labourers, as a rule, had not capital. To say that this land should be specially devoted to cultivation by labourers was one of the doctrines well fitted for the platform and the newspaper article; but was not a doctrine which any practical man would seriously defend.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.) said, he did not wish to interfere in the quarrel between the hon. Member for the Oxford University (Mr. J. G. Talbot) and his hon. Friend the Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth). Indeed, he could not conceive any political question, and probably still less any ecclesiastical question, on which those two hon. Gentlemen could agree. But he was bound to say that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxford University was not right in imputing to his hon. Friend the Member for West Bradford any disposition to make light of the loss felt by the occupants of glebe lands in late years. What the hon. Gentleman said was that the clergy had suffered, though not more than other members of the community, and he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) was bound to say, from his observation, that the principal difference between the owners of land and other portions of the community of late years had been that while all had suffered, probably those engaged in trade and commerce had suffered to an even greater extent; but they had not been so disposed to have recourse to Parliament, cap in hand, seeking relief as those who owned land. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxford University evidently did not much believe in the passing of any portion of these glebe lands into the hands of labourers, for, he said, labourers had not capital enough to work it. The hon. Gentleman could hardly have read the Bill which he was supporting, because it assumed they possessed capital enough to pay the whole purchase money at once. What his right hon. Friend the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) wished to do was to make it possible for labourers to acquire land by easing the purchase as much as could be. But he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) rose to ask the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill (Mr. E. Stanhope) to make clear what he thought was still a little in doubt. What they wanted to know was whether his (Mr. E. Stanhope's) engagement to consider what might be done in the interests of labourers extended to both the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre)—namely, to the question of notice, and also to the question of payment by instalments, or did it only refer to the question of notice?

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, he thought he made the point perfectly clear. He undertook to put a clause into the Bill during its passage through the House of Lords dealing with the question of notice; in regard to the other question, he only said it was a matter to which they would give their consideration.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA said, that, as he understood the question, all the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) desired was that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners should have the same power to deal with these glebe lands as they had in respect to lands already in their possession. The right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill treated the incumbent as though he were the personal proprietor of the land and wanted money. As a matter of fact, the incumbent had only a species of life interest, and could get nothing for himself, except the interest on the money when invested; and it was immaterial, so long as the principal was safe, whether the purchase money was invested in the purchased land or in Government Stock if the interest payable was equal. He would like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill would, between this and the time when the Bill reached "another place," undertake to consider whether he could not place some machinery in the Bill providing that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners should deal with this land in the same way as they dealt hitherto with other lands in their possession?

Mr. BYRON REED (Bradford, E.) said, it was through no seeking of his own that he found himself, upon the first occasion on which he had ventured to take more than a barely formal part in the discussions of the House, in conflict with his Colleagues in the representation of Bradford. He often found himself in opposition to the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), and especially so with regard to the hon. Gentleman's peculiar views as to the tenure of Church property. The hon. Member for Oxford University (Mr. J. G. Talbot) had, however, pointedly replied to one portion of the hon. Gentleman's observations; but there was another portion of them to which reference ought to be made. The hon. Member had spoken of the State dispossessing itself of property. He (Mr. Byron Reed) had searched in vain for any element of State ownership of either glebe land or the other endowments held by the clergy of the Church. He was aware that State ownership was the theory of the Liberation Society, and he was aware that the hon. Gentleman who represented the Liberation Society in that House was of opinion that all Church property should speedily be brought into national possession. But this Bill was simply a Bill for providing for the speedy, easy, and convenient sale of lands which at the present time were not fully remunerative to the clergy who held them, and for the investment of the money arising from their sale for the benefit of the clergy, in whose hands the lands were at present, and for whose advantage they were by their original donors intended to exist. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had referred to the question of allotments for agricultural labourers, and another hon. Gentleman—the Member for South Monaghan (Sir Joseph M'Kenna)—appeared to share with him a false impression as to the scope of the Bill. He (Mr. Byron Reed) found that Clause 8 distinctly provided that glebe lands dealt with by the Bill should be offered for sale in small parcels, not only to individual labourers, but to Sanitary Authorities, who obtained by the Act of last year power to deal with land for allotment purposes, and this, he thought, altogether disposed of the objection that the labourers were unable to purchase these lands for cultivation. He ventured to think that the House generally would be of opinion that the opposition to this Bill was the opposition which was always met with from certain quarters of the House when any measure of Church reform came up for discussion. There were hon. Members of the House who were nominally friends of the Church, and who were, in name, anxious and zealous for Church reform, but who exhibited their friendship and manifested their zeal by opposing even the humblest and simplest and most unpretentious measure for giving scope and latitude to Church operations. But while they could not expect for a moment that the Bill of the Government now before the House would please right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen opposite, they had every reason to believe that it would be approved by the clergy, for whose interest in the main it was conceived; that it would be approved by the great majority of the laity in the country for whose ultimate benefit its provisions were laid down; and that it would in a very few minutes from now be accepted by a majority of the House of Commons.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Bradford (Mr. Byron Reed) endeavoured to minimize the importance of this subject by saying it was a matter which mainly concerned the clergy—that it was for their benefit and their advantage. But there were certain other people in the land greatly interested in this property besides the clergy, and he and others, as representing them, thought that they had a right at this stage to protest against the passage of this Bill. The hon. Gentleman said that Clause 8 provided all manner of facilities for the acquisition of land by cottagers, labourers, and others. Yes; but the authorities concerned were to—

> "Satisfy themselves that such offer is not practicable without diminishing the price which can be obtained for the glebe land on a sale."

The hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxford University (Mr. J. G. Talbot), in common with the hon. Member for East Bradford (Mr. Byron Reed), charged the hon. Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) with continually reiterating the fallacy that Church land was national property. He (Mr. Picton) would like to know whether the Church was a sect or not, and was a sect distinct from the nation, or was it not? [MR. BYRON REED: No.] The hon. Member said "No." It was, as had been said at any rate, the nation in an ecclesiastica aspect; it was simply the nation regarded from a religious point of view. Therefore, whatever land was said to belong to the Church belonged to the nation. Land was not held by the Church for its own interest, but it was held for the good of the surrounding population. What Churchman would say it was not held for the good of the whole population, and then, if the land was held for the good of the whole population, surely in these days of almost universal franchise the population had a right to say which use of the land would serve them? If they were of opinion that using land for the purpose of offering and extending allotments would be very much better than using land for the sake of supporting particular theological doctrines, the population of the country had a perfect right to say so. Hon. Gentlemen could not deny that it was held in the interests of the whole of the people—then the whole of the people had a right to say how best their interests would be served. The doctrine which had been stated by hon. Members opposite to be a fallacy, in the mouth of the hon. Member for West Bradford, had been consecrated as law by repeated Acts of Parliament. The Act for the disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Church asserted that Church property was national property. On no other ground could the disendowment have possibly been effected. The principal basis of the Irish Church Act was that, after all living personal interests had been compensated, the residue was national property. They knew that Acts of Parliament could do anything; but Acts were supposed to proceed on a basis of justice, and that basis of justice was, in the case of the Irish Church property, that the property belonged to the whole nation. Besides that, Parliament was continually dealing with Church property; they had the endowments of one large Bishopric shared among other Bishoprics by Acts of Parliament; they had the property of a number of Corporations thrown into one mass and handed over to certain Commissioners to deal with as they might judge fit under the supervision of the Government of the day. What other property had they dealt with in such a way as this? The fact that they had dealt with this property in this way proved clearly that what was called Church property was regarded as fundamentally the property of the nation. He could not but profoundly regret that this Bill should have reached so late a stage; doubtless they, on the Opposition side of the House, had to blame themselves in part for that. But when it was remembered what a number of Committees they had to attend, and what an amount of Business had been rushed through the House during this exceedingly happy Session, he thought it need be no matter for surprise that this Bill had been a little overlooked. Still, he extremely regretted that it should have been so; for he thought that one of the darkest blots on our history had been the want of conscience, the want of political conscience at any rate, on the part of Governments in dealing with the land of the country. The interests of classes, the interests of individuals, the interests of institutions, the interests of religious doctrines, had always been considered before the interests of the people at large, and he thought this was only a fresh illustration of the same line of action. As their Predecessors acted at the time of the Enclosure Acts, thinking nothing of the needs of the laborious population, but only of the interests of the owners, so they were acting now, thinking nothing of the needs of the labourers, but only of the convenience and pecuniary prosperity of the clergy. He did not wish to do anything to injure the clergy, far from it. He believed that those who held the same opinions as himself were among the warmest friends of the clergy; he did not wish to injure the clergy; but he maintained that the interests of the laborious population ought to be of even much more significance to them, and if the clergy were faithful to their vocation they would think so too. Therefore, although he felt it was impossible to make anything more than a protest at this stage of the Bill, he earnestly hoped that protest would be made by taking a Division.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) said, he was glad the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) was about to make a protest against the passing of this Bill, because he thought the people in rural parishes, and especially in the rural parishes of Wales, took a very great interest in two forms of public property—in glebe lands and Crown lands.

In the case of this Glebe Land Bill, the Government was about to place this public property in much the same position as Crown property. Now, what was the objection to the present mode of dealing with Crown property, and with the sale of it? It was this—that when the labourer or the cottager attempted to buy any Crown land he was invariably refused, while he might find a few weeks afterwards that a whole mountain side had been sold surreptitiously to a large landowner, at whose mercy he would be placed. Much the same thing might happen in the case of glebe lands unless the Government promised to insert a clause in the Bill which would give public notice of any sale of glebe lands in any parish.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he had three times over pledged himself to put such a clause in the Bill when it reached the House of Lords.

MR. T. E. ELLIS said, he was glad the right hon. Gentleman could place such a simple trust in the House of Lords, for a similar promise in regard to the Mines Regulation Bill of last year was not carried out. He (Mr. T. E. Ellis) wished to make certain that in regard to this Bill, at any rate, they would be served in a better manner than the miners were in the Mines Regulation Bill. Now, if this clause were put into the Bill, he thought it would be insufficient, unless some provision were made by which a cottager or labourer could have access to the land by means of payments by instalments.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is discussing clauses in respect of which the House has already divided. The hon. Gentleman is, therefore, not in Order in referring to those clauses.

MR. T. E. ELLIS said, he would, of course, bow to the decision of the Chair, and he only wished to call attention to the fact that, as it stood, Clause 8 was illusory, it was deceptive, and of no good whatever to the labourer or the cottager; it simply held out a hope in words. If these lands were to be really brought within reach of the labourer and cottager—that was to say, if the nominal aim of this Bill was to be carried out, the Government ought, in justice to the labourers and cottagers, insert a provision by which Clause 8 could be made of real value to the labourers and cottagers in our parishes. The only other remark he would like to make was that this property, as to which two or three hon. Members on the other side of the House had brought forward several subtleties as to its being ecclesiastical and Church property, was of great interest to the parishes and the nation, and that there was no property of which the nation and parishes ought to keep a firmer grip than of glebe lands.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he desired to take note of a curious fact in connection with the debate. It appeared to him that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope), who seemed to have assumed the representation of the Church Militant, had just made a most unconstitutional declaration. Surely the right hon. Gentleman, in declaring that he would induce another House of Parliament, with which, presumably, he had no connection whatever, to do a certain thing, had overstepped the bounds of Ministerial authority. He (Mr. T. M. Healy) and others had always maintained that the House of Lords was only a kind of appanage of the Tory Party; and it really seemed that the right hon. Gentleman had no difficulty in asserting what another House of the Legislature would do. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the ease with which he disposed of "another place." He (Mr. T. M. Healy) also desired to take note of the fact that the Government, in bringing in this Bill, had laid down the proposition that land, as an investment, must necessarily be of less value than 2¾ per cents. The declaration of the Government amounted to this—that it would be of greater benefit to the clergy of the Church of England to have their money invested in 2¾ per cents than to have it invested in land. Such a declaration made by the Government on their responsibility and authority, and coming at the present time, when the question of agricultural depression was so frequently referred to in the House had peculiar force. He hoped the country would take note of the fact that instead of land being worth 25 years' purchase, it would be better, in the opinion of the Government, for the clergy of the Church of England to invest their money in what stockbrokers now called Goschens. [Mr. E. STANHOPE dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman shook his head, but such was the impression he (Mr. T. M. Healy) had got from the way the Bill had been manœuvred. It was not proposed to dispossess the Church of its property; it was only proposed to convert it into a different class of property. If they converted an investment in real property into an investment in personalty, it followed, as a matter of fact, that they believed realty to be of less actuarial value for the purposes of investment than personalty. Having said this he only wished to make one further remark, and that was with regard to what was said by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxford University (Mr. J. G. Talbot). The hon. Gentleman had laid down the doctrine, which certainly was very startling to one who came from a country where the Church had been disestablished, that this property ought not to be dealt with as property owned by the nation. The hon. Member described the declaration of the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) on that subject as a fallacy. But upon what other basis did this Bill proceed? What was the *raison d'être* of the Bill unless it proceeded on the supposition that this property was national property? Without doubt the property of the Church of Ireland was treated as national property, and now, because the hon. Member for West Bradford ventured to say that what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander, and because he advocated that what was done in Ireland should be done in England, he was denounced a fallacious logician. The hon. Gentleman's remarks were based upon sound reason, upon precedent, and upon logic, and it would have been far better for the Government to have taken a different course with regard to this Bill than they had taken. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had acted wisely in the opposition he had offered to the Bill. The opposition he had offered to the Bill was founded upon good sense, and it was to be regretted that it was not taken at an earlier stage of the Bill.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that if he was distinctly to understand from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War that when the Bill reached "another place" he would consider in a friendly spirit—in a more friendly spirit than he had considered his (Mr. Shaw Lefevre's) proposal—a proposal for facilitating the purchase of these glebe lands by labourers by spreading the payment of the purchase money over a term of years, he would not divide the House.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 116; Noes 74: Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 96.)

Bill read the third time, and *passed*.

CRIMINAL EVIDENCE BILL.—[Bill 132.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Solicitor General.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N) said, he had the following Notice on the Paper:—

"On Motion for going into Committee on Criminal Evidence Bill to move, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that the Committee have power to insert Amendments giving prisoners tried before Courts of Summary Jurisdiction in Ireland the same right of appeal as exists in England."

He understood, however, from Mr. Speaker that it would not be in Order for him to move that Amendment. He would, therefore, propose an Instruction more limited in its character.

Mr. SPEAKER said, he must point out to the hon. and learned Member that Notice of such Amendment would be necessary. He had intimated to the hon. and learned Gentleman, as early as it was in his power, that the Notice on the Paper was not in Order, the reason being that the subject of the Notice was not germane to the Law of Evidence which was dealt with by the Bill.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he was quite satisfied with what Mr. Speaker had ruled; but it was right that he should say that it was only that evening that he had received the right hon. Gentleman's intimation, and that the Instruction he proposed to move had been on the Paper for 10 days past.

Mr. SPEAKER said, that there had been no probability of the Bill coming on, and he had given the hon. and learned Gentleman Notice that afternoon, in order to cause him as little inconvenience as possible.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Persons charged with offence and wife or husband to be competent as witnesses).

THE CHAIRMAN: The first Amendment on the Paper is as follows:—"In page 1, line 5, after '1,' insert—'This Act shall apply to England only.'" This seems to me to be in effect a new clause, and, therefore, must come in at the end.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I would beg to submit to you, Sir, that, to put himself in Order, the hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow, instead of moving these words as a new clause, should move to insert, before the word "where," the words "in England."

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman must put an Amendment down to that effect.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) said, he would move the Amendment in the form proposed. This was a Bill as to the necessity for which, in the case of England, they were all agreed; but he wished to point out that a measure of this nature was not required either in Ireland or in Scotland. It could hardly be pretended that the Bill dealt with the question of crime in the three countries, for there was nothing in it which touched anything which was criminal in one country and not criminal in either of the others. It was a measure which dealt entirely with the question of legal procedure, and, dealing as it did with the question of legal procedure, it must be pointed out that notoriously the legal and criminal procedure differed in England, Ireland, and Scotland. In fact, as regarded the question of criminal procedure, there was a great diversity between the three countries. In the case of Scotland, for instance, they had a Public Prosecutor, and they also had a preliminary inquiry. Now, what was the form of the preliminary inquiry? When a prisoner was taken up by the criminal authorities he was taken before the magistrates, and when before the magistrates he had an opportunity of stating his case, and making what was termed a declaration. If the accused was an innocent person, he had an opportunity of stating before the magistrates circumstances to show his innocence, and the facts stated by him could be investigated by the Public Prosecutor. The chances were, if a prisoner's statement was correct, and he was entirely innocent of the charge brought against him, no prosecution followed at all. The Committee would see that, in the case of an innocent person in Scotland, he had an opportunity at present practically of stating his case, and of showing that he was innocent before the magistrates; and it was of more importance to him that he should be able to avoid a prosecution altogether than that he should be indicted before a Court, and put to the necessity of being heard in his own defence, and of employing counsel and bringing forward witnesses. What was the contention of the Government in this Bill? It was that this power of enabling a person to give evidence on his own behalf was in the interest of the accused. When the Government came forward to make a change in the law of the land, the onus rested on them of showing that that change was necessary. Let them take the case of Scotland. Would the Lord Advocate tell them of a single instance in which an accused person had been convicted for want of ability to give evidence on his own behalf? That, he thought, lay at the root of this change of procedure. Would the Lord Advocate, or any lawyer from Scotland, bring forward one single instance? If such a case did occur, and an accused person was found guilty by a jury, the Prerogative of Mercy could step in, and would be exercised, so that there would be nothing suffered in consequence of the absence of the power on the part of the accused to give evidence. So far as he was aware, no such case as that which he asked the Lord Advocate to point out had ever occurred—no innocent person ever having been found guilty in Scotland, owing to there being no power for the accused to give evidence on his own behalf, or to give evidence through his wife; and, therefore, he argued that there was no necessity for the proposed change. As he said, if the necessity was shown in the interest of the accused, it was not necessary for the Government to insist on it strongly, because they always possessed the Prerogative of the Crown, and could always go into the question of whether or not a person was guilty even after the trial had taken place. What was the objection they took to a Criminal Court of Appeal? It was based upon this—that it was required to proceed upon evidence, and upon legal evidence; but what was the case so far as the Prerogative of the Crown was concerned? Why, they could go there beyond what was strictly legal evidence. They could go into facts and circumstances which were not evidence, and examine into matters which might or might not have been brought up at the trial; and, therefore, if this Bill was conceived in the interest of the accused, it was not necessary that he should have power to give evidence, as they had power, under the Prerogative of the Crown, to give it far more efficaciously than he could at a trial. Another point was this. Supposing that a prisoner did not give the evidence in a case, if this Bill passed the fact of his not doing so would be adversely commented upon. Of course, it would be said, on behalf of the Crown, that they would not be likely to comment on the failure of an accused person to give evidence; but past experience showed a different state of things in the case of Scotland. In Scotland a prisoner was not bound to make any declaration, but might say, at the preliminary inquiry—"I decline to answer any question;" and it was notorious that such declinature not to answer any question, while in no way technically making up the evidence in a case, yet had a bearing on the minds of a jury. The Public Prosecutor read the prisoner's declaration, which simply stated—"The prisoner declines to answer any question." This was done for the purpose of prejudicing the prisoner's case before the eyes of the jury. It was done every day in Scotland. They saw the declaration brought up for no other purpose than that, and it would be the same thing under this Bill, if it became law. If a prisoner were not put into the box, the prosecutor would, with doubt, refer to the circumstance as showing in some way evidence of the man's guilt. It was a matter of common wisdom that, in a criminal case, a man should not be counsel in his own case. Much more was it true that, in such cases, a man should not be a witness in his own case.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Gentleman that he is arguing against the Bill altogether, and not in support of his particular Amendment.

MR. CALDWELL said, he was pointing out that in the case of Scotland the procedure was so very different from the procedure in England, on account of the opportunity the prisoner had of making a declaration at the preliminary inquiry, that there was not the same necessity in the case of Scotland for a prisoner to be examined as a witness as there was in England. Then, with regard to the application of the Bill to Ireland, there was strong reason why Ireland should be exempted from the operation of the measure. He (Mr. Caldwell) was one of those who had voted most regularly for the Crimes Bill. The Government had come to Parliament with the statement that it was necessary to strengthen their powers in order to obtain convictions in that country. No allegation was made last Session as to innocent persons being convicted. The sole case of the Government was that it was impossible to obtain convictions there; and it was upon that theory and upon that footing that he, along with many others, had given the most liberal powers to the Government for the purpose of carrying out the law in Ireland. But how would this Bill affect that country? The contention of the Government was this—that the Bill was in the interests of accused persons; and it was a remarkable circumstance to reflect upon that the Government found it no longer necessary to propose measures for obtaining convictions, but were now greatly exercising themselves to force through a measure for preventing innocent people from being convicted. And when had this new state of things arisen? Why, only since the Crimes Act was passed. There was no contention of this nature last Session, and now, for the first time, owing to the passing of the Crimes Act, the Government had been forced to bring in a measure with a view to mitigating the effect of past legislation, and of preventing innocent people from being convicted. Now, whether this Bill was or was not required in Ireland, it was obvious that it would be looked at with great jealousy. Who was the Public Prosecutor in Ireland? Why, the Public Prosecutor was the Government. Who were the defenders of accused parties in Ireland? Why, hon. Gentlemen who sat on that the Opposition side of the House. If that were so, and if this Bill really was, as the Government said it was, conceived entirely in the interest of accused persons, who were the best judges of what was to the interest of the accused? Was it the Government, who were the prosecutors, or was it those who were accustomed to defend the prisoners? He ventured to say that the public at large would look upon this question, whether or not the measure was or was not in the interest of the accused, as a matter falling more within the province of hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Opposition side of the House than of the Government, and it would be extremely difficult for the Government to convince the country that this Bill would be in the interest of the accused. He would not detain the House any longer upon this point than simply to point out that, owing to the difference of procedure in the three countries—and this was simply a matter of procedure—the law of Scotland being different from the law of England, and the law of Ireland also differing from the laws of the two other countries, no case whatever had been made out why such a Bill should be pressed in the interest of accused persons in the two countries he referred to.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 5, before the first word "where," to insert the words "in England."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. J. B. BALFOUR (Clackmannan) said, that the effect of the proposal of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down would be to limit the application of this Bill exclusively to England, and, of course, this would result in both Scotland and Ireland being excluded from its operations. Accordingly, in sustaining his Amendment, the hon. Gentleman had dealt with the cases of Scotland and Ireland separately, and properly so, if he (Mr. Balfour) might venture to say so. Now, as to the case of Ireland, he (Mr. Balfour) did not propose to say anything, because he was not sufficiently familiar with Irish criminal procedure, or with the other considerations which would enter into the question of whether the Bill should be applied to Ireland, to have any title to intervene in such discussion; and certainly upon any Amendment directed to raising the question of Ireland, separately and substantively, he should be largely influenced by the considerations his hon. Friend (Mr. Caldwell) had referred to—that was to say, the prevalent opinion and wish of those best acquainted with Ireland. But he thought he did know something about criminal procedure in Scotland, and, taking the case of that country by itself, he had no hesitation in saying that he thought it would be a great misfortune if the Bill were not extended to Scotland. This was by no means a new question. They had had to consider so far back, he thought, as 1883, in the Grand Committee on Law, of which he had had the honour of being a Member, and so far as his memory went, there was but one opinion at that time as to the propriety of extending the Bill to Scotland. And he must say that the provision of this Bill, which would remove the disabilities which now prevent certain classes of persons from giving evidence, appeared to him to be merely the natural termination of that long series of beneficial amendments in the Law of Evidence by which one restriction after another had been done away with, and by which the evidence of one class of persons after another had been made competent, leaving it to the tribunal, be it Jury or be it Judge, that had to decide the matter, as to what weight was to to be given to the evidence. He had been for many years of opinion that this abolition of restrictions should not stop at those cases which it had already reached, but that as to persons accused, and their husbands and wives, in the case of Scotland as in the case of England, there should be a power to give evidence, because, as he understood the Bill, it was not intended to render such persons compellable but only competent to give evidence. Therefore, the proposal of the Bill was simply to remove the disability to give evidence, but it would lay no compulsion on the parties to do so. His hon. Friend (Mr. Caldwell), in what he said as to Scotland, argued thus. He contended this Bill was unnecessary for Scotland, because the objects which it sought to accomplish were already sufficiently attained there. Well, if its ends were already served, that could not be an objection to the principle of the Bill. If the hon. Member was right in that, it was to be inferred that, through their experience or prescience in Scotland, they had acknowledged the justice of this proposal. But he was afraid his hon. Friend, whilst right so far in regard to what he had said as to Scotland, had not seen that the whole case which the Bill was directed to provide for had not already been met in Scotland. The hon. Member said, and said truly, that one of the first steps, when a person was arrested on a charge of crime, was to give him an opportunity of making what was called a declaration. Now, that was, or ought to be, an opportunity afforded to him to answer questions, or make a statement, if he chose to speak in reply to an invitation to say anything he desired to say. It was intimated to him that if he desired to say anything he could do so, and that the Public Prosecutor would take cognizance of what he said, and act accordingly. His hon. Friend was right in acknowledging that the system of public prosecutions in Scotland was a great safeguard to prisoners, because all who had had to do with the administration of the Criminal Law in Scotland were well aware that if an accused person was innocent, and told his story at once, before the magistrates, showing where he was at the time of the alleged occurrence, and accounting for any suspicious circumstances, what the Public Prosecutor did was to investigate the statement; and if he was satisfied of its truth, the accused person was at once released without trial If, on the other hand, the investigation did not bear out the statement, the case might be sent for trial. But the hon. Member had overlooked this, that while the Crown might put in and use as evidence against the prisoner the declaration he had made, the accused could not use the declaration as evidence in his own favour.

Mr. CALDWELL (interrupting) said that the law had been altered upon that point.

Mr. J. B. BALFOUR said, he was, perhaps, a little antiquated in this matter, but what he had stated used to be the practice, and, he believed that still, even if under the Act of last year the accused could insist upon having his declaration read, it was not in law evidence in his favour. But that would by no means cover the whole ground, because that declaration would only be a man's statement not tested by examination or cross-examination. It was not evidence in any sense. It would only go, so far as the interest of the prisoner was concerned, to give rise to this fair observation on the part of the prisoner's counsel, that the story submitted to the jury at the trial was the same as that which the prisoner had originally told. Those acquainted with the conduct of criminal inquiries in Scotland must know that evidence was constantly given of many things of which probably neither those who examined the accused nor the accused himself had the least idea when he was first apprehended. How was it possible that an innocent man could know what evidence was to be brought against him? Very likely the Public Prosecutor had not his evidence complete at the time when the declaration was taken, and it was clear to everyone familiar with the conduct of such inquiries, that the Scotch system of declarations, although a most excellent and admirable one, and a great defence of innocence, could by no means subserve all the purposes which this Bill would attain. It did not do so as to the accused person himself, and still less did it do so in regard to the husband or wife of the accused person—they had no opportunity of making a declaration. Supposing a man was accused of a crime and had been at home at the time, and there was no one who knew anything of his doings or his whereabouts but his wife. If that man's lips were sealed, and the lips of his wife were sealed, there were no means of proving the man's innocence, and that short and simple consideration showed that the Scotch system was by no means complete. What an innocent man would desire was that he should have an opportunity of meeting the case against him by his own testimony when the whole case of the prosecution had been disclosed. His hon. Friend had, however, said that it was impossible to adhere to the system of declarations if the accused was made a competent witness, but he did not see why it should not be easy to preserve the system of declarations along with the proposals made by the Bill. He thought it should be preserved. He (Mr. Balfour) would be sorry to see the system of declarations abolished, and if he might venture to make an observation, he would say that an accused person, in addition to the ordinary warning which he received now to the effect that everything he might say would be used against him, should also be informed he would have an opportunity of giving evidence at a later stage—at the trial—if he preferred to do so. If the man chose to make his statement at the preliminary examination let him do so, and in that way the present system would be preserved. Then his hon. Friend made reference to the Prerogative of Mercy as being sufficient protection for an innocent person. He (Mr. Balfour) could only say this, that if he had the misfortune to fall under suspicion and to be convicted by reason of the law forbidding him, or those connected with him, from giving evidence, he should consider it a very poor consolation if the Home Office or the Secretary of State for Scotland exercised the Prerogative of Mercy in his behalf and granted him a pardon. A man before he could be pardoned in that way, must, of necessity, have been found guilty by a jury, and the fact of being found guilty by a jury was a ban which should not be lightly placed upon a man by anyone. His hon. Friend's third point as to Scotland was that the matter might be met by a Court of Criminal Appeal. Well, in the first place, they had not in Scotland any Court of Criminal Appeal in a proper sense of the word. They had certain procedure by which questions of law which arose at the trial could subsequently be dealt with, but they had no appeal on questions of fact, so that this would not meet the case. But, even supposing they had in Scotland a Court of Criminal Appeal, as he had said in regard to the Prerogative of Mercy, there, again, the prisoner must first have undergone conviction. He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman contemplated that the accused should have the opportunity of tendering his own evidence before the Court of Criminal Appeal when he could not do so before the Court in which he had been originally tried, but, if not, the Appellate Court must proceed upon the evidence on which the man had originally been convicted, and so he would be none the better for his appeal. The object of the Bill was to afford to the person assumed to be innocent an opportunity of giving his evidence and submitting to cross-examination on it. As regarded Scotland, his hon. Friend (Mr. Caldwell) had stated no valid argument in favour of his Amendment. There was no sentiment whatever in Scotland against the application of this Bill to that country. The question had been before the country for five or six years, and he had never heard a single word against the general principle of the Bill. He would deprecate exceedingly this Bill becoming law in England and not in Scotland. Why should an accused person not have the same opportunity in Scotland as in England of giving his evidence, subject, of course, to cross-examination? There were cases in which a man fell under suspicion from circumstances which no one could explain but himself. He need not go into the particular kind of cases he had in mind, but everyone knew there were charges which were made almost exclusively with reference to occasions when no one but the accuser and the accused were present. Under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, which particularly dealt with cases of this kind, the accused person was allowed to give evidence.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the right hon. and learned Gentleman that he is now entering into the Bill at large.

MR. J. B. BALFOUR said, he would not pursue the point, though the Amendment was to exclude Scotland from the Bill as a whole. He had put before the Committee the reasons why it seemed to him Scotland should not be excluded from the Bill. What he had said had application purely to Scotland, and he put it to his hon. Friend (Mr. Caldwell), whether it would not be well for him so to modify his Amendment as to afford an opportunity of dealing separately with the cases of Scotland and Ireland?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. J. B. Balfour) had disposed completely of half of the contention of the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment (Mr. Caldwell). He had for ever dissipated the idea that it would be for the advantage of Scotland that Scotland should be excluded from the operation of the Bill, and the very few words he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) should address to the Committee related to the question of Ireland, which was left untouched by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) should not require to deal with the subject at such length as the right hon. and learned Gentleman did, because in truth his hon. Friend who moved the Amendment dealt very shortly with Ireland, and, as he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) thought, not in a very convincing strain. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Caldwell) alluded to the Act of last year, and stated, and stated very truly, that last year he had been an earnest and systematic supporter of the policy of the Government in passing the Crimes Act. But, he said, he never heard when the Crimes Act was being passed, of the necessity of protecting innocent people whom it was intended to protect by the provisions of this Bill. The hon. Gentleman was perfectly right. Nothing was said on that subject. But the hon. Gentleman must be perfectly aware that last year they were not dealing with the whole question of the criminal jurisprudence in Ireland; they were bringing forward a limited measure to deal with limited difficulty. They thought that the measure they brought forward dealt adequately with that; but they did not profess—they never had professed—to cover the whole ground, and they had never excluded themselves from bringing forward, or supporting, on a subsequent occasion, any other measure which would deal with another branch of the same subject. The hon. Gentleman appeared to forget that this question was not now raised for the first time. It was discussed at great length in 1882 and 1883, and it was discussed at great length in a Grand Committee—it was thoroughly threshed out in a Grand Committee—[Mr. T. M. Healy: No!]—and in that Grand Committee there was no question of excluding Ireland. [Mr. T. M. Healy: Yes, there was.] The hon. and learned Gentleman had the right of reply. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was informed by those who served on the Grand Committee that it never was suggested, when the merits of this question were being discussed, that either Ireland or Scotland should be excluded from the benefits the measure was intended to confer on the population of this country. The right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. J. B. Balfour) said that this measure was for the interests of innocent people, and he developed the argument by which he proved that at considerable length. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) defied any man to find a single fragment of argument adduced by the right hon. and learned Gentleman which did not apply to Ireland with as great force as it applied to Scotland. There were differences, there were great differences, between the criminal jurisprudence of Scotland and the criminal jurisprudence of England; there were no great differences between the criminal jurisprudence of Ireland and the criminal jurisprudence of England. On the contrary, the laws were substantially identical. But however divergent they might be—if they were as divergent as the criminal jurisprudence of Scotland and of England, it would nevertheless remain true, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman had pointed out with overwhelming force, that the interests of the innocent man, who could get no other testimony of his innocence than of himself or his wife, were safeguarded by the provisions of this Bill, and could be safeguarded by no other provision whatever. Were they seriously to believe that no innocent man accused of the crime alluded to by the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite existed in Ireland? Could it be seriously contended there was that difference between Ireland on the one hand and England and Scotland on the other? If there were such accused persons in Ireland, was Parliament to deliberately and with malice aforethought refuse to them the protection they were about to accord to accused persons in England and Scotland? He could not believe the House would deliberately accept a position so paradoxical and absurd as that. Every person in Ireland conversant with the question at issue was as strongly of opinion that this law should be extended to Ireland as the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. J. B. Balfour) was that it should be extended to Scotland. The Bar were almost unanimous on the point. There was the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Longford

(Mr. T. M. Healy) who held another opinion; but even he would not deny that the great weight of opinion in Ireland, at the Bar and amongst all classes of the population competent to judge of the question and conversant with its merits, was distinctly in favour of extending this law to Ireland. [Mr. T. M. HEALY: Nobody but Crown prosecutors.] He did not think the House would hesitate to reject that part of the Amendment which referred to Ireland.

MR. BERNARD COLERIDGE (Sheffield, Attercliffe) presumed that the object of the Bill was the conviction of the guilty and the acquittal of the innocent, and they who had some acquaintance with the Criminal Law in England were of opinion that the provisions of the Bill were admirably adapted to produce that effect in England. Anyone who had the smallest acquaintance with the working of the Criminal Law Amendment Act in England must know it was idle for any person who was accused under that Act to hope for an acquittal, unless he presented himself for examination and cross-examination in the box; indeed, a learned Judge was reported to have said the other day, in sentencing a man under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, that he had committed a very grave and heinous crime, and had added ten-fold to his crime by not going into the box to deny it on oath. The only reason why the power in question was not used in England was, that there was no such thing as an unfair prosecution, or ought not to be. If there was an unfair prosecution, it met with its due reward in the sympathies which were excited on behalf of the prisoner in the minds of the jury when they found the man was being unfairly prosecuted. But then they were asked to apply this to the sister country of Ireland. If English jurisprudence and the criminal laws, and the execution of them, were the same in the two countries, the arguments which were applicable to England would be equally applicable to Ireland. But what they on the opposition side of the House feared was that the object of extending this Act to Ireland was vindictive prosecutions under the Crimes Act. They would soon ascertain whether that was so or not, if the Chief Secretary for Ireland would answer a question he intended to put to him. The right hon. Gentleman would disarm much of the support which this Amendment was receiving on the Opposition side of the House, if he would accept the Amendment which appeared a little bit lower down on the Paper in the name of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), and which was to the effect that this Act should not apply to persons who were indicted under the Crimes Act of last year. If the Chief Secretary would accept that proposal, they would know that the Government were only now going on in that course of dealing out equal laws for the three countries, which they failed to do in the Act of last year, and which they professed to have so much at heart in all their legislation. If the right hon. Gentleman would not accept that Amendment, they would then know that the object of extending the provisions of this Bill to the sister country of Ireland was not the obtaining the acquittal of innocent people, but to obtain convictions, on the ground that persons would not go into the box, and thus subject themselves to cross-examination with all the licence granted to the Crown Prosecutors by the tribunals in that country, which would defeat the ends of fair and equal justice.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he quite agreed with the late Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) that the Bill might be made very beneficial to Scotland; but he feared that in its present form it was scarcely applicable to Scotland. He did not see that, by the Bill in its present shape, the Scotch declaration was saved.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Bill leaves the existing law as to declaration wholly untouched.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL remarked that in that case he was prepared to accept the application of the Bill to Scotland. He thought, however, that its form should be altered, because the Bill at present seemed inconsistent with the Scotch declaration, which was not the evidence of a witness, but the judicial examination of the accused.

MR. DARLING (Deptford) said, it was very well observed by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Attercliffe Division of Sheffield (Mr. Coleridge) that the object of the Criminal Law should be the acquittal of the innocent and the conviction of the guilty. Why did no one object that this Bill should apply to England and to Scotland? Because in England and in Scotland alike, they were all agreed as to the advantage not only of acquitting the innocent, but of convicting the guilty. Why was it that anyone objected to the Bill being applied to Ireland? Because there was a feeling in that country that it was to the advantage of some persons to acquit the guilty. It had been argued by those who would exempt Ireland from the operation of this Bill as though the only person made competent as a witness was the accused person himself. It seemed to be forgotten that there was a provision that an accused's wife should be a competent witness, or that in case the wife should be accused the husband should be a competent witness. It must happen in many cases—one would think under the Crimes Act—if anybody who was innocent was ever accused under that Act, which he very much doubted. [*Opposition cheers.*] He was glad that sentiment met with so much assent. One would think that if innocent people ever were accused under that Act, those who had their advantage at heart—and the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Coleridge) said it was expedient to have people examined in order that the innocent should be acquitted—one would think that if the accused were innocent of the charge made against them, their friends would wish that the accused themselves and their wives should be competent witnesses. Surely, it would be to the advantage of an accused person to go into the witness-box if he was innocent. Why should hon. Members not face the facts in the House of Commons just as they would face them in any other place? Why should they not admit that the reason why it was objected that this Bill should apply to Ireland was the fear that convictions might come from it, just as convictions might come from it in England and in Scotland; that whereas they in England and in Scotland did not mind seeing the guilty convicted, there were people in Ireland who had the greatest objection to seeing the guilty convicted at all? If hon. Members spoke what they thought and what they said outside the House, they would admit that that was the gist of the objection to the application of the Bill to Ireland. He was reminded of the case of Kirby, who was executed that morning. Kirby was charged under the Crimes Act, and he might, if this Bill had been law, have given evidence at the criminal investigation under the Crimes Act. [Mr. T. M. HEALY: So he did.] Did he? He might have given evidence then, and he might have also given evidence at his trial. If he gave evidence in the first instance, and could not give it in the second, was not that an injustice? He was anxious to remove that injustice. It was said that this Bill was only introduced because the Crimes Act was passed. That would only be an argument if the Bill applied to Ireland, and to Ireland alone; but it was notorious that for years there had been a demand on the part of England, and he believed on the part of Scotland—long before the Crimes Act was thought of for Ireland—there was a demand that prisoners and their wives should be allowed to give evidence. There were a great many people in this country who did not know that a prisoner could not give evidence, and whose moral sentiment was revolted when they learned that an accused could not give evidence. He (Mr. Darling) had heard a learned Judge of the Chancery Division attempting to demolish the argument for the prisoner, on the ground that if there was anything in it the prisoner would have been called. That learned Chancery Judge was now a Lord Justice. In consequence of his ignorance of the Criminal Law, perhaps, he was removed to the Court of Appeal. So common was the impression in this country that it was only right that prisoners should be allowed to give evidence, that even some of the Judges who did not practice in the Criminal Courts were unaware that criminals suffered under such a disadvantage. It was proposed to do for England what England had long demanded. It was proposed to do it for Scotland as well. England was perfectly willing. Scotland was perfectly willing. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] They had heard to-night that Scotland was perfectly willing; and why was not Ireland? The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Coleridge) said he would agree to the Bill's application to Ireland if it were not to apply to cases under the Crimes Act. Why should a man charged under the Crimes Act be less competent to give evidence than a man charged under any other Act? But that was not the point. The point was, that it was more desirable in the eyes of some persons that a man charged under the Crimes Act should be acquitted than that men charged with offences under other Acts should be acquitted. He did not think there was any reason in that. The man who broke one law should stand in the same position as the man who broke another law. It was as expedient that a man who had broken one law should be convicted as that a man who had broken another law should be convicted, so long as he was convicted by legal process. And what fairer legal process could there be than that he was convicted because he had chosen to avail himself of the opportunity of saying what only he knew, and having said it, the jury—[Mr. T. M. HEALY: What jury?]—an Irish jury—had come to the conclusion that he was guilty? It was not as though there was any compulsion to give evidence. An accused person might get counsel to speak for him, if he liked. A prisoner need not give evidence, but he could give it if he chose. What hardship was there in that? It was not a tenderness for the law, but it was a fear of what prisoners would say, which made this proposal unacceptable to certain Representatives from Ireland.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said, it was very possible the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Darling) had a very large experience of Quarter Sessions, but it was painfully obvious he had no experience whatever of the administration of the Crimes Act in Ireland and of the scandals that had disgraced the administration of justice in certain Courts in Ireland. It had become the fashion in the House and the country for hon. Members opposite not alone to pretend to know more how certain Acts of Parliament and certain Bills would affect Ireland, but actually to lecture Members from Ireland who ventured to have an opinion as to how Acts would affect their country. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said the opinion of Scotland was in favour of this measure. It was a very singular thing that the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment (Mr. Caldwell) hailed from Scotland, and hailed, if not from the Metropolis, at any rate from the largest commercial centre of Scotland. The hon. and learned Gentleman made statements which certainly called for some remarks from that side of the House. The hon. and learned Member, in utter ignorance of the operations of the Crimes Act, proceeded, in the customary style of hon. Gentlemen opposite, to impute motives to hon. Members from Ireland. [*Laughter.*] The Chief Secretary for Ireland smiled at that. The right hon. Gentleman must be perfectly well aware that, with the rank and file of Members opposite, nothing was more fashionable, for want of solid argument, than to pad out their speeches with ill-concealed imputations. He could tell the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Deptford that they who came from Ireland and represented the Irish people had a much stronger and far more honest desire that it was the innocent alone who should suffer than he could have. [*Laughter.*] It was quite obvious that the omission of a word composed of three letters had caused the hilarity on the opposite Benches. It was perfectly evident that what he meant to say was that the Irish Members had as large and as honest a desire that it was the guilty and not the innocent should suffer as hon. Members opposite. He certainly thought that imputations of the character he had mentioned should be supported by arguments and facts, and not by mere quotations from the obscure pamphlets of I.L.P.U. The hon. and learned Gentleman said they would be glad of the acquittal of guilty parties. He flung that charge in the hon. and learned Gentleman's teeth. It was a grave charge, one which ought not to be thrown across the floor of the House. It was a charge for which no proof had been given, and for which no proof could possibly be given. The hon. and learned Gentleman said there was a demand for a Bill of this nature in England and Scotland. He (Mr. Flynn) was not competent to say whether there was a demand for the Bill in Scotland; but undoubtedly there seemed to be a difference of opinion amongst the Scottish Members as to whether the Bill ought to apply to Scotland. There were several hon. Members from Scotland who were not quite so anxious to welcome this measure for Scotland as the hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think. But although he was not competent to speak for Scotland, he was perfectly competent to speak for Ireland, and he took issue with the Chief Secretary on the broad and unqualified statement he made, that everybody in Ireland competent to express an opinion upon the Bill were in favour of the measure. If the right hon. Gentleman would allow him (Mr. Flynn) to add two or three words to his statement, probably he would be prepared to agree with him. If the right hon. Gentleman had said that everybody he had met in or around Dublin Castle, there would be a great deal in what he said. The right hon. Gentleman ought, by this time, to be aware that there were other opinions besides those of the occupants of Dublin Castle worth listening to. In the City of Dublin and in the City of Cork there was the strongest possible objection to the operation of this measure being extended to Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had said, in regard to the application of the Bill to Ireland, that the clauses of the Criminal Law Procedure Act only dealt with a limited difficulty; but he had altogether forgotten to remind the Committee that the Crimes Act had to last for ever and ever. If it were dangerous to apply the Crimes Act at all, and its application necessitated such a Bill as this, they should remember that its application was for ever and ever. The hon. and learned Member for the Attercliffe Division of Sheffield (Mr. Coleridge) had put forward a proposal which, if it met with acceptance on behalf of the Government, the Irish Members would be prepared to consider if they could not altogether withdraw opposition to it. But the right hon. Gentleman had shown no desire to accept the suggestion of the hon. and learned Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman had not even referred to it, so far as he (Mr. Flynn) could remember. Now, that was a very important point, which touched the whole of their objections to the Bill. As regarded Ireland, the debate on the second reading was in the recollection of the House, and, therefore, he would not refer to that; but when the Bill was before introduced—he would not say whether it was the first time the subject was brought before them, because his memory did not serve him sufficiently well on the point—but somewhere about 12 months ago one of the strongest statements as affecting Ireland upon this subject was made by the Attorney General for Ireland, who said that if the Irish Members were willing to abate their opposition to the Bill, the Government would exclude Ireland from it. But had anything happened since? Yes; the Criminal Law Procedure Act had been applied to Ireland, and had been in operation since July last, and if the right hon. Gentleman opposite could on good faith make such a promise as he made to the Irish Members on the last occasion, to the effect that the measure should not be extended to Ireland if they withdrew their opposition, surely the case was very much stronger now, than when he spoke those words. The Irish had a distrust, and a well-founded distrust, of the Irish Resident Magistrates, and probably three-fourths or nine-tenths of the cases which would be affected by this Bill would come before those magistrates. The hon. and learned Member for Deptford (Mr. Darling) he (Mr. Flynn) had no doubt, though a Tory Member, notwithstanding he had acquired with fatal facility that eloquent sneer at everything Irish, or everything proposed by Irish Members, but if he were in Ireland and knew how the Resident Magistrates would deal with cases that came before them, he would dread placing such powers as that contained in the Bill in their hands. The Irish people had a very strong objection to seeing powers such as those contained in this Bill entrusted to hands which were not fit to exercise them. Let the Committee try to realize to itself the position under which a defendant would be under this Bill before a Resident Magistrate. Not long ago a case came before Colonel Carew, and an argument taking place between himself and the solicitor for the defence, this gentleman had boldly declared that he represented the Crown in the case.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: He was not acting magisterially.

Mr. FLYNN: The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland says he was not acting magisterially.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: He was not acting as a Judge in the case.

An hon. Member: Was he acting as a hangman?

Mr. FLYNN said, he presumed Colonel Carew was acting as Judge, jury, and gallows. At any rate, Mr. Higgons, the representative of the defendants, had declared that Colonel Carew no more represented the Crown than he did, and that his, Colonel Carew's business was to hold the balance equally between the prisoner and the Crown. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was sceptical as to Colonel Carew's acting magisterially, but he (Mr. Flynn) was not able to split hairs in the extraordinary manner in which the right hon. Gentleman was. This magistrate was acting as Crown Prosecutor, and as anything but a magistrate. Let the Committee imagine a prisoner brought before such a tribunal with the provisions of this Bill in operation. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that if the prisoner did not come forward and give evidence in his own behalf, there was nothing more to be said about it. Surely, the hon. and learned Gentleman was not so unskilled a lawyer as not to know what would happen. The prosecuting counsel would use the fact as very strong evidence against him. Colonel Carew would, if he gave evidence, proceed to cross-examine him, just as they read that some Judges applied the thumb-screw to unfortunate defendants; if the Crown Counsel was not sufficiently searching in his questions, or if there were certain points which might tell against the man's innocence, a magistrate like Colonel Carew, whose salary depended on the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, would do everything in his power to supplement the case for the Crown. Irish Members on those Benches had the greatest possible objection to the extension of the Bill to Ireland. That objection was based upon knowledge of the facts and considerations of the greatest importance to their people, as well as the safe conduct of justice in Ireland. He trusted, therefore, that the Government would not persevere in their intention of applying the Bill to Ireland, which, although it seemed to secure the acquittal of the innocent, he feared would have there the contrary effect.

Mr. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.) said, that the way in which the Amendment stood was not altogether satisfactory to some Members who made a distinction between Scotland and Ireland. He wished, and many of his countrymen also wished, to see the principle of the Bill extended to Scotland, and for that purpose he desired to insert the words "and Scotland," in order that the question might be raised independently. A good deal had been said by the hon. and learned Member for Deptford (Mr. Darling), and the hon. Member for North Cork (Mr. Flynn) on the Amendment, into whose arguments he did not propose to enter. The Bill appeared to him to be eminently satisfactory and desirable in a country where justice is fairly and honestly administered, and as he knew that was the case in England and Scotland he desired to see it carried into effect in those parts of the Kingdom. But, as he did not believe that justice was fairly and honestly administered in Ireland, he did not wish to see the Bill extended to that country. To those who had been accustomed to live in an atmosphere of real justice, to hear the Judges impartially laying down the law, and counsel conducting prosecutions with fairness and a desire to do what is right in the interest of the prisoner as well as in the interest of the Crown, were shocked and disgusted when they read of the proceedings of some of the so-called Courts of Justice and the counsel who appeared before them.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to add after the word "England," the words "and Scotland."—(*Mr. R. T. Reid.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'and Scotland' be added to the proposed Amendment."

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he hoped his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dumfries (Mr. R. T. Reid) would not press to have the words "and Scotland" in the Bill. The system in Scotland was altogether different from that which prevailed in England. In Scotland the first step was to examine the accused under circumstances which had become familiar to the people, and in his judgment there was no conceivable advantage in combining with that system that of allowing the prisoner to be examined as a witness on the trial. There were two alternative systems—they might have the Scotch system, or that proposed in the Bill, and if a prisoner was to be examined in secret under one, he did not see that there was any advantage at all in having him examined in public. He objected to it for that reason, unless the Scotch system were reconsidered altogether. At the present time a prisoner refusing to answer questions was not made the subject of remark by Judge or jury, but if he were allowed to be examined as a witness at the trial, it might be anticipated that what would happen would be that if anything like what might be called evidence by the prisoner was produced at the trial, and he did not think proper to go into the box to be examined, the Judge would draw the attention of the jury to the fact that the prisoner did not avail himself of that opportunity, and the jury would draw their own inference from the fact. That seemed a most unfair course of proceeding, and not calculated to promote the interests of justice, for it might and did happen that a prisoner had other reasons quite apart from the crime of which he was accused for not submitting to examination. He (Mr. Hunter) was not satisfied that any cause existed for the application of this change to Scotland. Certainly he had never heard from any quarter in Scotland any demand for the Bill, and in the total absence of any demand for a reform peculiarly suited to English law which had no examination of a prisoner at any stage of the proceedings, he did not see why it should be adopted in Scotland. The extension could be made at any time should it appear desirable, but he should vote against it at present.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, he had not intended to address the Committee because the matter had been so clearly stated by his right hon. Friend the Member for Clackmannan (Mr. J. B. Balfour), but he could not agree with the hon. Member who had just spoken (Mr. Hunter) that there was any alternative whatever as between the judicial examination which took place in Scotch law and the prisoner presenting himself for examination in the witness-box. It would be seen at once that the cases in England and Scotland were practically the same. The difference was that the accused in England at the conclusion of the examination, and after all the witnesses had been examined, was asked if he wished to say anything or make any statement, and he was warned that any statement might be used as evidence against him, and could not be used in his favour, and he was also told that he was under no obligation to make any statement; while the difference in the Scotch procedure was that the prisoner was brought up for judicial examination before the magistrate before any inquiry was made. He was brought up immediately, and that was a great advantage to the prisoner if innocent. But, in point of fact, prisoners in both cases had the opportunity of making statements, both were warned that such statements might be used against them, and could not be used in their favour, and both were told they need not make statements unless they pleased. It was a great mistake to say that the Scotch judicial examination was an alternative to examination in Court as a witness for the distinct reason that the statement by the prisoner could not be allowed as evidence on behalf of the prisoner at all, whereas if he were examined as a witness his evidence would go with all the other evidence before the jury. He (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) could not agree with the hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow (Mr. Caldwell) that there was quite sufficient security in the exercise of the Royal Prerogative, and, therefore, the Bill need not apply to Scotland. Such reasoning would equally apply to England. But it was the last thing that an innocent prisoner desired, that he should be left to the ultimate chance of an inquiry by the Secretary of State for England or Scotland, in order that he might be pardoned —not cleared—from the crime of which he was accused. The Prerogative of Mercy was used for setting right what was admittedly a miscarriage of justice—but the object of the Bill was to prevent a miscarriage of justice—to consider anything which, laid before the Secretary of State, would lead to the exercise of the Prerogative. It was to meet cases that had happened, and no one desired it should become part of the ordinary operation of the law. It was said also that under the Scotch system, if a prisoner declined to make any statement, that was a circumstance the prosecutor referred to as one the jury were entitled to take into consideration. He had heard that tried, and as often he had heard the Judge give a distinct injunction to the jury that they were not entitled to take it into account. He was sure that it had now disappeared from the practice in prosecutions. It was also said that the opportunity given for the accused to make a statement was quite sufficient to take the place of the giving of evidence, but he thought it was forgotten in the first place that a much fuller examination would take place at the trial than could possibly be taken on the initial stage of the proceedings before the circumstances were known. The Bill met the difficulty now found arising from the accused not being entitled to examination. On another matter he had been personally appealed to, whether he knew of any case in which a prisoner was convicted but would have had a chance of escaping had he been able to give evidence.

Mr. CALDWELL said, that was not the point. He asked for a case in which an innocent prisoner was convicted owing to his legal inability to give evidence in the case.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, that was practically the same thing in another form of words. Taking it as the hon. Member put it, he would say that he had known more than one such case. He would go further and say he had often had to defend prisoners with an anxious mind; but he would have had no anxiety whatever had he been able to put the accused in the witness box.

Mr. HUNTER said, he quite agreed with the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate that it was a great defect of Scotch law that the preliminary examination could not be quoted on behalf of the prisoner as well as against him.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he did not say it was a defect. He said it would be unwise and unfair that the examination should be taken without a safeguard.

Mr. HUNTER said, in his opinion it was a great defect and almost a scandal in Scotch administration that when a man was taken into custody he should at once be examined without any legal advice.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he might have legal advice.

Mr. HUNTER: But could the right hon. and learned Gentleman say how often it had been availed of? Certainly, the statement ought in all reason and justice to be used for as well as against the prisoner. But the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had failed to understand the objection. Suppose a prisoner refused to make a declaration, but on his trial desired to tell his story and give his evidence, would he not be exposed to the irresistible observation—"That is a fine story, but why did you not tell it when you were first arrested?" In that sense, he contended, the two systems were inconsistent. If the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate was prepared to alter the Scotch system and make it to resemble the English system, that a prisoner should be examined at his trial only, there was no objection; but he saw a great objection to a system that subjected the accused to a double ordeal; in the first place, that which was still a private ordeal not necessarily implying the assistance of a legal adviser, and then if he did not use the opportunity of giving evidence again at the trial he would be open to inferences that would certainly be drawn from that refusal. If the Scotch and English systems were to be assimilated, let that be done; but why pile "Pelion upon Ossa?" Why have the double ordeal that needs must work unfairly to the accused?

Mr. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, he would suggest that really the difficulty in the case applied to the three countries. The point at which the Committee had arrived had reference to Scotland, and he feared it would be disorderly to argue the case of England and Ireland, and he would not do so further than to say that it was agreed that the proposed alteration was not for securing the conviction of the guilty so much as to secure the acquittal of the innocent, and it had been called a protection to the accused.

The CHAIRMAN reminded the hon. and learned Member that he must speak to the Amendment "and Scotland."

Mr. WADDY said, he was only about to suggest an alteration by which the words "and Scotland" would become unnecessary; it could be met by a slight alteration in the Amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. WADDY resumed his seat.

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) said, he desired to support the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dumfries (Mr. R. T. Reid). It had been his duty for a period of 20 years to examine witnesses and to see witnesses examined before Criminal and other Courts, and he was bound to say that many cases occurred in which it would have been of very great advantage to the prisoner that the husband or wife should have been allowed to stand in the witness-box and give evidence in the case. He was bound to say also in regard to what had been said by his hon. Friend the Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) and others, that he had found in many cases that prisoners considered that injustice was done to them because husband or wife was not allowed to give evidence one for the other. A good deal had been said about the declaration made by a prisoner when apprehended; but these declarations were made under very exceptional circumstances; the prisoner was in an excited state, and he was afraid that the Act was not administered as carefully as it might be. He attached great importance to prisoners being allowed to make their statement before Judge and jury, that the jury might hear the statement and cross-examination. The impression on the jury would be much more useful than that formed from the mere reading of a declaration. So far as his experience went, the Bill ought to apply to Scotland, and he should support the Amendment.

Colonel SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put accordingly, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 213; Noes 121: Majority 92.—(Div. List, No. 97.)

Question put accordingly, "That the words 'and Scotland' be added to the proposed Amendment."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 278; Noes 52: Majority 226.—(Div. List, No. 98.)

It being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress; Committee to sit again upon *Thursday*.

MOTIONS.

—o—

TRAMWAYS PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The Tramways Act, 1870," relating to the Bolton and Suburban Tramways, Hartlepools Tramways, and Liverpool Corporation Tramways, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 242.]

TRAMWAYS PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 3) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The Tramways Act, 1870," relating to Keighley Tramways, North Metropolitan Tramways, and South Birmingham Tramways, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Mr. Jackson,

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 243.]

GAS PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 1) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870," relating to Chigwell, Loughton, and Woodford Gas, Great Berkhampstead Gas, Hatfield Gas, Snodland Gas, and Swansea Gas, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 244.]

GAS PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870," relating to Dursley Gas, King's Lynn Gas, Littlehampton Gas, Oakham Gas, Poulton-le-Fylde Gas, and Worksop Gas, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 245.]

WATER PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870," relating to Mansfield Water, Mid Sussex Water, Wimborne Minster Water, and Worksop Water, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 246.]

GAS AND WATER PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870," relating to Goring and Streatley District Gas and Water, Sheringham Gas and Water, and Winchester Water and Gas, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 247.]

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861," relating to Torquay and Tralee and Fenit, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 248.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 3) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Boroughs of Bideford, Burton-upon-Trent, and Stratford-upon-Avon, and the Improvement Act District of Milford, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 249.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 4) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Boroughs of Birkenhead and Stockton-on-Tees, the Local Government Districts of Cleckheaton, Pickering, Rawmarsh, and Wallasey, and the Wirral Joint Hospital District, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 250.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) (NO. 6) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Orders of the Local Government Board under the Provisions of "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876," as amended and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the Parishes of Aldham, Barford-Saint-Michael, Birch, Chappel, Copford, Deddington, East Donyland, Easthorpe, Fingringhoe, Fordham, Fryerning, Great Tey, Great Wigborough, Ingatestone, Inworth, Layer-Breton, Layer-de-la-Hay, Layer-Marney, Little Horksley, Little Tey, Little Wigborough, Marks Tey, Messing, Mount Bures, Peldon, Virley, Wakes Colne, West Bergholt, and Wormingford, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 251.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (GAS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870," and "The Public Health Act, 1875," relating to the Local Government District of Croston and the Borough of Wilton, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 252.]

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (SPECIAL REPORT.)

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY accordingly *reported* from the Committee of Selection; That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure the following Fifteen Members in respect of the Bail (Scotland) Bill:—Mr. Anderson, Mr. Baird, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Hozier, Sir Robert Jardine, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Mark Stewart, Mr. Angus Sutherland, Mr. Thorburn, Mr. Wallace, and Mr. Shiress Will.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY further *reported* from the Committee; That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure the following Member in respect of the Mortmain and Charitable Uses Bill [*Lords*]:—Mr. Neville.

Report to lie upon the Table.

House adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 8th May, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Rochester Bishopric * (98); Glebe Lands * (100).

Second Reading—Suffragans' Act Amendment (83); Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, Amendment (91).

Second Reading—Committee negatived—Customs and Inland Revenue (95).

Referred to Select Committee—Land Charges Registration and Searches * (40), *referred to Select Committee on* Land Transfer Bill.

Committee—Tithe Rentcharge Recovery and Variation (54).

Committee—Report—Tithe Rentcharge * (53).

Third Reading—Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, Amendment * (68), and *passed.*

TITHE RENT-CHARGE RECOVERY AND VARIATION BILL.—(No. 54.)

(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to order).

Recovery of Tithe Rent-Charge.

Clause 1 (Abolition, except in certain cases of distress for recovery of rent-charge) *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Procedure for obtaining order of County Court for payment of tithe rentcharge).

Lord HERRIES, in moving to amend Sub-section 3 by inserting words to limit the right of the titheowner to three-fourths of the net profit of the land, thus giving the landlord some compensation for the expenses of management and maintenance of the land, said it might be objected that the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836 was a final settlement of the question; but to that he would answer that the Legislature had frequently interfered and had altered the incidence of tithes, and the introduction of this measure itself proved that the tithe commutation was not considered to be a settlement of the question. It was always supposed that the land would be three times the value of the rent-charge; but he had been informed that in some cases the landlords had to pay as tithes more than their interest in their land was worth; and it certainly was extraordinary that the person who was entitled to only one-tenth of the produce of the land had a right to take the whole of the profits derived from the land. It was a fact that the natural productiveness of the land was gradually diminishing, and that it had to be supplemented by the use of stimulating and expensive manure. Was it fair in such circumstances that the titheowners should take the whole of the profits of the soil? In the interest of agriculture he moved this Amendment, because he thought the landowner should be allowed to take some part of the profits, and that the titheowner should not take the whole. Land had diminished in value, and his Amendment went to this—that in a case where the rent charged so nearly approached the net profits, the landowner should be allowed to retain one-fourth of them to pay his expenses of cultivation. He begged to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury) said, he could not assent to the Amendment. He did not think that the definition of profits given by the noble Lord was quite correct. He understood the noble Lord to desire to make this deduction from the profits in order to repay the landowner for his management. But the object which the noble Lord had in view would be satisfied by the clause as it stood. In point of principle, however, profits had nothing to do with the rent-charge, which had never been a charge upon the profits of the land. It was open to the noble Lord to say that the rights existing should be taken away; but if the noble Lord advocated that principle, it should be adopted after a very full inquiry, and then their Lordships might consider whether they would accept the results to which that inquiry would lead them. If land should go out of cultivation there would be no profits, but there would be a right to tithe notwithstanding.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said, he could not see that the clause reserved any profits to the landowner. No doubt, the noble Marquess was quite right in saying that to deal with this question as the noble Lord proposed would be a large matter; but he thought that this clause as it stood would lead to the question being re-opened, because it never could have been the intention of any individual to give to the Church the whole profits of the land. He fully admitted that as the law stood the right of the titheowner was as the noble Marquess had stated; but it was not always advisable or even possible to exact your pound of flesh although entitled to it. It seemed to him that the arguments that as the law stood the titheowner might absorb the whole of the net profits of the land pointed irresistibly to an alteration of the law.

The Earl of SELBORNE observed, when tithe was commuted a Parliamentary settlement was made between the landowner and the titheowner by which tithe was made a rent-charge on the land and took priority of the landlord's interest. The present was not a proper occasion for going into the question, whether that was a satisfactory settlement; if such a question were at any time raised, he did not doubt that it could be shewn; and he thought it had been already demonstrated that, on the whole, taking everything into account, the landowner had been a large gainer by that arrangement. It was perfectly clear that the titheowner's rent-charge now took precedence over the landlord's interest on the land as much as any other rent-charge would do. To say that because the landlord might get nothing out of the land he was entitled to have transferred to him one-fourth part of the titheowner's rent-charge, seemed to him to mean simply appropriation by the tithepayer of part of the titheowner's property.

LORD HERRIES said, he could not admit that under all circumstances the tithe rent-charge must remain as at present. It might be that, owing to change in the value of money, 100 years hence the tithe rent-charge might be worth more than the land itself. Could it be contended that under those circumstances the titheowner was to be allowed to have the whole property in the land? He did not wish to press his Amendment to a Division unless it was likely to be supported by the House.

Amendment (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clauses 3 to 9 inclusive, *agreed to.*

Reduction of Averages.

Clause 10 (Calculation of tithe rent-charge on triennial instead of septennial average of prices).

On the Motion of the Marquess of SALISBURY, an Amendment made to the effect that the substitution of a three years' average for the seven years' average should not affect extraordinary tithes.

An Amendment *moved* providing that the computation should be made as respects the average prices for the three years' ending on the 25th of December, 1889.—(*The Lord Addington.*)

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he could not admit that the clause as it stood did any injury to the titheowner, because it was impossible to say what the prices within the next few years would be, although the indications were rather in favour of a rise. He was, however, quite willing to accept the proposal of his noble Friend.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON said, he wished to express his gratitude on behalf of the clergy, to the noble Marquess, for acceding to a proposal which might tend to ameliorate their condition.

Amendment *agreed to;* other Amendments made; the Report thereof to be received on *Monday* next; and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 99.)

SUFFRAGANS' ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle.*)

(NO. 83.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE (Dr. HARVEY GOODWIN), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, explained that it was intended to remedy the defects of an Act of Henry VIII., which had proved to be a very useful Act, enabling Bishops to be consecrated to assist Diocesan Bishops. That Act, unfortunately, contained a list of towns from which the] titles of Suffragan Bishops could be taken, and some of these towns, as might be imagined, were totally inapplicable to the altered conditions of society. For example, the Bishop of Bedford was really a Bishop for East London, and the Bishop of Marlborough had no connection with the town from which he derived his title. What, however, brought the anomaly most vividly to his mind was the proposal to appoint a suffragan to the Bishop of Ripon by a title derived from Penrith, which was in his own diocese. But since he had introduced his Bill he had discovered that a Bill with a similar object was introduced in "another place" three months ago. This other Bill, however, went further than the one for which he was asking a second reading, and proposed to enable bishops with incongruous titles to change their names into more suitable ones. It also differed from his own Bill in allowing gentlemen already in episcopal orders to be appointed Suffragan Bishops. When he made this discovery he rather hesitated whether he should go on with the Bill, but inasmuch as no progress had been made in the House of Commons with that Bill, he resolved to proceed with his Bill and then to take counsel with the members of the other House who had been good enough to interest themselves in the question. He, therefore, hoped that their Lordships would be good enough to give his little Bill a second reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887, AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 91.)

(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Lord FITZGERALD, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said that this Bill was intended to remedy an omission of the Act of last Session. By an Act of 1860 it was provided that where the lease prohibited assignment without the lessor's assent, no assignment should be valid unless sanctioned by the lessor's consent in writing, or by his being a party to the assignment, or endorsing his consent on the instrument. It frequently happened that the assignment was made with the verbal consent of the lessor or established by his subsequent acquiescence and dealings. Such assignees were excluded from the operation of the Act of last Session, unless the lessees had obtained the written consent of the lessor, or a memorandum sanctioning the assignment had been engrossed on the lease. The Bill proposed that whenever the lessor, by the receipt of rent or in any other way, had virtually recognized the assignment, the assignee might come into Court and claim the benefit of the Act. As the Act stood, the same result might be brought about indirectly by the lessee's claiming the benefit which his assignee would enjoy, and the Bill, therefore, provided that what might be now done circuitously should be done in a more straightforward manner.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

The LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl Cadogan) said, that the Government would offer no opposition to the second reading of the Bill, which would remedy a defect that undoubtedly existed in the Land Act of last year.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Friday* next.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.—(No. 95.)

(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

Earl GRANVILLE said, that the noble Marquess had stated, the other day, that the House of Lords had no practical power to deal either with the formation of Government or with the Revenue; and although we had an undoubted right to discuss and to vote on such matters, the noble Marquess was right as to our practical power; he, therefore, did not desire to raise any debate upon the facts of the case; but he might remark that he had observed a telegram in the newspapers stating that the French Ambassador, M. Waddington, had been instructed to make representations to Her Majesty's Government on the subject of their proposal in regard to bottled wines, and had informed his Government that the negotiations were proceeding favourably; and he, therefore, now wished to know whether, in the negotiations which had taken place, any satisfactory result had been arrived at through the modification made by Mr. Goschen in his proposals in the House of Commons as to the Wine Duties.

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury) said, that undoubtedly there was a recognized and a very real grievance in the anomaly pointed out by the noble Earl—namely, that in deciding such a question as was debated with so much animation in "another place" lately as to whether realty or personal property was unjustly treated in the present balance of taxation, all their Lordships put together had less direct influence than the humblest ratepayer in the country. It was certainly a very strange and curious anomaly; and the only thing which could be said in its favour was that it dated from the time of Richard II. Therefore the noble Lord would not expect him to defend it. As to the particular matter in the Bill to which the noble Earl had referred, he could only say that he did not recognize in the newspaper telegram—to which he presumed the noble Earl alluded—any resemblance to any facts with which he was acquainted. No doubt there had been discussions on that subject between the French and the British Governments. Her Majesty's Government had recognized that on one point the object of the

French Government was the same as their own. Her Majesty's Government desired by that impost to touch rather the well-to-do than the poorer class. In fact, the tax, to use an ordinary phrase, was one upon luxury. The French Government pointed out that it would affect, and very severely, a class of wines which could hardly be called luxurious—namely, the lower class of sparkling wines. Mr. Goschen had undertaken to consider the question, and to see whether any provisions could be proposed which would have the effect of relieving that class of wines from a burden which it was desired to put upon them. Undoubtedly the question was a difficult one; and he did not like to use any language which might make it quite certain that the difficulty could be satisfactorily overcome, but the subject was engaging Mr. Goschen's best attention; and his right hon. Friend would make every endeavour to meet it. It had been thought better in the House of Commons that any arrangement which might be made should take the form of another Bill rather than that they should reserve a discretionary power of altering it by this Bill—a course which might be thought inconsistent with precedent. He hoped, therefore, that the matter might be arranged. He could not say that he considered the tax itself one to which any objection could reasonably be offered; but, of course, it was always a matter of regret to the Government if any tax affected the feelings and interests of any of their allies.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly: Committee *negatived;* and Bill to be read 3ª on *Friday* next.

LUNACY LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether it is their intention, as far as it lies with them, to forward, and pass into law this Session, the important Bill for the amendment of the Lunacy Laws which, having already passed that House on three previous occasions, was sent down to "another place" on the 22nd of March this year?

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, he would also express an earnest hope that the passing of the Bill mentioned in the Question of the noble Earl might not be longer delayed.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, it was difficult to answer the Question of the noble Earl, because he could not answer for the progress of Business in the other House, which must very much exercise the patience and discretion of his right hon. Friend the Leader of that House. He agreed that this was a topic quite removed from Party politics; and, although there was not perfect unanimity, yet he thought they might hope soon to settle it one way or the other.

ROCHESTER BISHOPRIC BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for the better administering of the Diocese of Rochester—Was *presented* by The Lord Bishop of Rochester; read 1ª. (No. 98.)

LAND CHARGES REGISTRATION AND SEARCHES BILL [H.L.]

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to the Select Committee to which the Land Transfer Bill stands referred;" *agreed to.*—(*The Lord Hobhouse.*)

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock, to Friday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 8*th May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered — First Reading*—Quarries Regulation * [254]; Public Health Acts Amendment (Buildings in Streets) * [255].

Second Reading—Office under the Crown (Vacating of Seats) [98], *debate adjourned.*

Committee—Libel Law Amendment* [17]—R.P.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS—*Second Reading*—Public Health (Scotland) (Denny and Dunipace Water) * [229].

Third Reading—Metropolis (Whitechapel and Limehouse) * [194]; Metropolitan Commons (Farnborough, &c.) * [192], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

—o—

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—SENTENCES AT KILRUSH PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether it is the fact, as reported in the newspapers, that at the

Kilrush Petty Sessions, Mr. John C. Mahony, J.P., presiding, a young man named Thomas W. Coote was sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment with hard labour for laughing at a policeman; whether it is also the fact that at Longford, on Tuesday last, the Court, consisting of Colonels Bowlby and Stewart, on the request of District Inspector Flower, warned persons allowing their children to hoot or cheer parties obnoxious to them, as the children would be sent to a reformatory; and, whether he can state under what branch of the Common or Statute Law it is a crime to cheer, hoot, or laugh at other persons?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): Thomas Coote was sentenced to pay a fine of 10*s*., or, in default, to be imprisoned for 14 days, for riotous behaviour in hooting and groaning at the police while they were engaged in dispersing a disorderly crowd in the streets of Kilrush. The prosecution was under the provisions of the Towns Improvement Act, 1854, before Mr. Mahony, borough magistrate. I am informed that the statement in the second paragraph of the Question as to what occurred at Longford on Tuesday last is without foundation. The hon. Gentleman will see that the Question put to me in the third paragraph does not arise.

MR. CONYBEARE: The hon. and learned Gentleman has not answered the last paragraph of the Question. Is it a crime to cheer, hoot, or laugh at other persons?

MR. MADDEN: I am quite ready to answer any Question of law if there is any substratum of fact to support it; but, inasmuch as there has been no prosecution for any such act as that referred to in the Question, I would be trifling with the House if I were to answer it.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman, how many men are in gaol in Ireland for the crime of having merely laughed at the police?

MR. MADDEN: None, Sir.

DR. TANNER: Mr. Speaker, I would ask——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. CONYBEARE asked, was he not right in stating that this young man was sent to gaol for hooting and laughing at policemen?

MR. MADDEN: No, Sir. The prosecution was under a section of the Towns Improvement Act of 1854, by which a borough magistrate can convict for riotous behaviour in the streets. The riotous behaviour in this case was what I have stated, hooting and groaning at the police while they were engaged in dispersing a disorderly crowd in the streets.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — KENAGH PETTY SESSIONS — SENTENCE ON A CHILD NINE YEARS OLD.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact, as reported in the newspapers, that at Kenagh, County Longford, on Friday, April 20, a child of nine years old was committed to prison for one month on a charge of having thrown stones during a recent eviction in the district of Newtown Cashel; and, whether he will make inquiry into the case, with a view to remitting what remains unexpired of the sentence?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The local Constabulary Authorities report that the statement alleged to have appeared in the newspapers as to a child of nine years old having been committed to prison for a month (or for any other term) at Kenagh Petty Sessions is without foundation.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—SENIOR TELEGRAPHISTS.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Postmaster General, Whether there are at present in the Metropolitan Districts 25 first class telegraphists, whose length of service ranges from 18 to 24 years, who have been waiting at the maximum of their class since April, 1886; whether it is his intention to increase the senior class so as to relieve the congestion which at present exists, and which must necessarily increase yearly as others arrive at the maximum; whether, in the Central Office, the number of senior telegraphists is 161, as compared with 334 first class, while in the Metropolitan Districts the numbers are 16 and 61 respectively; and, whether he will take the necessary steps to remedy the inequality?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that the number of the first class telegraphists in the Metropolitan District who have attained to the maximum of their scale of pay is 24, and they reached their maximum in 1886. Of these 24 officers 15 have completed 18 years of service, and nine have not. The numbers of the respective classes are as stated by the hon. Member. The difference is due to the comparatively much larger number of superior duties performed in the Central Telegraph Office. The numbers of the classes both in the Central Telegraph Office and in the Metropolitan District are fixed strictly in accordance with the numbers of superior duties to be performed; and as there are at present no additional duties of the kind to be provided for in the Metropolitan District, I do not feel justified in making an addition to the senior class.

ARMY ESTIMATES—ADDITION TO NUMBERS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the fact that the Commander-in-Chief did not, before the Estimates for this year were settled, recommend or make "any demand whatever" for any considerable addition to the numbers of the Army, which he has since declared to be too weak for its duties; and, whether the preparation of the Estimates, or what other occasion, presents the proper opportunity for the chief military adviser of the Secretary of State to place on formal record his responsible opinion as to the number of men which he, as such military expert, may deem necessary for the requirements of the country?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I stated the other day that no demand for an addition of 11,000 men to the Army was made to me officially or unofficially. The net addition asked for was between 2,000 and 3,000 men. The hon. Member will find in the Estimates of the present year that the battalions of Infantry and regiments of Cavalry first for service and in the Aldershot Division were raised to a higher establishment. He will also find a considerable increase in the number of the Royal Engineers and the Commissariat and Transport Staff. On the other hand, certain reductions were made which fixed the net increase to the Army at 276 men. The natural opportunity for raising any question of increase of establishments is before the Estimates are framed, because, of course, they entirely depend on the numbers of the establishment.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) asked, whether the construction placed by the Civil Authorities at the War Office on the sentence in the Order in Council imposing on the Commander-in-Chief the duty of preparing the Estimates was that he should submit what he considered to be an adequate estimate of the military requirements of the country?

MR. E. STANHOPE: No change whatever has been made in this respect by the recent re-organization. The Commander-in-Chief has always submitted annually his proposed establishment, and he does so now.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—THE ESTIMATE.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he can now state if the Estimate of £40,435 for the first class at the Central Telegraph Office for the past financial year was not realized by over £7,000; whether there are over 100 vacancies in that class; and, whether he will consider the desirability of utilizing the whole of the Estimate of £41,252 for the current financial year by at once filling up those vacancies?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I can but repeat an answer given by me a few days ago that the charge for the salaries of telegraphists of the first class at the Central Telegraph Office in the past financial year will not fall short of the Estimate to the extent of £7,000. There are at present 70 vacancies in the class. As regards the current financial year, I have already stated, in answer to a Question put to me by the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), that promotions will be made in due course; and that the expenditure for salaries of telegraphists at the Central Telegraph Office will, in my belief, approximate very closely to the Estimate.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — TRAVELLING POST OFFICES.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has yet decided on paying the 6*d.* per trip risk money to the men employed in the travelling post offices in Ireland, which he stated in February last was under the consideration of the Government; and, if so, will payment commence from the date of the Memorial (30th April, 1887) from the officers of that Department?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): No, Sir. The question is still under consideration. I hope, however, to be able to arrive at a decision upon it shortly.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS — STAMP DUTY ON SECURITIES TO BEARER.

Mr. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the exemption from the 1*s.* per cent duty on securities to bearer when actual ownership is not changed would extend to such securities if lodged as cover for loans or as security for bills accepted?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; it would not. In such a lodgment as the hon. Member describes the actual ownership of the securities is not, it is true, changed; but there is an assignment of interest, and the new duty would, therefore, be payable.

POST OFFICE—FOREIGN TELEGRAPH FORMS.

Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) asked the Postmaster General, Whether there is any particular reason why the paper used for foreign telegraph forms should be of such a quality that it is impossible to write on it without impediment from its fibrous and flimsy composition; and, whether he will order a better kind of paper to be supplied for this purpose in the future?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): A better kind of paper for the foreign telegraph form was introduced some time ago, and I have received from the public several expressions of satisfaction with the improvement. Possibly the form of which the hon. Member complains was one of the old issue.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—ROSSCARBERY PIER.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What was the cost of building the new pier at Rosscarbery; whether many protests have been made to the Dublin Castle authorities complaining of its present very unsatisfactory condition; whether it is a fact that serious inconvenience has ensued in consequence of shipping being delayed, sometimes for four days together, in consequence of being obliged to use the old pier and being obliged to await a high tide; whether the masters of vessels refuse to approach the new structure, in consequence of its incomplete and unsafe condition; and, what steps will be taken to remedy the existing defects?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: The pier in question cost £4,299. One gentleman has written two letters to the Castle respecting it, his principal ground of complaint being the delays of the contractor for the works. No other objections to the design or execution have reached the Government; but as the Fishery Piers and Harbours Commissioners only provided four feet of water at the pier head at low water springs, it evidently cannot be approached at all states of the tide. No further works are contemplated at this point, nor are there funds available for the purpose.

TURKEY (EUROPEAN PROVINCES)—MACEDONIA.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is any foundation for the report from Constantinople that British agents are at work in Macedonia, and that their action has been taken notice of by the Palace; and, whether several attempts which have been made by the local Constantinople Press to deny it have been suppressed by the censor?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): When a Question is asked as to the accuracy of a report it is usual to state where such a report has appeared.

Dr. TANNER said, the report appeared in two of the London morning papers of last Saturday.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: I am informed that no such report has appeared in any newspaper; but, if it had, I cannot imagine its being believed in by any one possessed of ordinary sobriety of judgment.

Dr. TANNER said, he would supply the right hon. Baronet with cuttings, setting forth that British agents had been accused of fomenting disorder in Macedonia.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION OF TRANSATLANTIC STEAMERS.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the hospital accommodation on board most of the transatlantic steamers carrying emigrants is frequently, if not always, utilized for the accommodation of cabin or intermediate passengers, or of officers or crew; whether such hospital accommodation is intended by Act of Parliament to be kept unoccupied except by sick passengers or crew; and, what guarantee is given that, after the emigration officer has cleared such vessels, the executive officers of such ships other than the medical officer will not allocate the hospital berths to such persons as they please who are neither sick nor ailing?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): I have made inquiries; and I am assured by the Companies that the hospital accommodation on board the transatlantic steamers carrying emigrants is not utilized for the accommodation of cabin or intermediate passengers, or of officers or crew. Such hospital accommodation is intended by Act of Parliament to be kept always for the service of sick passengers or crew. No such hospital berths can be allocated to other than sick persons, unless on the express sanction of the medical officer of the ship.

Dr. TANNER asked, whether it was not a well-known fact, from all the Reports furnished by the emigration officers at Liverpool and Queenstown, that such hospital accommodation was frequently utilized by both passengers and crews?

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I am certainly not aware of it. I have given the hon. Member the best information I can obtain.

THE CURRENCY—ISSUE OF BRONZE COINS.

Mr. L. FRY (Bristol, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What was the amount of bronze coins issued by the Mint in the year 1887, as compared with 1886; whether he has received any information or complaints of a glut of such coinage existing in any localities to the loss and inconvenience of traders; and, whether, if there is ground for any such complaints, he will temporarily suspend the issue of bronze coins, so as to adjust the circulation to the requirements of the public?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The amount of bronze coin issued in 1887 was £57,680, as against £42,610 in the preceding year. For many years past the issue of bronze coin has been suspended in districts in which a redundancy has been reported to the Mint. During 11 months of the year 1887 applicants for pence in London were referred to firms of brewers who held a surplus stock of this coin; and the issue of pence and halfpence was frequently suspended in certain Northern districts, where banking firms undertook to meet the local demands. Since February last, again, applicants for pence and halfpence residing in the North of England have been referred to a Liverpool firm who hold a considerable surplus stock. The occasions on which the issue of bronze coin was suspended in different districts were more numerous in 1886 than in 1887.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) — LOSS OF LIFE FROM SCOTCH FISHING BOATS.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the great and increasing loss of life at sea from fishing boats in Scotland; whether his attention has been called to the following statement in *The Scotsman* newspaper of the 23rd of April last, where, after describing the death by drowning of a fisherman, it proceeds:—

> "This is the fourth instance this year of fishermen falling overboard on this coast and being drowned. The cause of these accidents is almost wholly attributed to the want of safety rails on these boats;"

and, whether, in view of the alarming frequency of these accidents, and the great loss of life consequent thereon, the Board of Trade will take such steps, as indicated above or otherwise, as will secure reasonable protection to these men in their dangerous calling?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): My attention has been directed to this matter, and an officer of the Board of Trade is now engaged in inquiring into it. I hope the inquiry will result in something being done.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED INSURANCE FRAUDS AT BELFAST.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, with reference to the prosecution for insurance frauds at Belfast, Whether his attention has been called to the statements made by Mr. Young, solicitor for the accused man Orr, in the Belfast Police Court, on Friday last, and published in the Belfast papers of Saturday last, in which he told the Court that his client, J. Speers Orr, had been from the beginning, and was then, prepared to give unconditionally every assistance in his power to bring to justice the guilty parties who have been for some time back gambling on the lives of others in Belfast, and whose practices have given such a shock to its citizens; whether Mr. Young then pledged himself that, if the Crown took up the case, he would supply them with sufficient evidence to convict those who are at present not in custody, but "who were the first to formulate this dreadful plan of trafficking in human life;" whether he is aware that Mr. Matthews, a Town Councillor at Belfast, surrendered about £17,000 of life policies which had been fraudulently obtained, and that the surrender of these policies had been accepted by the Company which had charge of the recent prosecutions against Orr; whether the greater number of these policies were issued on the lives of persons who were in bad health when the proposals were made, and were obtained by means of forgeries, and on lives in which Matthews had no insurable interest, and without the consent of the persons assured; and, whether, considering the number of lives which have been so assured, and the general feeling of indignation and uneasiness which this discovery has given rise to in Belfast and throughout the country, the Government will now take steps to proceed against the principals whose dupes have been sent forward for trial?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): The Attorney General for Ireland, having before him the result of the preliminary inquiries at the instance of the private prosecution in the case of the Belfast insurance frauds case, decided on conducting the prosecution on behalf of the Crown. It would be obviously improper for me to discuss the facts of individual charges; but I may state that the whole case is being thoroughly investigated, not only as regards the persons returned for trial, but with reference to every person implicated in the matter. The Attorney General has given full instructions in the matter which are being actively carried out, and no effort will be spared to bring all guilty persons to justice.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Is it intended to allow the venue to remain at Belfast?

MR. MADDEN: I have no special information on that point.

METROPOLITAN DRAINAGE—OUTFALL SEWAGE WORKS AT CROSSNESS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether the Metropolitan Board of Works, on Friday last, accepted a tender (£259,816) for additional outfall sewage works at Crossness; whether he can state the nature and tenor of the Report of the consulting chemist of the Board on the use of chemicals as failing to prevent the foul condition of the river during hot weather and seasons of drought; whether the proposed outfall works are opposed to the recommendations of the Royal Commission presided over by Baron Bramwell; and, whether, pending the passage of the Local Government Bill now before Parliament, the Metropolitan Board of Works will refrain from entering on such works involving a large expenditure of public money and the utility of which is challenged by very high authority?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): In answer to the hon. Member's Question, I have to state that the Board did on Friday last accept a tender for some large works at the Crossness Sewage Outfall, the works being mainly for the purpose of purifying the sewage by precipitation of the solid matter, and including also an enlargement of the sewage reservoir, which has for some years past been of too limited capacity, thus necessitating the occasional discharge of sewage into the river before the tide has begun to ebb. The Board's consulting chemist has reported that the use of chemicals will not prevent a foul condition of the river in droughts or during hot weather; but in thus speaking he refers to the application of chemicals to crude sewage, as has been the case during the last two or three summers, it not having yet been possible to put into operation the process of separating the solid matter from the whole of the sewage. The proposed works can hardly be said to be opposed to the recommendations of the Royal Commission; inasmuch as the Commission contemplated as one alternative the discharge of the separated liquid at the present outfalls after it had been purified by filtration through land. Therefore, whatever method of purification may be finally adopted, the precipitation works and the enlargement of the reservoir now resolved upon are not opposed to the recommendations of the Royal Commission. The Board does not take the view that the circumstance of a Local Government Bill being now before Parliament relieves the Board from the duty which devolves upon it, and which, moreover, has so frequently been urged upon it by the Government, of preventing the pollution of the River Thames by the discharge of crude sewage.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked, whether the House had not been led to understand that the Board would not undertake any fresh works, except those which were of a specially urgent nature?

MR. TATTON EGERTON: These works are of great urgent necessity.

MERCHANDIZE MARKS ACT— CUSTOM HOUSE DELAYS.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If, under the new Merchandize Marks Act, it is permissible for the Custom House authorities to delay cases of goods, send samples to the Board of Trade, and then forward the goods finally to consignees, without returning the samples subtracted for submission to the Board, thereby causing on some occasions a loss of several per cent on the value of the goods; and, if this is not permissible, how is the consignee to obtain redress, which is denied at present?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): No samples of goods detained under the Merchandize Marks Act have been forwarded by the Custom House authorities to the Board of Trade. It may be that the local Customs Authorities forwarded samples to the Board of Customs in London; but that, of course, has nothing to do with the Board of Trade.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—AN AMERICAN ZOLLVEREIN OR CUSTOMS UNION.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If his attention has been drawn to an Exchange Company's telegram of the 26th of April, dated Ottawa, April 26, to the following effect:—

> "That the Republics of Central and South America, Hayti, San Domingo, and the Brazilian Empire have decided to send delegates to Washington next April to attend a Convention having for its object the promotion of an American Zollverein or Customs Union, to the exclusion of the goods of other countries;"

and, if there is any truth in the statement; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Representatives in the Southern and Central American States have been requested to point out to the Governments to which they are accredited that in joining such a Customs Union, to the exclusion of the competition of other manufacturing countries other than the United States, they would act detrimentally to the interests of the trade of this country?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Man-

chester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government were informed in 1886 that such a scheme was spoken of, and inquiries were made in America about it. It assumed no definite shape, and we have received no recent information on the subject. Inquiries will now be made regarding it. I am afraid that if the scheme should be seriously contemplated, the Governments concerned will consider their national interests rather than those of British commerce.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—EXPENSES OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

LORD HENRY BRUCE (Wilts, Chippenham) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he is aware that the moneys of the ratepayers are being applied to the defence of the Metropolitan Board of Works before the Royal Commission; if so, whether those ratepayers, who are seeking to substantiate the very grave charges which they have felt it their duty to make against that Body, will not have the same privilege?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) (who replied) said: There is no precedent, so far as I am aware, for allowing the expenses of counsel appearing before a Royal Commission out of public funds. The legitimate expenses of witnesses called by the ratepayers will be defrayed by the Treasury out of moneys provided by Parliament. I am not aware that the Board of Works propose to pay their counsel out of the rates. If they do so, they must justify that expenditure under some statutory power.

EXCISE DUTIES (LOCAL PURPOSES) BILL—THE CART TAX—TRACTION-ENGINES.

MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will fix a maximum sum beyond which owners of traction-engines shall not be taxed, as is proposed in Clause 10 of the Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill in the case of livery stable keepers; whether, as under Clause 5 of that Bill the tax on trade carts is limited to the number of carts kept, he will propose a similar limitation in the case of trucks drawn by traction-engines; and, whether road steam rollers are to be taxed under the Bill?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): My answer to the first Question of the hon. Gentleman is, No. My answer to the second is also in the negative, though I think the point is a fair one for him to raise in Committee on the Bill. In answer to his third Question, I have to say that road steam rollers, if used solely for local public purposes, will not be liable to duty.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—SUFFOLK COUNTY COURTS.

MR. GREENE (Suffolk, Stowmarket) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will cause a Return to be made of all Courts holden by Sir Francis Roxburgh as the County Court Judge for Suffolk, distinguishing those held monthly from the bi-monthly Courts, and when the edict of the Lord Chancellor was given for the latter, how, and to whom; and, if, considering the increasing dissatisfaction that exists in the county, an official will be sent to the various districts to make inquiries and to gather evidence as to the accuracy of the reflective statements made against the Judge?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Lord Chancellor that he has no objection to giving the Return asked for by my hon. Friend. He is unable, however, to accede to the suggestion contained in the second paragraph of the Question; as, having regard to the circumstances of the case, he considers that to institute such an inquiry would be injurious to the Public Service, and unfair to the Judge himself.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—CRIMES ACT COURTS—RESIDENT MAGISTRATES.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will now communicate to the House what are the "certain principles" guiding the allocation of Resident Magistrates in trying cases under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887?"

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): As far as possible Resident Magistrates are not sent out of their division to serve on Crimes Act Courts. As far as possible no Resident Magistrate is required to sit on a Crimes Court in his own district. Resident Magistrates are not asked to serve in a judicial capacity in cases where they have acted in an executive capacity.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman, how it was that two Resident Magistrates were recently sent 50 or 60 miles to try a case under the Crimes Act; but when they got there it was found that neither possessed the legal knowledge of which the Lord Lieutenant would be satisfied?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The arrangements for sending Resident Magistrates are made by the Divisional Magistrate for the Division. Of course, when such a case occurs as that quoted by the hon. Gentleman, it shows that there must be some error in the constitution of the Court.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Cannot the right hon. Gentleman, in view of the fact that Resident Magistrates have to try cases in various parts of the country, suggest that there should be some change in their designation?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There does not appear to me to be anything in the name. As the hon. Member is aware, a Crimes Act Court must consist of two Resident Magistrates, and one of those obviously must serve out of his own district.

Mr. FLYNN: What I asked the right hon. Gentleman is, whether he cannot, by any means, alter the designation of these Resident Magistrates, in view of the fact that they adjudicate in every part of the country?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There does not appear to be anything in the name.

ARMY (INDIA)—CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS—ALLEGED CIRCULAR OF THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL.

Mr. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether, among the Papers he has received from India regarding the Contagious Diseases Acts, there is a Circular Memorandum, dated the 17th of June, 1886, from Major General E. F. Chapman, Quartermaster General in India, to the General Officers commanding Divisions and Districts; whether it states that it was written by order of General Sir Frederick Roberts, the Commander-in-Chief; whether, in furtherance of the instructions in such Memorandum, the officer commanding the 2nd Cheshire Regiment at Solon caused a requisition to be sent to the Cantonment Magistrate at Umballa, stating that the strength of the regiment was 400 men, and that six additional women were now required for it; whether, in remitting a copy of this on the 6th of August, 1886, to the Assistant Quartermaster General, the officer commanding the Cheshire Regiment wrote—

> "Some of the women now with the headquarters of the 2nd Batt. Cheshire Regiment are not very attractive, and application has been made to the Cantonment Magistrate, Umballa, for others, but up to date none have arrived; therefore it is presumed a great difficulty exists in procuring the class of young women asked for;"

and, has the 2nd Cheshire Regiment been specially singled out to be supplied with women in this way?

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, with respect to a Paper to which his attention has been called, which purports to be a copy of a Circular Memorandum issued from the Office of Quartermaster General in India, dated from the Army Head Quarters, Simla, the 17th of June, 1886, addressed to General Officers commanding Divisions and Districts, containing among others the following sentence:—

> "In the regimental bazaars it is necessary to have a sufficient number of women, to take care that they are sufficiently attractive, to provide them with proper houses, and, above all, to insist upon means of ablution being always available;"

and purporting to be signed by E. F. Chapman, Major General, Quartermaster General in India; and, whether he will at once telegraph to India to ascertain if such a document, or any document substantially of that character, has been issued from that or any other Government Office?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Perhaps the hon. Members will allow me to answer their Questions, as my hon. Friend is not able to be in his place to-night. The Under Secretary of State for India has already several times stated to the House that no such document has been received at the India Office, and that the Secretary of State has no information on the other allegations contained in the Question. He has already made the inquiry suggested by the hon. Member for the Hoxton Division of Shoreditch; but has not yet received a reply. The Questions imply a practice or system of providing women for the several regiments in India. To any such practice, if it exists, the Secretary of State is as entirely opposed as the hon. Members who have asked such Questions. It is, in his opinion, wholly indefensible; and the orders which he has sent out to the Government of India will effectually put an end to it if it exists.

Mr. JAMES STUART asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman meant that the Under Secretary of State had already telegraphed to India to ascertain whether the document was genuine or not?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: I must confine my answer to that which has been given to me by the Department. I think the answer I have given covers that Question.

Mr. JAMES STUART said, he desired to ask whether a definite document existed or not; and, if it existed, to ask that it might be laid on the Table of the House? He asked a Question yesterday on the same subject; and he received a private message from the Under Secretary of State that if he would put the Question again he would definitely state whether he would telegraph or not.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: Will the hon. Member be good enough to give Notice of that Question?

Mr. JAMES STUART wished to point out that that would put him off until Thursday. A discussion was to take place on Tuesday next on the subject, and it was most important to know, for the purposes of that discussion, whether the document was genuine or not. He begged to say that he had received the assurance he had mentioned from the Under Secretary of State; and he asked for a further assurance from him that a telegraphic despatch would be at once sent to ascertain the genuineness of the document. He would put the Question again on Thursday.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ASSAULT ON A POLICEMAN AT MACROOM.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Irwin, R.M., who acted as presiding magistrate, on giving the decision of the Bench in the case of "O'Shea *v.* Reardon," for an assault alleged to have been committed in Macroom, on the 8th of April last, is correctly reported to have stated, with respect to the meeting held on the occasion at issue, that he was not there to justify the magistrates who suppressed the meeting, but he even thought the meeting legal; whether it was clearly proved that O'Shea first struck Creedon; whether Mr. Irwin said that Creedon had no right to resist; whether it was on account of Creedon's superior strength he received the sentence of four months' imprisonment; whether it was proved that Creedon, after knocking O'Shea down, was attacked by nine or 10 policemen; whether it is correct that for several minutes they made no attempt to arrest him, but beat him with bâtons and fists; and, whether, under the circumstances, an inquiry will be made into the case, and the suppression of the meeting in question?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have caused a Report to be called for in regard to this Question, which is on today's Paper without previous Notice. A local reference has been found to be necessary; and I have, therefore, been unable to obtain the requisite reply.

MEDICAL ACTS AMENDMENT ACT, 1886—FOREIGN MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.

Mr. CALEB WRIGHT (Lancashire, S.W., Leigh) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether the Medical Acts Amendment Bill which passed in 1886, and provided for registering duly-qualified foreign medical practitioners, is now in operation, and whether the requisite forms will be supplied to those practitioners to fill up for registration; and, whether he can name the countries that are eligible to claim registration for their medical practitioners?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): The second part of the Act has only been applied to New Zealand and Ceylon. In regard to registration of foreign medical practitioners, Sections 11, 12, and 13 of the Act prescribe the exact course to be adopted.

THE FRANCHISE ACT (IRELAND)—REMUNERATION OF CLERKS OF UNIONS, &c.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Government intend to bring in their Bill for remuneration of Clerks of Unions and Poor Rate Collectors in Ireland for the compulsory duties imposed on them under the Franchise Act?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): It is impossible for me to add anything to the answer given on this subject by the Parliamentary Under Secretary some time ago.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—MONEY COLLECTIONS.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Metropolitan Board of Works made a bye-law on the 23rd of December, 1887, prohibiting under penalty

> "The soliciting or gathering money in or on the parks, commons, heaths, open spaces, embankments, and recreation grounds under the control of the Board from persons frequenting the same;"

whether he approved of this bye-law on the 25th of February, 1888; whether, in so approving, he understood that the bye-law would be applied to the case of the chairman of a public meeting asking for contributions to defray the costs of that meeting; and, whether he is aware that for a number of years public meetings have been held in Southwark Park on local and general questions, at which it has been the custom to make a collection to defray the expenses of the meeting, the balance, if any, being paid to some Charitable Institution.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The answer to the first two paragraphs is in the affirmative. I understood that the bye-law would be applied in the case of persons who, after addressing a meeting, solicited money from the audience and bystanders, a practice which, in the opinion of the Board, was not desirable at public meetings. I was told that on some occasions money had been so collected at meetings held in Southwark Park; but I was not informed of the purposes to which the collections were devoted. The bye-laws were duly advertised before being sanctioned, and no objections were received.

INDIA—AUTHORIZED PROSTITUTION.

MR. STANSFELD (Halifax) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, How soon he will be able to state to the House the steps which Her Majesty's Government are prepared to take to carry out in India the Resolution of this House of March 16, 1886, disapproving of the compulsory examination of women?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: The despatch which contained the full Report on this subject, for which the Secretary of State had asked, arrived from India a fortnight ago. The despatch is now before the Secretary of State in Council; and its consideration is proceeding with the utmost expedition consistent with due deliberation on so important a subject. The Under Secretary of State for India has every reason to believe that he will be able to make the statement asked for on Monday next.

Subsequently,

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, considering the promise made to the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. James Stuart) yesterday with regard to the sending of a message to India, he would himself undertake that that message should be sent to India?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I was under the impression that the answer given by my right hon. Friend (Sir James Fergusson) implied that that message had been sent. [*Cries of* "No!"] But he did not feel himself at liberty to go beyond the precise terms of the answer put into his hands. I will certainly undertake that the message shall be transmitted to India, if it has not been done already; but my belief is that it has been already done.

EXCISE DUTIES (LOCAL PURPOSES) BILL—EXEMPTIONS.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether before the second reading of the Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill he will lay upon the Table of the House a full statement of the exemptions from liability to taxation he is prepared to make.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The exemptions are in the Bill. There is nothing beyond them which I would propose. If the hon. Member applies his mind to it with impartiality I have no doubt he will discover what the exemptions are.

ADMIRALTY—INCREASED PAY TO SENIOR LIEUTENANTS.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, When it is proposed to commence paying the senior lieutenants of the Navy on the increased scale of pay provided for in the Estimates and promised in his Memorandum?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The improved scale of pay obtained for the senior lieutenants in the Navy will be paid from the 1st of April last.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—SENTENCE ON S. P. KINGSTON AND WIFE FOR FORCIBLE POSSESSION.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has seen the report in the London *Daily Telegraph* of the 3rd instant of proceedings under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," at Skibbereen on the 2nd instant, stating that a man named Samuel Paul Kingston, who is 80 years of age, and his wife, were brought before Messrs. Warburton and Major Caddell, Resident Magistrates, charged with taking forcible possession; that from the evidence it appeared that the defendants were evicted from their farm on the 20th of February last, and that they went back into one of the outhouses, and when asked to leave said they had no place to go but the roadside; that, notwithstanding the request of Dr. Lewis, J.P., the landlord, that the defendants might be dealt with leniently, and the entreaties of Mrs. Kingston to the magistrates not to send the old man to gaol for the first time in his life as he was very delicate, the Bench sentenced the old man to one month and his wife to a fortnight in Cork Gaol; and, whether, taking the circumstances into account, he will consider the propriety of advising the Lord Lieutenant to exercise his prerogative in this case, and remit the sentence on this old man and his wife?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I have not yet received a full Report in this case; but I gather that, with slight exceptions, the main statements contained in the Question are correct. I am making further inquiries into the matter.

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—DISTURBANCES AT CASTLEREA.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has seen a report in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 3rd instant, to the following effect, that—

> "In Castlerea, on Saturday last, on the occasion of Mr. John Fitzgibbon's trial, a number of little boys with whistles went through the town, the eldest not being over 14 years of age. One of the policemen, who were very excited, attacked a boy only 12 years old, and struck him with a bâton on the head, inflicting a severe wound. So much blood flowed, that it was deemed desirable to bring him to the barrack and have the wound washed before showing him to the magistrates;"

are the facts as stated; who was in command of the police, and were they ordered to charge the boys and bâton them; what was the result of this boy being brought before the magistrates; and, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the conduct of the police on this occasion?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Divisional Magistrate reports that the facts are not as stated in the Question. Nothing of the kind occurred on Saturday; but on Sunday night, April 29, a disorderly mob of between 30 and 40 men and boys paraded the streets of Castlerea shouting, yelling, and blowing tin whistles. As they passed the barrack the Head Constable with two constables went out and proceeded after them. On their approach the mob dispersed; but, collecting again, stoned the three policemen, who thereupon endeavoured to disperse them. A lad about 15 years old received a slight cut on his head, and was arrested almost simultaneously by the Head Constable. He was subsequently charged at Petty Sessions with being one of a disorderly and stone-throwing mob. He was bound over to come up for judgment if called upon within six months.

MR. CONYBEARE asked, would it not be possible to get Reports on these cases from impartial and independent authority?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) ELECTORS BILL — THE FRANCHISE.

MR. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether, under the burgess qualification in the Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill, miners and others occupying their employers' houses rent free or as part of their wages would be entitled to exercise the franchise for the election of Local Authorities?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): It is a question of fact in each case who are the occupiers; but if the houses occupied by the miners or other persons are separately rated to the poor, then, in my opinion, the occupiers will be entitled to exercise the franchise in question.

NAVAL AND MILITARY DEFENCES— THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the pledge given by him on the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) for a Royal Commission to inquire into the state of our Naval and Military Defences; in view also of the letter published in *The Times* of September 23, 1884, signed W. H. Smith, pressing for a searching inquiry into the state of the Navy, Her Majesty's Government will consent to re-consider the terms of the "Order of Reference" to the Royal Commission on Naval and Military Administration, so that the inquiry may embrace the reception of evidence from competent professional witnesses as to the sufficiency or otherwise of our existing Naval Force to meet the requirements of the Empire for the better enabling Her Majesty's Government to base their Naval policy upon fixed principles?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I stated on Thursday the circumstances under which the Reference to the Royal Commission had been somewhat narrowed from that which had been originally proposed. I should have been very glad if it had been possible to adhere to the letter of the proposed Reference; but after making every endeavour to do so the Government found themselves unable to constitute a Commission which would have reported within a reasonable time, and in adopting the course they had found themselves compelled to take they have not excluded an examination by some other method of the important questions which are omitted from the present Reference. My hon. and gallant Friend now asks if the inquiry to be conducted by my noble Friend the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) may be extended to the question of the sufficiency of our Naval Forces. In the debate, and in the terms of Reference as proposed in March, I insisted on the responsibility of the Government for the adequacy of the Forces of the country. I declined to include the question as one that could be submitted to a Commission; and I adhere to that view, accepting to the fullest extent the very heavy responsibility which, under our Parliamentary system, rests upon the Heads of the Departments and upon the Government as a whole. We have the advantage of the counsel and assistance in administration of eminent professional authorities, of which it is our duty to avail ourselves. We have not ceased to devote our anxious and careful attention to the development of the defensive resources of the country; and while we are prepared to maintain that great advances have been made during the last three or four years, we are not insensible to the duty of continued vigilance, and of persistence in a policy by which the available mechanical power of the country shall be used to make our strength at sea adequate to our responsibilities.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

In reply to Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.),

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, that he hoped to take the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Salary) Bill and the Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill on Monday next; but he would give a definite reply on Thursday.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) asked, in consequence of the answer of the Chief Secretary, Whether it was proposed to take the Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill before Thursday; because, if so, he thought there would be great inconvenience?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he feared the Bill could not be taken before Thursday in next week; but he would shortly make a statement as to the order of Business?

MOTIONS.

—o—

CORPORATION OF LONDON (MALVERSATION OF FUNDS).

RESOLUTION.

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) said, he rose for the purpose of calling attention to the Report of the City Corporation (Malversation of Funds) Committee, 1887; and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary, without delay, to place the expenditure of the Corporation of the City of London under similar statutory restrictions to those to which other Corporations in the Kingdom are subject."

Perhaps, in the first instance, it was desirable that he should shortly draw the attention of the House to what those statutory restrictions were. Before the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, all Corporations had been regarded as the owners of their property; but the effect of that Act was held to be to constitute them into trustees of such property only. That was supposed to be the effect of the 92nd section, and the 94th imposed a restriction upon their method of dealing with their property without the approval of the Treasury. The whole of the provisions of the Act in respect of property was re-enacted in the Consolidation Act of 1882, which was now the law. Under the last Act, all income from property was to be paid into the borough fund, and the borough fund was only applicable to certain purposes set out in the Act. This provision had been found to work satisfactorily in 246 boroughs which were at the present time placed under the provisions of the Act. With respect to the Corporation of the City of London, it was not, as the House was aware, under the Act of 1835. Lord John Russell promised in that year that it should be placed under a similar set of restrictions; but the promised Bill was not introduced, although no question was raised as to the propriety of placing the Corporation of London under the same control as other Corporations. In 1853, a Commission sat, which consisted of Sir George Cornewall Lewis, Mr. Justice Pattison, and Mr. Labouchere, to consider the question. That Commission recommended that the very thing should be done which he proposed to the House in his Resolution—namely, that the provisions as to expenditure of the Municipal Corporations Act should be applied to London. It was also suggested that there should be auditors with full powers of examination and disallowance. In the document supplied to hon. Members by the Corporation of the City of London in opposition to the present Motion, it was said that they published annually a fully audited account of their receipts, and that the members who disbursed the funds of the Corporation were accountable to their constituents. As one of the constituents in question, he could only say that he had never seen any fully audited accounts. The audit of the Corporation of London was of a kind which differed altogether from any other audit existing in this country. The City Livery Companies and the members of the City Guilds elected four men as auditors; but theirs was not analogous to other audits. The auditors could not verify the truth of the vouchers. City Committees were entitled to draw upon the Chamberlain by warrants; and, if the auditors saw the warrant, they were unable to go behind it. As a matter of fact, neither the auditors nor the Common Councilmen themselves were aware what the details of the expenditure were. He need scarcely say that, under those circumstances, there was no surcharge. In the evidence given before the Commission, it was said that in one instance an order was given for payment of £1,287 by the City Committee to one of its own members. In regard to that payment no details were given, according to the Remembrancer's own evidence. When asked whether the word of the member of the Committee was the only authority for the expenditure, the City Remembrancer replied — "Rather, I would say, the wish of the Committee." Now, the City of London had always claimed to be the absolute owners of their property, and no opportunity had ever been afforded for contesting what their position in that respect really was. They protested last year, before the Committee of this House, against the production of their accounts and their expenditure in connection with their estate, on the ground that it would be a derogation of the ancient rights and privileges of the Corporation and of the Livery. He supposed that they claimed to be in the same position as that in which they were previous to the passing of the Act of 1835. He knew of no decision, although there was a dictum of Lord Eldon on the matter, in which any Corporation before the Act was not entitled to regard itself as owner. The suggestion contained in his Resolution was that the Corporation of London should now be placed under the same restrictions as other Corporations. In their statement the City of London said that they differed from other Corporations, inasmuch as other bodies levied a borough rate which was restricted to the purposes for which that rate was levied. The 92nd section of the Act of 1835, and the corresponding section of the Act of 1882, provided that the income derived from all property should be applied to the purposes of the borough fund, and that all the property of the Corporation should be in the position of trust property. In their statement, the Corporation said something in regard to the word "malversation." Now, that word was one which was put in the Reference to the Committee last year. He did not know who put it in, and it was not in the terms of his Motion. It was difficult to see what would be malversation. The Corporation said that he had been unable to substantiate the charges he had made; but he was not responsible for the use of that word. The Report of the Committee last year deprecated the use of the term "malversation," but went on to say that the Corporation had from the earliest times freely expended the City cash without any control by Parliament, and that Parliament had never required any accounts to be rendered. That was quite true. Their Report went on to say that no conclusive judgment on the question of malversation could be arrived at except by a Court of Law. That undoubtedly was so, and he ventured to think the matter ought not to have been referred to a Committee at all. They said that he had failed in substantiating the charges he had made against the Corporation; but, as he had pointed out, he was not responsible for the use of the word "malversation." He thought that was an improper word to use. All that he said was that there was no proper control over the expenditure. Attention was called to this fact by the Commission which sat in 1853, and a year or two afterwards Sir George Grey's Government Bill came on for discussion. On that occasion it was asserted in regard to the large expenditure of the City Corporation that they declined to give any explanation of the expenditure, simply contenting themselves by saying that the money was judicially and fairly expended. As a matter of fact, the Court of Aldermen declined to give an account of the expenditure of the City cash, even to the Common Council. Before the inquiry of the Commission in 1853, the evil of the absence of public examination was forcibly shown, and it was because it was forcibly shown that the Committee practically recommended that there should be what he proposed to add—namely, statutory restrictions. There was evidence given of the expenditure of some thousands of pounds in opposing a Government Bill; and, further, that Petitions had been got up by the City officers to insure its defeat, the plea being that if the public were made aware of all the circumstances of the case, the opposition would be more effectual. Of course, that might or might not be so. His view of the case was that where a great Corporation spent large sums of money, as it was well known the City Corporation did, it was not a matter which should be affected by secret petitioning; but it was clearly the right of the House of Commons to insist upon the expenditure being made a matter of common knowledge. That state of things continued for some years. In 1884, there was a serious inquiry into the propriety of continuing the Coal and Wine Dues. Last year the Corporation endeavoured to develop a predominant opinion in favour of those dues, and a Petition was presented to the House signed by 93,000 persons in favour of the continuance of the dues. It would appear that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had suggested that unless there was a predominant public opinion in favour of the dues, the Government would seriously consider the question of continuing them. Accordingly, an endeavour was made to obtain a predominant public opinion, and the City Solicitor employed a man who employed other men to obtain signatures to a Parliamentary Petition. Upwards of 90,000 signatures passed through their hands in regard to which an expert declared his doubt whether a very large proportion were genuine at all. Not only was this scandal created, but it was found that all the expenditure in getting the Petition was paid out of the City cash. He therefore suggested that there ought to be that statutory control over the expenditure of the City cash which there was over the expenditure of other Corporations. He would give the House an illustration of what it was he desired to draw attention to in his Resolution. In 1882, in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, it was suggested that there should be an extension of municipal government in London. A Committee of the City Corporation was appointed to consider the question, and to do as they might deem expedient. That Committee had power to expend whatever money they thought fit. As a matter of fact, they did expend £19,550, but no Report was ever presented to the Common Council, and every application made for it had been in vain. Last year an inquiry into the action of the Committee was decreed by the House on account of the discovery, or production of the copy of a book, of one of the Associations which had worked with the City officers. That book was printed at the end of the Report of the Committee, and it justified every statement he had made.

Admiral FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said, he rose to Order. He wished to know whether an hon. Member was allowed to read his speech? He had been keeping his eye on the hon. Member for Dundee (Mr. Firth), and he appeared to be reading every word.

Mr. FIRTH said, he would hand his notes to the hon. and gallant Member.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! It is a well-established Rule of the House that a Member may refer to notes in order to refresh his memory, but he must not read his speech.

Mr. FIRTH said, that at the close of his speech he would hand his notes to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, if he wished to have them, and the hon. and gallant Gentleman would then be able to see whether he had been reading his speech or not. As a matter of fact, he had not read a single sentence except what was contained in the Report of the Committee, and he was going to show from the Report that an improper use had been made of a portion of the funds in the hands of the City Corporation. As he had pointed out, there had been an expenditure of £19,550 by the Committee which was appointed by the Corporation to examine into the question of the extension of municipal government to London. Of that sum £14,139 was expended in 1884, and it was expended in a very remarkable way. It was expended in circulating pamphlets, and there were some very remarkable pamphlets circulated. For instance, every vestryman in London received a pamphlet of 89 pages, entitled *Centralization knocked into a cocked hat, or Firth dissected*, and this was paid for by the City Corporation. Some of the money was expended in a movement which suddenly grew up in favour of obtaining Charters for various London constituencies. This movement was conducted in so subtle a manner as to deceive even the very elect, for the First Lord of the Treasury attended a Charter meeting at Westminster in connection with which more than £50 were spent for the purpose of providing an audience. The statement with regard to the Greenwich Charter was of a still more remarkable character. The Committee endeavoured to get some evidence in regard to that expenditure, but they were told that all the documents had been destroyed. In answer, however, to several questions, it was admitted that money was paid to induce persons to promote the Charter.

A considerable sum was paid for getting up Petitions; but, perhaps, the most remarkable phase the position assumed was the establishment of associations apparently *bonâ fide* for the purpose of obstructing reform. Six associations were established, and the City spent a large sum in advertising their proceedings, £2,341 having been spent in advertisements only in the course of two months. The Committee very naturally reported that this expenditure was extravagant and excessive. The particular matter which led to the appointment of the Committee was specially inquired into—namely, a grant to a particular association of a sum of £3,950. This money was paid to the City Solicitor, and paid by him into his banking account, whence it was drawn out in cash and paid to other agents. For some reason or other no copy of the cash account in connection with these items had been produced. Probably, it was thought that the matter would never come within the public knowledge, although, as a matter of fact, it did leak out. Some remarkable evidence was given as to conferences being called. At one of them only five men attended, although the conference had been largely advertised. Evidence was given of meetings having been held at which the secretary admitted everyone who presented himself, and all who attended were paid. The chairman, the various speakers, and the movers of amendments, it would appear, were always paid. The promoters of the anti-reform movement even arranged some meettings purporting to be in favour of reform; but it was carefully arranged that there should be a majority on the other side. One great meeting, of which the hon. Baronet the Member for the City (Sir Robert Fowler) had spoken, was held in the Guildhall. That meeting, described as one of bankers and merchants, was alluded to in the appendix to the Report of the Select Committee in one single line, "130 men at 5*s*., £32 10*s*." That was a meeting held within the sacred precincts of Guildhall; but it was stated that the City Solicitor expressed an opinion that 5*s*. was too much to give to each man for attending a Guildhall meeting. There was a good deal of evidence given as to the character of the associations which were established, and the Committee reported with respect to this matter as follows:—

> "Your Committee further consider the system of subsidising so-called political associations, such as the Metropolitan Ratepayers' Protection Association, to have been improper on the part of a public body. The practice of placing corporate funds at the disposal of irresponsible and unknown persons was calculated to mislead Parliament by the appearance of an active and organized public opinion which might in reality have no existence. The improper use of a portion of the funds derived from the City estate under the authority of the Special Committee of the Corporation has been proved."

It would, however, appear, from the City statement, that the Corporation regarded the Report of the Committee as an acquittal. He would not quarrel with them upon that matter, but he confessed that it did not strike him as an acquittal. In his opinion, the Corporation ought to be put under the same statutory control as other Corporations, because the course they had pursued in regard to the presentation of Petitions to that House, and in respect of other operations—such as their opposition to the Bill of 1884—were matters of public notoriety. He would give another illustration in justification of his assertion that those who lived in London had the right to object to be governed by a Corporation which made such an improper use of the City money as this Corporation had undoubtedly done. The case had come under his own notice. In the year 1885 he was a Member of the Telephone Committee of that House. That Committee reported on the 12th of May. On the 21st of May, in the Common Council, a question was put by an inquiring member of the name of Sly, as to whether the Streets Committee proposed to spend Whitsuntide in Paris, and there was great difficulty in extracting an answer. In the end, an answer was extracted, and it was to the effect that the Streets Committee were going to see the telephone wires in Paris themselves, because it would cost a great deal more to employ experts. Moreover, it was said that the Parliamentary Committee would not take second-hand evidence. The result was that on the 22nd of May, 1885, the Streets Committee of the Corporation, at a cost of £500, went to Paris to see the telephone system in operation there, in order that they might give evidence before a Select

Committee, which had already reported 10 days before. It was suggested that it was desirable to continue the expenditure of the money of the Corporation for the general public interest. It was contended that audited accounts were periodically supplied. He held one of those accounts in his hand, and it afforded another illustration of the way in which the Corporation dealt with these matters. He found that in connection with the matter affecting the whole of the police area over which the Coal and Wine Dues were collected, a sum of £600 had been expended in visiting the boundaries of the coal and wine area. It would appear that last year a sum of £5,000 was expended in refreshments for the Committee, in addition to which a considerable sum was expended upon trips up the river in an ancient barge, called *The Maria Wood.* If everything done over every square mile was to be done at the same rate of expenditure, the feeding of Committees alone would cost a sum of £250,000 sterling. All he maintained was that whether this expenditure was sanctioned by long precedent and usage or not, it ought to be made a matter of the same statutory control as other Corporations. He had only one word more to say in respect of this question, and he would then cease to trouble the House. The Corporation had published an account of their good works. He had never denied that the Corporation had done some good works; but that fact by no means constituted a sufficient answer to his case. He had never said that they were unrighteous altogether, and he regretted that they should have found it necessary to go back as far as the 17th century in order to show what noble work they had performed, and how well it had been done. The Corporation said they had done much more, and had done it better than the Metropolitan Board of Works. Among other works, they set forth that they had expended £20,000 upon the purification of the Thames. Yes; but the Metropolitan Board of Works had not spent a sum of £20,000 in showing that their work had been done properly. It was suggested that the Corporation expended money for charitable purposes. That was beyond all doubt They maintained an excellent library, as he himself knew. Further, the Corporation claimed that it was their business to discharge the duties of national hospitality. He agreed with that view to a large extent, but the Resolution did not propose that there should be no more cakes and ale, and no more hospitality to anybody. In the 28th section of the Bill of 1884 it was proposed that the Corporation of London, which was to be a larger body, or at any rate was to possess a larger jurisdiction, should have the power of entertaining strangers, and conferring the freedom of the City upon distinguished persons; and, further, that the Corporation should be entitled to contribute to charitable objects, such as education and in providing schools, and that it should have power to institute and defend legal proceedings for the protection of the interests of the City. Therefore, the propositions contained in that Bill covered the whole ground of objection which the City took in this part of their statement. He admitted that the Corporation—or somebody in their stead—should have the right to entertain hospitably people who came from a distance; but even that right ought to be under some control. Not long ago the City gave a banquet and a ball, on which the sum of £903 was spent by a Corporation on *menu* cards and ball tickets, and £145 on gloves, perfumery, and hair-brushes. Surely, such sums were far too large, and would never be incurred by a reformed Corporation which was placed under statutory restrictions. If Her Majesty's Government proposed next year to deal with this question of the government of the City in the sense of putting it on the same lines as other Corporations, he thought he should be justified in withdrawing the Resolution; but if the Government had no proposal to make in regard to the matter, then he would venture to suggest that his proposition might be fairly conceded that the City of London should be placed on the same lines as other Municipal Corporations. At present there was no power to prevent the Corporation from doing the things which he had pointed out; and, unfortunately, a Corporate Body frequently did things which a man in an individual capacity would never dream of doing. Lord Coke said, 300 years ago—"Corporations cannot commit treason, or be outlawed, or excommunicated, for they have no souls." This expenditure, however, could be controlled, and he maintained that it would be for the advantage of the people of London and for the Corporation itself that the expenditure of the City should be placed under the same statutory restrictions as had been successfully imposed in the the case of every other Corporation in the Kingdom. He begged to move the Resolution which stood in his name.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) said, he rose for the purpose of seconding the Motion; and he was very glad indeed that the hon. Member for Dundee (Mr. Firth) had brought the matter before the House. He failed to see why the inquiry which took place last year had not been followed up by some action on the part of Parliament. In regard to the Motion which he had brought before the House last year, and the inquiry which subsequently took place as to the conduct of the Corporation with reference to the Bill for its reform, every statement he had made had been verified by the Report of the Committee. The hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler) at first characterized his charges as anonymous tittle-tattle. It was, however, a singular fact that the Inquiry conducted upstairs, by very able Members of the House, proved that every statement he had made was substantially true. He had been aware of the responsibility he incurred when he introduced the subject, and when he mentioned the fact that £19,550 10*s*. 10*d*. had been expended by the committee appointed by the Corporation to examine into the question of the extension of municipal government to London, it was proved that he was correct, even to the 10*s*. 10*d*. Some hours were spent by the Corporation, when before the Committee, in trying to prove that at least £200 might be struck off that bill; but he thought the House would agree with him that even if £200 had been struck off, he had fairly proved his case before the Committee. But, as a matter of fact, the £200 were retained, notwithstanding all that was said and done; and it stood in the Report of the Committee that all the items he had mentioned were accurate. One paragraph contained in the Report deserved to be quoted. It stated—

> "The items are correctly given in the Memorandum furnished by Mr. Howell, and printed in the Appendix,"

That Memorandum was the report in *Hansard* of the statements he had made in the House. The Committee went on to say—

> "Your Committee have gone through every item, and found them all debited to the City fund."

He wished to call the attention of the hon. Baronet the Member for the City to that fact, because he had himself described the statements that were made as "anonymous tittle-tattle," although he was a member of the special committee of the Corporation, had attended its sittings on many occasions, and ought to have known what was being expended by the Corporation. Although the hon. Baronet characterized the statements as "anonymous tittle-tattle," it was distinctly stated by the Select Committee that, as far as the City accounts were concerned, every item had been carefully identified. There was another statement in the Report which deserved to be quoted, especially as there were some hon. Members who sat upon the Select Committee present in the House. The Committee stated in their Report—

> "The classification of items was, on the whole, accurately summarized by Mr. Howell in his speech in the House of Commons."

The words of the Committee were "on the whole." He should have thought that the Committee, after having identified every item, might have left out that particular expression "on the whole," because it was not only "on the whole," but every individual item brought before the House in his speech had been traced and identified before the Select Committee. He would recall to the House the terms of his Motion last year, because he desired distinctly to show the position in which he stood in regard to the matter. In the course of his speech on that occasion he had never once used the term "malversation." He had carefully avoided that term, because he knew that it was a technical term, and one that was very difficult indeed to substantiate. Unfortunately it dropped into the Resolution subsequently proposed, and, therefore, he had to take, and did take, the responsibility for the use of the term. He was quite aware that the Committee had exonerated the City Corporation from malversation. Very well, he accepted that exoneration; but, after all, the

Committee itself showed that a large amount of money had been spent wrongly, and he was perfectly satisfied with that result, notwithstanding the fact that the Select Committee exonerated the City from the charge of malversation, so far as the technical use of that term was concerned. He had certainly never meant to fasten a charge of malversation upon the City Committee, and the hon. Baronet the Member for the City knew very well that in the statement he made to the House he declined to fasten upon the Committee as a whole, or any individual Member of it, any charge of a criminal nature. What he maintained then, and maintained now, was that a large amount of the public money belonging to the City had been employed in a manner in which it ought not to have been employed, and in that respect the Select Committee had supported his statement. He had asserted in his speech that a considerable sum of money was spent in getting up bogus movements. He would ask the House, and any hon. Member on either side of the House who had read the Report of the Committee and the evidence given before the Committee, whether it was not absolutely proved up to the hilt that bogus movements were got up and paid for by the City funds for the purpose of influencing the decision of the House. But, although hon. Members as sensible and business men must have been aware that these bogus movements might have been got up for a particular purpose, they did not know that the agitation was to be followed up by action of a much more serious character—namely, the manufacture of bogus Petitions. Hon. Members would, perhaps, remember a curious and somewhat solemn scene which was enacted in the House when a youth was reprimanded at the Bar of the House for the part he had taken in regard to those Petitions. What he maintained was that instead of reprimanding that youth, the men who were themselves responsible, who had hired him and paid him for his services, ought to have been reprimanded, and something more. All that the Resolution asked was that in the future the public money should be expended in such a way as to reflect credit and honour upon the municipality which expended it. He did not think that that was asking very much. The Corporation of the City of London certainly deserved to be reformed more than any other Corporation in the Kingdom. It required reformation at the time the Municipal Corporations Act was passed more than any other Corporation in the land, and certainly it required it no less now than it did then. If any Corporation had ever spent money in a corrupt way, if he might use the term not in an offensive but in a modified sense, that Corporation was the City of London. He used the word "corrupt" to cover, at any rate, the bogus movements to which he had referred, and which were alluded to in the Report of the Select Committee; he used the term "corrupt" to show in what way the money belonging to the Corporation of the City of London was spent, tens of thousands of forged signatures having been sent into that House for the purpose of influencing the decision of Parliament. He said to the honour and credit of the Corporation of London that it had a history in many particulars of which it had a right to be proud, and, therefore, it ought to be the first to welcome such a reformation as would put it on a par, at any rate, with all the other and more healthy municipalities of the United Kingdom. His desire was that the Corporation of the City of London should be a Corporation worthy of its position and worthy of its great name. He wished to see that Corporation expend its vast funds in such a manner that the expenditure could not be called in question in that House, but in a way that would redound to the honour and credit of the City. Instead of striving to retard the day when it must be brought under the operation of the Municipal Corporations Act, the Corporation should be the first to request the House to place it under the provisions of that law. He called upon the Government, especially now that they were doing something for the reform of local government in the country, to do something with regard to the Corporation of the City of London. He called upon the Government to assist hon. Members on that side of the House in endeavouring to purify the Corporation of the City of London, and bring some kind of influence to bear upon it, so that the vast sums of money committed to its care should, in future, be expended on worthy objects. He supported the Motion of his hon. Friend because he believed that it would be for the advantage of this great City. Not of the City of London merely that covered the one square mile which had been alluded to, but that larger City, that greater London which they had to deal with, that London comprising 4,000,000 of inhabitants over which the Lord Mayor and Corporation ought to feel pride in governing. He asked that the Government should take some steps, either in connection with the Local Government Bill, or by some independent measure, to bring the Corporation of the City of London within the Municipal Corporations Act, as was proposed in the Resolution. He had great pleasure in seconding the Resolution which had been moved by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dundee.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary, without delay, to place the expenditure of the Corporation of the City of London under similar statutory restrictions to those to which other corporations in the Kingdom are subject."—(*Mr. Firth.*)

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham) said, the hon. Member for Dundee had, in the course of the last fortnight, substituted an entirely different Motion for that which he had originally placed upon the Order Book of the House, and which had remained there for something like four weeks. He supposed that the hon. Gentleman had in the interval read the Report on which his original Motion was to have been based, and finding that he could not make good out of that Report the very violent terms in which it was framed he had suddenly withdrawn it, and had now placed on the Notice Paper and moved that afternoon a totally different issue. It seemed to be rather a reckless and unfair way of making an accusation against either a public body or an individual to put a Notice on the Paper, and leave it there for four weeks, charging the Corporation with scandalous and corrupt expenditure, and then, after reading the Report and finding that he could not make good his accusations, to withdraw the Motion and substitute a totally different one. Why had not the hon. Member for Dundee stood to his guns? It was because he knew that on the face of the Report he could not make good the terms of his original Motion. If the hon. Member had never intended to take the opinion of the House on that Motion, he ought not to have allowed it to stand for four weeks on the Order Book. The hon. Member asked the House that afternoon to submit the management of the City estate to the restrictions of the Municipal Reform Acts of 1835 and 1882. There was in the City, as most hon. Members were aware, a trust estate, the disposition of which was strictly bound down by trust deeds which confined it to City purposes. There was, besides, an estate which brought in an income of £350,000 called the City Cash, which was spent at the direction of the Corporation. He would here observe that the Corporation were not answerable at all for the expenditure of that money to the House, but to their constituents, the ratepayers who elected them annually by a most democratic suffrage. What he wanted more particularly to impress upon hon. Gentlemen was that the Motion of the hon. Member for Dundee, if carried, would have precisely the reverse effect of that which he imagined the hon. Gentleman and the Members of the Municipal Reform League intended. Perhaps he did the hon. Member and his coadjutors injustice—perhaps he misconstrued their motives; but he had always imagined that the object of the Municipal Reform League was to get at the coffers of the City, or, at any rate, to diffuse the revenue of the Corporation over a wider area. But the effect of this Motion and the effect of applying the restrictions of the Municipal Reform Acts to the City estate would have exactly the opposite result. The effect of applying them to the City Cash and making the Corporation trustees instead of owners would be to confine the expenditure of the City Cash strictly within the limits of that celebrated "square mile," in which the distempered imagination of the Municipal Reform League had pictured a perpetual carnival. Under the Municipal Reform Act of 1882, by Sections 143 and 149 the whole of the income of municipal boroughs, whether derived from real or personal property, was carried to what was called the borough fund, and out of that fund was paid the expense of preparing the Burgess List, of maintaining the corporate buildings, and of defraying other expenses incurred under the direction of the Council for the public benefit of the inhabitants and the improvement of the borough. Now, the City was about to be made a Quarter Sessions borough, and the only effect of applying to the City estate the restrictions of the Municipal Reform Act would be absolutely to limit the expenditure of the present to the area of what was called the City proper. Was that the object of the hon. Gentleman opposite and the Municipal Reform League? It was certainly not his (Mr. Baumann's) object, nor was it the object of hon. Gentlemen who sat around him. As a Metropolitan Member, he frankly admitted that he was rather anxious under the new system of Local Government that the County Council for London should get some assistance from the City Cash of the Corporation, and he hoped that in the future the City Cash would continue to contribute as in the past to public schemes for the advantage of the Metropolis. The hon. Member had made very light of the charitable expenditure of the Corporation, but he would like to ask who it was who purchased and obtained for the London public the use of Epping Forest. The City Corporation out of the City estate spent more than £33,000 in fighting 12 Chancery suits, and in buying out the Lords of the Manor in Epping Forest, and it was that expenditure which established the rights of the London public to use that forest. Then again, the City Corporation, out of the City Cash, had purchased and presented to the public Burnham Beeches; they had, in connection with the Metropolitan Board of Works, freed the bridges over the Thames and erected Holborn Viaduct, and they had made themselves liable for the construction of the new Tower Bridge over the Thames; and the City Corporation, out of the City Cash, were, at this moment, spending over £6,000 a-year for port sanitary regulations over an area extending from the Nore to Staines. He maintained that these were all objects of public utility and advantage on which the City Cash of the Corporation had been expended. But if the House adopted the present Resolution and imposed the restrictions of the Municipal Reform Acts upon the City estate in future, all expenditure of that kind would be prevented, and the City Cash would be restricted to the area of the City proper. Turning to the Report of the Select Committee, he really wondered the hon. Member for Dundee had had the hardihood to refer to that Report, for a more crushing reply to the attacks made upon the Corporation last year than that Report it was difficult to imagine. The Report said that the question of malversation or whether the City had a legal right to expend the City Cash for the purpose of defending its own existence was one for a Court of Law. The hon. Member for Dundee said that he was not responsible for the word "malversation" in the reference to the Committee. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) was responsible for it, however, and the reply of the Committee was that the charge of malversation had not been established. In the final paragraph of the Report, the Committee said that in their opinion the charge of malversation had not been established, but that an improper use of a portion of the funds belonging to the City estate had been proved. That there had been an improper, foolish, and ridiculous expenditure of City Cash, he did not suppose that anybody would be found to deny. He did not believe that the hon. Members for the City would deny it. He quite concurred in the finding of the Committee; and in looking over some of the items nothing had surprised him more than to find the astonishingly generous patronage of literature in which the Corporation indulged. He found, for instance, on page 7, that Mr. Lea, as the author of a pamphlet, had received £50. £50 for a pamphlet on the Corporation of London! Why, he believed that that was more than an ex-Cabinet Minister got for an article on the gods of Olympus. Then he found that very versatile gentleman, Mr. Frank Hugh O'Donnell, formerly a Member of the House, contrived a double debt to pay, for having denounced the Corporation by day as devoted to the consumption of turtle and Madeira, he wrote a pamphlet in their defence by night, for which he received 40 guineas, the Corporation evidently appreciating the maxim that a soft answer in the shape of a large cheque turneth away wrath. Then Dr. Charles Mackay, the compiler, he believed, of a book called *1,001 Gems of Poetry*, received 50 guineas. No doubt a poem on the hon. Baronet and the Corporation must be a gem of purest ray serene. All this expenditure every one admitted was very foolish, extravagant, and absurd; but surely it was not criminal or wicked, and he was entitled to ask who were the accusers of the Corporation in this matter? First, there was the hon. Member for Dundee who had registered an oath—he was afraid not in Heaven—to destroy the Corporation, and to divide its substance among the members of the Municipal Reform League. It was amusing to watch the deadly animus with which the hon. Member hunted the Corporation with mortal Amendments through clauses of the Local Government Bill. He really thought that upon any question in which the Corporation of London was concerned the hon. Member might be put aside as a fanatic and a zealot. Then there was the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell), who, he was afraid, could hardly be regarded as a zealot, because it appeared from the evidence of the hon. Member for Dundee before the Committee that at the time of the transactions complained of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green was the organizer of the Municipal Reform League, and was receiving remuneration for his services. Therefore, he did not think the hon. Member was exactly the person to lead the attack against the Corporation of London in this matter. Then there were the two hon. Members for Northampton. With regard to the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), perhaps the hon. Member would forgive him if he said his blade was somewhat blunted by constant and indiscriminate hacking at everybody and everything; while the *prestige* of the hon. Gentleman's Colleague, the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), as a public accuser, had been a little dimmed by a recent decision in a Court of Law. He believed the hon. Member had promised to prove most astonishing things against the hon. Baronet the Member for the City, and he wondered whether the evidence of the hon. Member would be of the same kind as that by which he attempted to prove his charge that Lord Salisbury had subsidized rioters in Trafalgar Square. It was perfectly absurd and ridiculous to see these hon. Gentleman turning up their eyes in pious horror at the idea of packed meetings in London, as if they had never heard of "Dilke's Lambs," or of the 12 "honest but powerful" men described by the Report as constituting the body guard of the hon. Member for Dundee. Why the hon. Member for Dundee was the oldest hand at packing a meeting in London, and the most successful. There was no crime in packing a meeting that he knew of. It was a melancholy truth that all the agitation about the whole question of the reform of London Government on both sides, on the side of the Municipal Reform League and on that of the Corporation, with their hired stewards and Petitions at street corners—it was a melancholy truth that there was no real genuine opinion in London at all. With the exception of a few interested parties on both sides, and a few mercenaries, he was afraid that the large majority of Londoners did not care a row of pins whether they had one municipality or 10 or 20. When there was no genuine public opinion on a question of this nature there was always an irresistible temptation for interested parties to create a spurious public opinion by that kind of agitation which could always be bought for money, and both the Corporation and the Municipal Reform League had succumbed to that temptation. They had both been guilty of conducting an agitation which he ventured to say would have been impossible in any other town in the Kingdom. The only difference between the Municipal Reform League and the Corporation of the City of London was that the Corporation, being a *quasi*-public body, presented an easy mark for attack by a Motion of this kind. Three times the Legislature had refused on three historical occasions to submit the Corporation of the City of London to the restrictions of the Municipal Reform Acts. Lord John Russell, in introducing the Municipal Reform Act in 1835, made no allusion whatever to the City of London, and when he was afterwards questioned on the subject by a Member of the House of Commons he said, that he would introduce a separate Bill for the purpose of dealing with the City of London. But he never did so, and, as far as could be gathered from *Hansard*, no subsequent allusion was made to the City of London. Then there was a Bill passed in 1872, called Leeman's Act, dealing with the expenditure of borough funds, and promoting and opposing Bills upstairs. The Party opposite was in power at that time, and for a second time the City of London was left outside the operation of the Municipal Reform Acts. Finally, there was a Municipal Reform Act of 1882, a consolidating Act introduced again by the Party opposite when they were in power, and for the third time the City of London was left out of the operation of these restrictive Acts. That being so, he asked the House, seeing that on three occasions the Legislature had refused to include the City within the purview of these Acts, not to place the restrictions proposed upon the expenditure of the City estate. He asked the House not to consent to the Motion at the instigation and interested suggestion of a disappointed rival, and to the general prejudice of the Metropolitan public.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he had listened attentively to the debate, and could not altogether congratulate the Corporation upon the line of defence adopted by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Peckham Division of Camberwell (Mr. Baumann). He (Sir George Trevelyan) had carefully taken a note of the points of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and he would proceed to deal with each of them in a very few words before he came to the substance of the Motion. In the first place the hon. and learned Gentleman charged the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundee (Mr. Firth) with having altered his Motion. Now, he was bound to say, that he had not read the Motion until it appeared on the Paper that day; but taking the description given of it, by the hon. and learned Gentleman, that the Motion in its original shape charged the Corporation with having been guilty of scandalous and corrupt expenditure, after the way in which the expenditure had been described he could not see that those epithets, if they had been applied to it, would have been very much too strong. The next point of the hon. and learned Member was that if this Motion were carried, and the City funds were brought under statutory restrictions, those funds could no longer be applied to anything but the absolute purposes of the City. He did not think there was anything in that argument. If the City funds were to be brought under statutory restrictions, it was obvious that that must be done by statute. Whatever scope Parliament wished to give to the Corporation in the public spirit and generous use they made of their funds, that scope would undoubtedly be given by the statute. At all events, when the expenditure of their funds was brought under statutory restrictions, there would be an end of the expenditure, which he would not call scandalous, but the nature of which he would describe in the course of his remarks. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman took to making fun of the Report and evidence laid before the House by the Select Committee; but he (Sir George Trevelyan) was inclined to think that this was a matter which must be met with something more than jokes. It was by no means a laughing matter, and he did not think it would be a laughing matter in the estimation of the great majority of the inhabitants of London. As a Londoner who had lived for two-thirds of his life as an inhabitant of the Metropolis, he protested against the description which the hon. and learned Gentleman had given of his own constituents and those of many other hon. Members of the House. The only defence of the Corporation made by the hon. and learned Member was that he had really nothing to say in its favour. He allowed that the expenditure, even in his eyes, was ridiculous, improper, and foolish; but he added that there was so little public spirit in London on the question of Municipal Reform, that the Metropolis deserved such a Corporation as it had got.

Mr. BAUMANN: I did not say that.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN said, the hon. and learned Member had said that there was very little public spirit in London.

Mr. BAUMANN: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I did not say that. I said that on the question of Municipal Reform, there was no genuine public opinion in London.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN said, he would interpret that to mean if there was no interest in Municipal Reform in a great City like London, there was a sad lack of public spirit among the inhabitants. He (Sir George Trevelyan) did not belong to the Party which commanded the majority of the representation of London, but the reason why his Party was beaten at the Elections in London was that a genuine public opinion did exist there, and that genuine public opinion was Conservative. It was quite time to take this question up in the House of Commons. Half a century ago Parliament proceeded on certain lines. They reformed all the Corporations of the Kingdom except London. What led to this reform was the abuse of corporate funds; and, therefore, in every town except the City of London these funds were placed in such a position that Parliament might have a supervision in regard to them, and every Member of Parliament had a right to know how every penny arising from municipal estates was expended, except in the single case of the City of London. There could be only two adequate reasons why the property of the Corporation of London should be excepted. One was that the amount was so small that it was not worth regarding. There were only four leading towns in which the income from corporate property reached five figures. In Bristol it was £24,000, in Liverpool £61,000, in Sheffield £17,000, and in Newcastle £24,000. But the annual income of the City of London derived from municipal property was upwards of £350,000. The only other reason for excepting the City which would hold water was that its property was managed with greater propriety and carefulness than that of any other Corporation. How the £350,000 was spent behind the scenes we had no means of judging. We had no Parliamentary supervision of control. All we could have was a side-light occasionally thrown in. Such a side-light we had now. There had been an inquiry which the City, through the mouth of its Town Clerk, had pronounced fair and impartial; and the result made it plain that the standard of public morality and the sense of responsibility in dealing with public money were not as high in the City as he was thankful to believe they were in all the open Corporations. A great deal had been made of the fact that the charge of malversation had not been proved. He supposed that meant that the Corporation in what they did were not acting in an illegal manner. No, they were acting in a perfectly legal manner; and that was the reason why the matter was brought before Parliament. If they were acting illegally it would have been brought before another Court. The Report of the Committee was that, in view of the whole circumstances of the case, the charge of malversation had not been sustained, but that "improper use of a portion of the funds derived from the City's estate had been proved." If that would not justify the intervention of Parliament, he did not know what would. Immense sums of public money had been spent in falsifying and doctoring public opinion. He was not going to make any personal charges. The Committee allowed that the expenditure of a very large sum on getting up petitions was morally as well as legally in the right of the Corporation; the more so as it was alleged that the object was to ascertain that only genuine ratepayers had signed the petition; and they said that, although the expenditure on advertisements was extravagant and excessive, there were no serious evils connected with it which it was necessary for the House to take cognizance of. But they added—

> "Your Committee are also of opinion that no proper supervision was maintained over the agents employed by the Corporation, and that much of the money which passed through their hands was used for improper and indefensible purposes."

The Committee also considered the subsidies to so-called political associations, such as the Metropolitan Ratepayers' Protection Association, were improper, and they condemned the practice of placing funds at the disposal of irresponsible persons. The action of the committee of the Corporation in sending bodies of men in great numbers to form public meetings and to pass resolutions which would appear to proceed from the great body of the unpaid citizens of London was wholly indefensible. When the advocates of reform called public meetings, a great number of those hirelings were sent to them, and that important officer, the City Remembrancer, was cognizant of such infamous proceedings. That officer said there was one meeting in Kensington Town Hall to which they did undoubtedly send a large number of people. It was advertised as an open meeting to discuss the question of Municipal Reform, and Sir Charles Dilke was to be chairman and the principal speaker, and enormous numbers of hired people were sent from all parts of London to falsify the opinion of that meeting. The dangers of such a course were so obvious that he could not imagine how a responsible Body like the Corporation of London could have sanctioned it for a moment. Consider what must be the class of human beings who took shillings and half-crowns night after night, and who lived in idleness during the day and took this money at night for such a purpose, and think what chance was there that the business of public meetings could be carried on by them in the manner in which they were usually conducted by respectable citizens? Actually, sovereigns had to be paid at one of their own meetings, because such a row was made that they could not go on with the business until their own hirelings had been induced by higher pay to go away. What were the sums spent on this precious machinery? Upwards of £3,000 was paid to a Mr. Wragg alone, who got £500 for himself, and the business of this man was to get up sham meetings in defence of the Corporation. A sum of nearly £1,300 was also paid to a Mr. Stoneham, upwards of £1,600 to a Mr. Palmer, and nearly £3,000 to a Mr. Johnson. And the Select Committee reported that in his hands the practice of which he had spoken assumed proportions which were hardly consistent with public safety. This Johnson had endeavoured to persuade a gentleman to subscribe to the Ratepayers' Defence Association, promising that if he put down his name for £100, he (Mr. Johnson) would provide the £100 out of the Corporation funds. This had been under the notice of the Committee, and one member had spoken sharply to Johnson about it. But what were they to think of the Corporation who, when they knew that this man had been guilty of this indescribable action, still continued to employ him and entrusted him with large sums of public money? It was said that this money and this machinery had been employed in counteracting the Municipal Reform League, and that that body was as bad as the Corporation. He must say he had never heard of such a case of abusing the plaintiff's attorney when you had no case of your own as the charge made by the hon. Member for the Peckham Division of Camberwell against the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) and the hon. and learned Member for Dundee (Mr. Firth). These charges had been so vague and were put forward in a manner so unworthy of this important and serious debate that he would prefer to leave them alone. Parliament had no cognizance of the Municipal Reform League, which was a private body, and one with which they had nothing to do; but the Corporation of London was a public Body, and in the disposal of its funds and the method in which it disposed of them, he maintained that it had forfeited the privilege, which up to this time it had retained, of being the only Corporation whose corporate property was not subject to the purview of Parliament. It might be said that the Corporation of London had not been in fault, and that they expressed regret when the matter was brought to their notice. He was sorry to say that that was not the case. In February last there had been a crowded meeting of the Common Council, and the Town Clerk had made a report which practically endorsed all the proceedings of the committee of the Corporation. That report had been adopted almost unanimously, with one single exception. It was stated in the Paper which had been laid before them that the City of London expended very great sums on objects of public use and munificence. Nobody believed that the Corporation spent £350,000 a-year exclusively on such purposes as they saw stated in the report of the committee. That was not the question; the point was that great sums of money had been expended upon improper objects through improper agents, and whether or not it was the duty of Parliament to do that which the Corporation had so clearly failed to do—namely, to show that they would have no longer the responsibility of allowing such a state of things to go on. In his opinion, the duty of Parliament was plain in this matter. When an instance, whether small or great, was brought before them, in which either a public man or a public Body had been guilty of improper conduct in relation to public money, then, in the highest interests of the country, they could not afford to pass it over. If they made light of this and said that public money might be spent on these objects and through these hands, then they confirmed by Parliamentary sanction an example which every municipality in the country and all the new authorities which the Government were going to set up would be justified in following. This was not a Party question;

this sort of question never was a Party one in that House. In a matter involving personal conduct hon. Members on both sides of the House had always come forward and taken the side of purity and public spirit, and in this case they were bound to take action, because as a collective Body they had appointed the Select Committee of last year, and as a collective Body, therefore, they were absolutely bound to take cognizance of the revelations which had come out before the Committee. He ventured to say that in passing the Resolution of his hon. and learned Friend they would be passing the mildest censure that could be passed upon conduct which was absolutely indefensible.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he wished to point out that the discussion of that evening had in no way been initiated by himself. He had not had until that evening any communication with the hon. and learned Gentleman the Mover of the Amendment (Mr. Firth). He (Mr. Bradlaugh) had last year put upon the Paper a Notice of Motion on this subject even in stronger terms than that upon which the House was now asked to express an opinion. The Government were then desirous of finding a night for the discussion, and were repeatedly pressed to give effect to that desire; but they were unable to do so, and the matter was, therefore, not discussed last Session, through no fault of his. He had expected that some comment might be made on himself if the present discussion arose; but he hardly expected that the comment would be of the special character of that with which he had been honoured by the hon. and learned Member for the Peckham Division of Camberwell (Mr. Baumann). He would repeat the hon. and learned Member's words of challenge, and deal with them exactly. The hon. and learned Member asked—"If the evidence of the hon. Member for Northampton against the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler) would be of the same character as that which he brought forward against the Marquess of Salisbury of subsidizing agitators?" To that question he replied—"It will be of exactly the same nature." He had traced cheques in both instances, and he had traced them to the same individuals. Messrs. Kelly and Peters had been entrusted, as he had not expected they would have been entrusted by any wise man, with a work of charity; and, as the result showed, they were entrusted with a work of dishonesty. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) was, of course, bound by the evidence of the Prime Minister given in the witness-box; but he could not help wondering how that the noble Marquess lived so much out of the world as to be ignorant of the rascally character of the men whom he entrusted with money whose character was perfectly well known in London. Lord Salisbury stated that he was aware that they were getting up a meeting in Trafalgar Square; and he (Mr. Bradlaugh) was naturally misled, knowing whose hands the cheques had reached. One of the officials of the City of London knew the men; for, in conversation, he said at once—"Oh, you mean Kelly and Peters;" but it appeared that they had a better character in other circles than he knew of, and so it turned out that he was in error as to the application of one cheque out of six. That being so, he did not think the hon. and learned Member for the Peckham Division of Camberwell would detract very much from what he was pleased to call his *prestige* as a public accuser by the remarks he had used, and which he could not in that House characterize by the language which he thought applicable to it. He would now examine the matter he had to deal with; and it was suggested that the Report of the Committee which, it was said, showed the charges he had made in that House—the full responsibility for which he accepted—were not proven. The hon. and learned Member for the Peckham Division of Camberwell, who could certainly read, had been good enough to say there was no charge of wicked payment of money. But what did he think of the absolutely fraudulent payment—admittedly fraudulent, for there was no cross-examination of the witness—of £3,000 with the knowledge of the Committee? It was only just to the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler) to say that he accepted his word fully that he knew nothing about the matter; but he (Mr. Bradlaugh) could not know that when he addressed him at the first meeting. There had been a great deal of difficulty in getting evidence, some of which, when it was obtained, was of a very peculiar character. Why, cheques were signed for thousands of pounds. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) had referred to the sum of £1,287 most scandalously paid by the City Committee to one of their own members, who was employed in getting up divisions at meetings. If that was not scandalous the word had no meaning. It was said that the Committee stated that there was no malversation. That was true; and he did not want to say one word with regard to the Committee, which listened carefully to the evidence, except that, having stated that no conclusive judgment on the question of malversation could be arrived at except in a Court of Law, it was a pity they raised the question at all. For his own part, he thought the action of the City Committee was so much like malversation that he did not know in what way it differed from it. On page 193 of the Report it would be found that he asked the witness questions as to the list of monies which he produced, and the reply was that he did not know in whose handwriting it was. He continued the conversation, and ended in obtaining from this frank witness the statement that he had dictated the list the night before to a confidential clerk who had been in his employment for many years and with whose handwriting he was familiar, and he accounted for saying that he did not know in whose handwriting the list was by the statement that he had forgotten the handwriting of this man. After this it did not lie well in the mouth of the hon. and learned Member for Peckham to say there was nothing in the charge of malversation. If this was not wilful perjury, and if this kind of thing was to be tolerated in the City of London, he was bound to say that it would not be considered maintainable by anyone outside who wished to preserve a reputation for truthfulness. The Report was very partially read by the hon. and learned Gentleman who had defended the City authorities; but it had in some of its points been so completely dealt with by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow that he need not trouble the House by reading from it any further. As he had said, he accepted to the fullest the statement of the hon. Baronet the Member for London that he did not know; but he must plead in self-defence not only that he was present at 10 meetings when cheques were drawn for large amounts, but he had himself spoken of his own knowledge of the association which was financed to the extent of £3,000, and which clearly never had any existence at all. The whole thing was practically a fraud, the result of conspiracy between the late City Solicitor and the man who concocted it; and it would not do to say that this was not true because there was not a word in cross-examination of the man who swore to it. In order to avoid the tracing of the money, they had gone to the length of changing the notes into gold and re-changing them into notes. Luckily, he (Mr. Bradlaugh) had been able to trace some of the notes; and from the new Solicitor to the City they had got a book in which every one of the payments were traceable, which, owing to the notes having been changed in the manner described, would have been otherwise exceedingly difficult. That course could not have been taken by anyone who knew that he was spending the money honestly; and although he accepted to the fullest the statement of the hon. Baronet that he thought the kind of warfare engaged in was justifiable, he asked the House to excuse him if he thought the transaction was scandalous and malversatory, and for saying that this was still the proper language to apply to it. It was almost a pity that this question could not have been discussed without personal comment; but the House would do him the justice to say that what had passed was not of his provoking, and that he was bound to make some answer to what had been said with regard to himself by the hon. and learned Member for Peckham. There was not one of the charges which had not been completely proved by the evidence given before the Committee; and if anyone should rise after he had sat down, and venture to repeat one phrase of his which he thought was not proven, he was ready to read chapter and verse for evidence of its truth; but until that was done he would not further occupy the time of the House.

SIR JOSEPH BAILEY (Hereford) said, as a Member of the Select Committee which inquired into the charges against the Corporation of the City of London, he thought it a pity that the House should not know the exact amount of weight in the charges. When his hon. Friend the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler) spoke of the matter as anonymous tittle-tattle, he felt sure that the House would agree that he had been misunderstood, and that what he meant to convey was that there was no name given at the time as authority for the charge. It seemed to him (Sir Joseph Bailey) that the accusation had been laid a little higher than it ought to have been. His right hon. Friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) had spoken of the estate of the Corporation as being £300,000 odd a-year, and of this being expended in an irresponsible way. But neither of those statements was exactly correct. It was true that the gross amount of the City estate was £300,000 odd; he believed it was reduced to the sum of £160,000 a-year for various outgoings. Now, out of that large expenditure £19,000 was the only amount which was called in question. The City of London Corporation found itself face to face with an organization whose one object was to make a single municipality for the City of London. He did not think it would be said by the Corporation of the City that there was no need of any reform whatever; but they were as strongly as possible opposed to the idea of one municipality for London, and they accordingly placed the matter in the hands of a special committee. He had understood the hon. and learned Member for Dundee (Mr. Firth) to say that the Committee made no report. But that was not the case. They made five reports, which were quoted in the Appendix to the Report of the Committee of last year.

MR. FIRTH said, the hon. Baronet had misapprehended what he said, which was that the committee had made no detailed report of their expenditure.

SIR JOSEPH BAILEY said, it was true that they had made no detailed report of expenditure; but, at the same time, he was prepared to say that the whole of the items quoted in the Report of last year were traced in the public reports of the City. They were there for everyone to see, although the details of the various items were not given. Some of the £19,000 was proved to have been expended in making inquiries at home and abroad as to the matter referred to the Committee. A large sum was expended by the Corporation in defending themselves against the organization opposed to them. They had, he believed, a perfect right to defend themselves with their own money, and that could not be malversation, because the word indicated the misapplication of something in the nature of trust—money given for one purpose and devoted to another purpose—and he thought that in the minds of most men it would be held to involve not only application to a purpose other than that intended, but fraudulent application. But although persons had a perfect right to defend themselves with their own money, there were certain things which they might not do even with their own money; and they were not to pack meetings, attack other meetings, and make meetings at which there was not a single person present honestly representing public opinion. The House should understand how far it was proved that the Corporation of the City did this. There was one large item which he was extremely surprised that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had not pressed home. How the money was spent they did not know; they knew nothing about it, except that it was stated that if investigation were desired it might be seen by all the world. One person was concerned, as to whom he would only say that every word used on the other side was absolutely true, and of whom he hardly thought enough had been said. He was engaged by a gentleman who was a great officer of the City, who, not being alive at the time of the inquiry, was, of course, unable to say anything in his own defence. This person was engaged in January and discharged in July so that the expenditure in connection with him, which was proved absolutely up to the hilt to be improper from first to last, was incurred within six months of one year. This man Johnson did not present his account until two or three days before he was discharged; he took a shorthand copy of it, and that actually in the room where he was going to give it to Sir Thomas Nelson. What his motive was he (Sir Joseph Bailey) did not know, but in a short time that shorthand copy found its way into the hands of those who were attacking the Corporation. How far Johnson was acting straightforwardly by his employer he did not know; that he ought not to have been employed at all was quite certain; but, seeing that his employer was dead and could not defend himself, and seeing that the accounts were only placed before him a day or two before Johnson was discharged, he was unable to hold the Corporation responsible in this matter. Where he thought the Corporation were wrong was in not looking after their own affairs, and he was quite certain that, however little reform might be meted out to the Corporation of the City of London, it was absolutely necessary that their accounts should indicate something like a decent and proper audit. In this matter the Corporation had devolved their authority on a committee to whom they gave almost the unlimited power of spending money. That committee handed over its power to great City officers, who were themselves unable to undertake the business, and they in turn handed it over to electioneering agents, some of whom were honourable men and some of them exactly the reverse. The whole proceeding was in the nature of a political "house that Jack built." Although, in his opinion, this matter had been placed a little too high by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and although possibly they could not go the length of the Resolution on the Paper, so long as the Corporation spent its money for great purposes, he could not help thinking that the Corporation themselves would accept willingly something in the nature of reform.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, he was ready to acknowledge the attitude taken up by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) on the present occasion, who had, of his own accord, stated that he accepted his word of denial of the charges made last year. This was a Motion which he apprehended was not binding without an Act of Parliament; it was of course necessary that to carry out the Resolution the hon. and learned Member should bring in a Bill to be passed by this and the other House of Parliament. He did not think it was necessary to detain the House at any length, but there was one observation made by the hon. and learned Member for Dundee (Mr. Firth) with regard to the meeting over which he (Sir Robert Fowler) presided at Guildhall, to which he would refer. That meeting, whatever might be said of others, was most enthusiastic in support of the Corporation against the proposal of the hon. and learned Gentleman. If the committee made any mistake with regard to the meeting it was that they thought their opponents might send men to make a disturbance, and took what they thought to be necessary precautions to prevent it. No one would dispute that the meeting was enthusiastic, and he believed the object on both sides was to ascertain the feeling of the Metropolis with regard to the measure introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) and warmly supported by the hon. and learned Member for Dundee. The result of the meeting was fairly put before the Metropolis within two years afterwards at the General Election of 1885. He did not want to refer to the following Election, which might be said to have been still more decisive, but in the General Election of 1885, the issue before the country was the question of Confidence in Lord Salisbury on the one hand, and in the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) on the other. The right hon. Gentleman just before the Election was the Head of a Government, one of the leading Members of which had brought in a very important Bill, and as there was no very important question before the country at that time beyond the conduct of distinguished statesmen, they might infer that this question was fairly put before the Metropolis; and the result was to send a larger number of Metropolitan Members to support Lord Salisbury as against the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. The hon. and learned Member for Dundee was then an active Metropolitan Member, and he having been defeated at Chelsea in 1885, crossed the water in 1886, and contested a constituency in South London with the same result. Now, the hon. and learned Gentleman being the apostle for the establishment of one great municipality for London, the result of his candidatures might very fairly be considered to show that his views with regard to the Corporation were not very popular in the Metropolis, and he ventured to think they would not be accepted by the country at large.

MR. J. C. STEVENSON (South Shields) said, that having been a Member of the Select Committee of last Session, he thought that if the public opinion of the Metropolis was so decidedly in favour of the Corporation of London as the hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Fowler) stated, there was all the less necessity for the Corporation to indulge in the questionable practices which had been proved against them. He desired to call the attention of the House to the utterly delusive character of the audit of the Corporation accounts. The four auditors annually appointed by the Livery signed the accounts; but it came out that they satisfied themselves with ascertaining the fact that the large sums in question had been duly voted by the Committee to be spent by the high officials of the Corporation. These auditors did not follow the money any further. They called for no vouchers. A proper auditor would require the production of receipts, stamped and signed by the persons who actually received the money. The Remembrancer, who gave Mr. Wragg £3,000 to spend, told the committee that no one but himself even saw Mr. Wragg's report of his proceedings. It was the Select Committee that by their inquiry elicited the information as to this expenditure that would otherwise have never come to light. The chairman of the special committee of the Corporation that supplied the money declared that he never asked the officials for any detail, putting it on the footing of a contested election in which he was engaged many years ago, when he freely supplied his election agent with the money he wanted, and never thought of asking him how he spent it. The inquiry disclosed the highest degree of looseness in relation to this expenditure, and showed that the so-called audit was a delusive protection to the public; and he heartily supported the Motion before the House.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CLARKE) (Plymouth) said, that the House had now listened to an exposition of the Report in their hands by two Members of the Select Committee which considered the charges made against the Corporation of the City of London. But most hon. Members of the House—if they had the responsibility of judging upon the matters in issue—would find themselves obliged to be content with the judgment to which the Committee arrived. It was impossible to examine in detail before the House of Commons the large mass of evidence which had been given. It would, he thought, be agreed that the Committee was perfectly competent to deal with the questions before it, and that the fullest opportunity of giving evidence was offered to all interested in the matter. By the Report laid upon the Table of the House the Committee expressed their judgment upon the questions submitted to them, and by that judgment the House itself might be well content to be guided. It would be extremely unfair to the Corporation of the City of London if in that debate Members were to pick out special passages in the evidence given before the Committee. That might have been a proper course upon a real Vote of Censure upon the Corporation of the City of London, but it was by no means fair to induce Members of the House to vote on the question now upon the Paper by making accusations against certain individuals. The Committee arrived at the conclusion that there had been no malversation of funds, but that there had been improper appropriation and unjustifiable expenditure of money, which would have been just as improper and unjustifiable if it had come out of the pockets of individuals as out of the City estates of the Corporation. It must be remembered that the Committee had to report upon the matter, and they gave their own description of the transactions. They said that the employment on both sides, by the Corporation and by the Municipal Reform League, of private police was advocated as a necessity, the Metropolitan Police not being permitted to enter buildings where meetings were held. They said that the Municipal

Reform League had an organized body of 12 men in its employment who were called municipal policemen, and similar individuals were employed by persons subsidized by the Corporation of the City of London. Both the Municipal Reform League and the various associations subsidized by the Corporation packed their own meetings to a greater or less extent, and each side attended the meetings of the other. Of course, it was a matter of great regret and shame that the political life of this country could not be carried out without resort to the employment of persons to prevent disorder. It was a melancholy thing; but whether they were in the most crowded parts of the most Radical districts, or in the most remote district of the most Tory county, it would be found that some sort of measures had to be taken in order to prevent the speakers from being interrupted. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] It was useless to cry "No, no!" He had not been in political life for 20 years without having learnt the absolute necessity of taking measures to protect speakers from interruption by those to whom they were opposed. ["No, no!"] That was the state of the case all over the country, no matter how much hon. Gentlemen might deny it, and that was the state of the case in London, for the Committee found that the Municipal Reform League packed their own meetings, and attended the meetings of the other side, while their opponents did the like. Then there was the question of the large sum of money passing into the hands of Johnson from Sir Thomas Nelson—a copy of the report rendered to Sir Thomas Nelson being kept by Johnson, and from him finding its way to the secretary of the Chelsea Liberal Club, and from him to the hon. and learned Member for Dundee (Mr. Firth). It was hardly fair to the Corporation that an investigation should take place after the death of Sir Thomas Nelson, and that the word of the man Johnson should be taken with regard to all the matters in which he had been concerned. He (Sir Edward Clarke) was desirous of pointing out that if it were desired to bring charges of this kind and to drive them home, the original Motion should have been persisted in, when the House would have been able to express its judgment on the matters in question. But the course now taken, he ventured to say, was extremely unfair. Instead of a direct Motion the hon. and learned Member for Dundee placed on the Paper a Resolution to the effect that the expenditure of the Corporation of the City of London ought to be placed under statutory restrictions similar to those to which other Corporations in the Kingdom were subject. That was an innocent-looking enough form of words, but the supporters of the Motion were by it in reality asking the House to endorse the accusations against the Corporation, notwithstanding that the Committee had decided that there had been no malversation, though there had been an improper appropriation of money, but without any proof that any responsible persons in the Corporation were cognizant of these things being done. The Motion was supported by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) upon grounds entirely inconsistent with the acceptance of the Motion itself. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Peckham Division of Camberwell (Mr. Baumann) —with whose advocacy the Corporation of London had every reason to be satisfied—had, it appeared to him (Sir Edward Clarke), made an absolutely conclusive answer to the Motion. He said that the Motion, if carried out by legislation, would defeat every object which its supporters chiefly had in view. Their object was that these great funds, which for centuries had belonged to the Corporation, and which he believed had been administered to the great advantage of the people of London, and to the great credit of the Corporation, should be used not merely for the advantage of the whole Metropolis, but subject in some way to the control and authority of the whole Metropolis. That was an intelligible object which it might be reasonable to keep in view, when changes were made, as they necessarily would be made, in the government of London. But as his hon. and learned Friend had pointed out, the effect of carrying out the recommendations of this Resolution by legislation would be to place the Corporation under legislative compulsion to expend the whole of its City Estate Fund on the small area of the City itself. Instead of going outside its own area and being able to expend money by opening Epping Forest and Burnham Beeches for the benefit of the Metropolis, it would be compelled to expend its revenues in the City itself. The right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division had contended that if the Corporation were placed under statutory restrictions they might make provisions in the statute to enable the Corporation to discharge those great functions for the public advantage which it now fulfilled. When Parliament came to deal with the whole question of London government, he (Sir Edward Clarke) had no doubt it would make provision—he would not say to extend the area of usefulness of the City—but would take care that those great matters which a Central Body would have to deal with should be reserved to the Corporation. That was entirely contrary to the Resolution of the hon. and learned Member for Dundee. It seemed to him that the Resolution of the hon. and learned Member and the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division were mutually destructive. One wanted to bring the Corporation within the recognized law as to other Corporations, while the other wanted to pass a new law. He understood the hon. and learned Member for Dundee to say that if the Government announced its intention of dealing with this question at an early time he would not press his Resolution upon the House. Her Majesty's Government had already told the House that, in their opinion, the question of London government was one to be dealt with at an early day. But the hon. and learned Member would not think it reasonable to ask him (Sir Edward Clarke) then to say anything which might limit or abridge, or be construed as limiting or abridging, the right of the Government to choose the mode in which the subject ought to be dealt with. It clearly could not be dealt with at that time as a separate matter, but must abide the decision of the House on the whole question of London government. Although the House had been informed that Her Majesty's Government looked upon this question as a subject for early consideration and legislation, it would be impossible for the Government to give any pledge on the subject. In the meantime, in his opinion, it would be extremely unwise of the House to pledge itself to a Resolution dealing with a small part of a large subject in a manner not involving any practical issue.

MR. FIRTH said, he wished to say this before the Division was taken, that the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down was not under a correct apprehension as to the effect of his proposal. The effect would be to enable the City to give money for purposes for which it rightly gave it now. The hon. and learned Gentleman had adopted the language of the hon. Member for the Peckham Division of Camberwell (Mr. Baumann) as to what was done in the matter of the purchase of Burnham Beeches, but neither of the hon. Gentlemen had seemed to think it desirable to ascertain the correct facts. Burnham Beeches had not been bought out of the City cash, but from the Grain Duties, whilst of the cost of Holborn Viaduct not one penny had come out of the City cash, but had been paid for by the Coal and Wines Dues. With regard to the particular expenditure referred to in Question 511, they would see that the Special Committee were informed of that expenditure by Sir Thomas Nelson.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) [*who rose amidst loud cries of* "Divide!"] said, he desired to say a word or two before the Division was taken, as he intended to give a vote which would not be the universal vote on that (the Ministerial) side of the House, and it therefore seemed to him desirable that he should give his reasons for his attitude on the question. He did not intend to enter into the subject of the Committee on the Corporation of London. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] He thought, as a Metropolitan Member who was not satisfied with the way in which the City funds were expended, he was right in believing that the time had come when they ought to insist upon having a check placed upon the outlay, and upon an efficient audit of the accounts being made. Therefore, he did not see why they should not support a Resolution which declared that the expenditure of the Corporation of the City of London should be placed under similar statutory restrictions to those to which other Corporations in the Kingdom were subject. [*Renewed cries of* "Divide!"] He thought the impatience of the House — especially on this side of it — augured badly for the position in this matter of hon. Members who took a different view of the subject to that which he took. [*Continued cries of* "Divide!"] He, with other Metropolitan Members on that side of the House, thought that the time had come when the large funds in the hands of the City Authorities should be devoted to some better purpose than that upon which they were at present expended, and administered in a way to give greater public confidence. He therefore supported the Motion.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 133; Noes 156: Majority 23.—(Div. List, No. 99.)

BOARD OF TRADE (WORKING OF RAILWAYS).—RESOLUTION.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said, that in previous Sessions, as many hon. Members were aware, from the Petitions sent to them to present, he had attempted to deal with the question of railway safety by Bill. That year, to find an opportunity to give voice to the wishes of those he represented in this matter, he had substituted a Resolution. One of Her Majesty's Ministers had recently complained, and with some reason, that many Bills brought forward in that House were only Resolutions expanded. He hoped, therefore, the President of the Board of Trade would not quarrel with him for having condensed the provisions of what he believed was a carefully-drawn Bill into two definite proportions on which the House would express an opinion. The Motion was wholly free from any Party character, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman might see reason to accept some part at least of the reforms asked for under the Resolution, and, if so, that he might do what a private Member could not hope to do that Session, by using the power of the Government to carry them into effect by legislation. He would only say further that that was not a mere abstract Resolution based on theory, but was the outcome of the practical experience of a generation, backed by the expressed wishes of thousands upon thousands of those personally and vitally interested in these matters. The Motion expressed the recommendations of the only great Royal Commission which had inquired into railway accidents, and the opinion of the Board of Trade under a former Ministry. He would further remind the House that his own Railway Regulation Bill passed a second reading in 1886, and that thereby the House had approved the principle of his Resolution. They might be told that accidents were diminishing. He was placed at some disadvantage, because the Returns of accidents for the past year were not yet in the hands of hon. Members; but they had the Report of accidents down to June 30, 1887, and he was convinced that hon. Members, if they considered the Reports for the past few years, must be aware that there had been no sensible reduction in the general average of loss of life and injury. That was especially true of the classes of accidents to which he wished to call attention. Some, indeed, had shown a special persistence, and even a distinct increase. Certainly that was the case as to accidents connected with shunting, the number and frequency of which was a national scandal. In the last year for which they had completed Returns—1886—there was a considerable increase. In 1885, 85 railway servants had been killed and 846 had been injured while on duty in shunting operations. In 1886 the numbers had increased to a total of 119 killed and 1,168 injured. In the first six months of 1887 there were 58 killed and 551 injured, showing a persistence of the higher average. Then, as to another most fruitful source of accidents —level crossings—a like increase was to be found. In 1885 there were 93 persons killed at level crossings, and in 1886 there were 104; while in 1885 34 persons were injured at level crossings, and in 1886 52 persons were injured. The real question for the House to consider was whether the casualties could be prevented or not. He could wish that all hon. Members would read and consider the interesting and admirable Reports of the Inspectors of the Board of Trade on the causes of the accidents on which they held inquiries. Those Reports were of the deepest interest, and of high scientific value. He did not think anyone in the House would challenge their scientific accuracy and the weight of their recommendations. Well, they established the fact that though many accidents were due to want of care and want of discipline, the majority of accidents were due either to defective safety appliances or arrangements. What were the checks on which they had to rely to keep down railway accidents? They had compensation. Well, he did not think that compensation, as provided by Lord Campbell's Act, was to be seriously considered. Mr. Galt, one of the greatest authorities on railway matters, in his separate Report, appended to the Report of the Commission of 1877, proved from an average of years that the amount of compensation was not a serious item in the expenditure of the Companies, amounting to less than 1 per cent on their outgoings. He thought that Boards of Railway Directors had, in the great improvement they had so widely introduced, been much more influenced by their own sense of duty and by public opinion. Then, as to personal responsibility, what happened generally? Why, there was some great catastrophe involving loss of life, and then they would find an engine-driver, or guard, or a station-master charged with manslaughter, and, very possibly, the case would be sent for trial. But, then, in a great number of instances, the railway servants would be acquitted at the Assizes, because conclusive evidence would be offered showing that the accident was wholly or largely due to the want of proper safety arrangements. And when that was clearly established he should like to know if any Director had ever been put on his trial or held responsible? Then they had, as another means of checking accidents, the method of publicity. The Companies were compelled to make Returns of accidents and injuries on their lines, and of the extent to which the block system of working and the interlocking of signals and points were adopted on their lines, and also as to the nature of the brakes they used for their rolling stock; but the Returns thus made were largely untrustworthy. Last September, in the Doncaster race week, one of the most ghastly railway disasters occurred at Hexthorpe, a station just outside Doncaster, on the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway. That Company made a Return, under the Act, that their line was worked on the absolute block system. But it was shown during the inquiries on the Hexthorpe accident that, for years past, at this, perhaps the most critical and trying time in the whole year, owing to the crowded traffic, trains from several railways approaching Doncaster in quick succession, the block system was recklessly suspended, and that, to protect trains, recourse was had to the antiquated expedient of putting flagmen on the line. Not only so, but he believed he was correct in stating that, according to the regulations of the Company, the flagmen should have been provided with detonating fog signals to place on the rails, and that even that precaution was neglected. He thought that the withdrawal of the protection of the block system on such an occasion as that amply justified the severe strictures on the Company made by Chief Justice Coleridge at the trial, and by Major Marindin, the Inspector of the Board of Trade, who held the inquiry as to the causes of this most terrible accident. But the block system of working was constantly evaded by "warning tickets." Goods trains were admitted into block sections when they were not yet clear, and, in a Report as to an accident in 1883, attention was drawn by one of the Inspectors to the fact that the regulations of the Railway Clearing House actually permitted these evasions. Then, as to the working of single lines, when he spoke on this subject in 1886 he had referred to an incorrect Return made by the Somerset and Dorset Railway. In the last Return of railway accidents they would find a report of an accident which occurred at Rothiemay, on the Great North of Scotland Railway, which disclosed almost every possible form of evasion and neglect. That railway was returned as worked on the absolute block system, with the use of the train staff, which, of course, would prevent two trains from being on the same section at the same time. But it appeared from the Report that there was no train staff or ticket, that the starting signals were not used, that there was no interlocking of points with signals, and that there were no efficient continuous brakes. He might quote the words of Major Marindin, the Inspector who reported on the accident—

> "I am afraid it is hopeless to expect that the Company will voluntarily adopt on their single lines the train staff and ticket system of working, admitted by nearly all railway authorities to be the safest way of working a single line

and the Board of Trade has, unfortunately, no power to insist upon this mode of working, or an equivalent, except upon new lines, where it is invariably required."

Thus, the system of Returns was, in many cases, unsatisfactory. The existing powers of the Board of Trade were practically confined to the postponement, from month to month, of the opening of new lines or new branches of old lines, until the specified requirements of the Board were complied with. But he believed he was right in saying that, so far as legal obligation went, there was nothing to prevent a Company from changing any of these arrangements after the line was opened. At any rate, as regards single lines, there was no doubt whatever that the Board had no check on improper ways of working the line unless the Railway Company made a false Return, in which case the Board could prosecute the Company for the false Return. If those powers as to new lines were so limited, what was to be said as to the working of old lines, where the traffic and the risk were infinitely greater? Was it not a ridiculous farce for the Board of Trade to be sending recommendations to the Railway Companies which they promptly consigned to the waste paper basket? Since he had had a seat in Parliament he had, from time to time, put Questions as to defective arrangements, distinctly with the object of showing that the Board of Trade was powerless to remedy the defects to which it had called attention. Thus he had referred to the working of the lines at Toton sidings, near Long Eaton, on the Midland Railway. There were eight or nine lines, and there was an immense amount of shunting of mineral and other goods trains. But those lines were worked wholly by hand signals, and there was no cabin. The number of fatal casualties had made those sidings notorious. The hon. Member for the Toxteth Division of Liverpool (Baron Henry de Worms), who was then Secretary to the Board of Trade, had replied that the Board thought the working by hand signals unsatisfactory, but had no power to compel a change. In the previous and in the present Session he had put Questions as to the neglect of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company to provide either a subway or a bridge at Todmorden. That was a crowded junction, where it was estimated an average of nearly 1,000 persons every day had to cross the lines, and there had been many narrow escapes. The Company had more than once promised to do something; but the Board of Trade was without power to compel even so necessary a work as that. It would probably be in the recollection of the President of the Board of Trade that on no point had the Royal Commission on Railway Accidents laid more stress than on the necessity of powers—

"To enforce the execution of necessary works wherever the deficiency of station and siding accommodation is such as to endanger public safety."

The recommendations of the Inspectors in their Reports as to the causes of accidents had no legal force whatever. But the cost of the Railway Department of the Board was considerable. There were the salaries and travelling expenses of the officials, the charges for witnesses, and many other outgoings. He would ask if those Reports had no legal force, if there was no power behind them, what justification was there for such a waste of public money? As it was, the Reports drew the attention of the Companies again and again to serious defects in the working of their lines, and yet the public had to wait till the Reports were supplemented and confirmed by ghastly catastrophes like that at Hexthorpe. Well, if they gave greater powers to the Board, it might be asked whether there would be work to do? There was plenty of work. Take the question of brakes. The Board of Trade had issued a Circular as to brakes in 1877, laying down the conditions of a satisfactory brake—one of which was that it should be self-acting. That Circular had been more than confirmed by scientific experience, and had recently been re-considered and again approved by the most experienced of the Railway Servants at their annual Congress. But, although that Circular had been issued more than 10 years, and although it had been repeatedly confirmed and enforced in the recommendations of the Inspectors of the Board, how long had it taken to convert the London and North-Western Railway, how long had the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company refused to adopt an automatic brake? As to the North-Western, he had in

1886 drawn attention to an accident at New Street Station, Birmingham, where, from want of an automatic brake, there was a narrow escape from a serious collision between two sections of a train which parted on an incline. Within six months after, an accident almost identical in its nature took place at the same station, and in the Report of last year there was a serious accident at Carlisle from the same cause. Yet, after the repeated warnings on that point, he found that the Company, out of its immense rolling stock, had only 66 engines and 624 carriages fitted with an automatic brake. One of the most disastrous accidents of recent years occurred near Penistone, on the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway, in July, 1884, the fatality of the accident being largely due to the fact that the brakes, not being self-acting, did not check the headlong rush of the carriages after the train parted. Two years after, in September, 1886, the same defective brake was responsible for a collision, also at Penistone, with a runaway train, causing injury to 23 persons. General Hutchinson, in his Report on this second accident, says—

> "It is very unsatisfactory to find that this Company has done nothing towards supplying its rolling stock with automatic brakes, notwithstanding the warning it received from the very serious accident which occurred near Penistone in July, 1884, when there is every reason to believe that, had the train been fitted with a good automatic brake, the consequences of that accident might have been considerably mitigated."

Yet, even after that second warning, they found the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway persisting in the use of this brake, and that this defective brake was largely responsible for the terrible loss of life at Hexthorpe. The consequences of that accident were enormously aggravated because the brakes, not being automatic, were instantly released by the parting of the couplings at the moment of collision, and so the full weight of the train—about 200 tons—was propelled with enormous velocity into the last four carriages of the Midland train, and it was the second shock which caused the most serious casualties. Then there was room for action of the Board of Trade in dealing with shunting accidents. The House would remember that early in 1886 the Railway Servants' Society held trials of coupling appliances at Nine Elms, and it was shown that there were inventions of a workable type which would make it needless for the men to go between the buffers in coupling and uncoupling. In December of the same year, the Midland Railway Company held some interesting trials at Derby of coupling appliances and the coupling pole, and he wished to express the opinion that that Company had admirably discharged its duty to its *employés* in this matter. These trials were taken to have established the great value of the coupling pole and the three-link coupling. He would express no opinion as to the one appliance being better than another; but he would take the two sets of trials as proving that in the one way or the other it was possible to save many lives, and prevent many men from being maimed in having to go between carriages and trucks in the act of coupling. Yet, although the three-link coupling and the pole were a cheap and easy contrivance, there were many important lines of railway which did nothing. The powers of the Board of Trade might be used not merely to compel the Companies to adopt some safer mode of coupling, but might be used to strengthen the hands of the Companies in dealing with private owners of trucks and waggons. There had been many instances of serious accidents in mixed trains, which were due to stiff and unworkable couplings attached to private waggons. Last winter, again, during the dense fogs, there were an unusually large number of casualties among the platelayers and men who placed fog signals on the rails. There were several contrivances for minimizing the risk under those circumstances. The Motion also dealt with the excessive hours of work. Anyone who had passed some time, as he had, in a signal-box on a crowded line, would know that the strain of prolonged hours of work for signalmen was excessive. To take one instance, there were on the North-Eastern Railway, between Edinburgh and Darlington, 136 signal-boxes. In 96 of those boxes the hours of duty were from 12 to 13, while in the remaining 40 the hours of duty ranged from 9 to 11½. The Return of overtime work obtained in the House of Lords by Lord De La Warr proved that, on some lines, overtime work was systematic. He held that a regular monthly Return, giving full particulars of cases of overtime work, would prevent that overwork being the rule. Opponents of the Motion might say that it would be dangerous to have fixed hours of work on railways. He quite agreed that the conditions of railway work were such that it was impossible to prevent occasional overtime, when trains were delayed owing to weather or other circumstances. But what was wanted was, not to have fixed hours so much as to break up the system by which engine-drivers and guards were forced by the regular hours on which they booked on for duty and booked off duty, to work longer than was desirable for themselves, and for the safety of the public. To sum up his argument, what was wished was, that the powers of the Board of Trade should be consolidated and simplified, so that the Board of Trade should be able to remedy grave defects on all lines in the same way as on new lines before their opening. On the exercise of those powers he would be willing to see any reasonable checks or limitations, and if a suitable tribunal could be instituted, there might be a right of appeal from an order of the Board. But, he would ask, who would be the worse, how many lives might have been saved at Penitone and at Hexthorpe, if the Board had been able to enforce its recommendations? Who would be the worse if the Board could order the adoption of the three-link coupling and the pole, or other coupling appliances? Or, he might put it this way—Was it reasonable that all this public money should be spent if the Board had no real powers? What was the Board of Trade to be? Was it to be lowered to the position of a mere Intelligence Department—a function which might just as well be discharged by the scientific or engineering Press; or was the Board to be a real guardian of the public interest, and to be enabled to vindicate the State's side of the bargain with the railways? He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman might see his way to meet him on some, at least, of the points he had raised. He begged to move the Motion which stood in his name.

Mr. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) said, he rose to second the Motion, because he represented a larger number of railway servants than almost any other Member of the House. Certainly, in the town of Crewe and the neighbouring villages, where the great works of the London and North-Western Railway Company were situated, there were to be found a large number of railway men. Now, the subject was of vital interest to them, and he hoped it would receive the careful attention of the House, and the favourable consideration of the President of the Board of Trade. The Motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Channing) referred to the safety both of passengers and of railway servants; but the matter was really most pressing with regard to the protection of the railway servants, for the passengers were protected to a very great extent by the influence of the Press. Whenever there was any great accident, the attention of the country was drawn to it. and full justice as far as possible was done in the matter; but with regard to the servants of the Railway Companies, the number of deaths and accidents vastly exceeded those of passengers. There were in 1886, the last year for which there were any Returns, 459 deaths of railway servants, and 5,490 accidents of a more or less serious character. Such an enormous extent of mortality and injury to limb was a matter which ought to call for the serious attention of the Government and of the country. The Motion referred to preventible causes of accidents; but really, when one took the accidents individually, there was not a single one of them that might not have been prevented if more care had been used either on the part of the unfortunate sufferers or on that of the Railway Companies, in what he thought was the proper discharge of their duties towards their servants. No doubt, the Directors of our Railway Companies were sincerely anxious to prevent these accidents; but they were anxious to prevent them in a sort of abstract way. They did not, as he (Mr. M'Laren) contended, take the pains they ought to take in order to insure that these accidents should be reduced to the very lowest possible number. Although the majority of the Companies had issued rules and regulations and bye-laws for the guidance of their men, in practice those rules were very little more than shams. He did not mean to say that the Directors desired them to be shams; far from that; but in practical operation those rules might almost as well not exist, except for one consideration, and that was that the existence of them in almost every case prevented the men from obtaining compensation for any injuries they sustained. Those rules became dead letters; the men knew them; they knew them in a kind of indefinite way; but in the ordinary everyday work of life they forgot them. There was no one who insisted upon the fulfilment of the rules, and in the pressure of railway work—and railway work was always carried on at the highest pressure with the desire of getting the work done—those rules were neglected, with the connivance of the managers of the railways and those who ought to see that the rules were enforced. They hurried on with their work; they did not wish to delay the trains; there was a natural desire to keep the trains punctual; and, so far from the influence of the managers being used for the enforcement of the rules, their influence was to a very large extent used in an opposite direction. He believed that if there was to be real care exercised, and that if they were to have preventible accidents prevented, they must place a heavy pecuniary responsibility upon the Boards of Directors and the shareholders of the Companies; they must, in fact, make the shareholders responsible for the payment of compensation for all the deaths and for all the serious accidents that occurred. He would not, of course, propose that all accidents should be compensated for, because there were men who would possibly suffer some trivial accident for the sake of compensation; but the class of accidents he referred to were such as resulted in loss of limb, or in serious crushing, so that a man was permanently disabled. Considering that those accidents took place with almost unfailing regularity year by year, he had come to the conclusion—and a great number of railway men whom he knew had come to the conclusion—that the only way of reducing them to the lowest possible dimensions was to give compensation out of the funds of the shareholders. He had said that the rules and regulations of the Companies were, unfortunately, largely shams, and the returns of the deaths and accidents, he thought, were sufficient to prove that that was the case. When there were 459 deaths in a single year—about four deaths of railway servants every three days—and when there were no fewer than 15 accidents, more or less severe, every day, it was obvious that the figures must be capable of serious reduction, and that if care were exercised, either by the men themselves or by those who had charge of them, the number of those accidents could be very largely reduced. If they examined—which he should not do at length, but very briefly—the class of accidents, he thought it was clearer still that many accidents could be prevented if the Companies chose to take sufficient means to prevent them. Let them compare the number of accidents to the two classes of railway guards—goods guards and passenger guards. The number of goods guards who were killed in 1886 was one in 192 employed, whereas the number of passenger guards killed was only one in every 3,000. The number of goods guards who were injured was one in 18, whereas the number of passenger guards injured was one in 100. There did not seem any satisfactory reason why the mortality and injury to the guards of goods trains should be so much higher than the mortality and injury of passenger guards, except that they travelled at night, that less care was taken for their lives, and that they were, to some extent, though not very largely, employed in the dangerous work of superintending shunting. When they came to shunters the facts were most startling. One in every 155 employed was killed, and one in 21 was injured. That did not really represent the number of accidents which occurred from careless shunting and defective mechanical appliances. It had been stated, on the authority of the Board of Trade Returns, that from the year 1879 to 1885 the number of deaths in various occupations relative to shunting was no less than 1,075, and that during the same time there were no less than 10,000 men injured. It was stated, and he believed with truth, that the total number of men engaged at any one time in the various occupations that could be classed under the work of shunting was about 14,000, so that during the seven years he had mentioned there were over 11,000 of those persons killed or injured. In other words, about 80 per cent of the average number of men employed in one way or the other in connection with shunting were killed or injured during that period; and what was a most painful incident or circumstance connected with this was that in not a single one of these cases did any man get any compensation from the Railway Companies awarded by law. That, no doubt, was because of the defective state of the Compensation Clauses in the Employers' Liability Act. The Railway Companies were able to show that these accidents were due to the carelessness of the men—they always managed to put the whole blame upon the shoulders of the unfortunate sufferers. The fact that the Companies were not liable for compensation was one of the chief reasons why they did not make adequate arrangements to secure the safety of their servants. If it could be brought home to them that their servants were in their charge, and that unless gross carelessness could be proved against the men compensation was to be paid, it would be to the direct interests of the Railway Companies to insist that care should be taken by their servants. Everyone knew that men of hardy character, like these shunters and railway servants generally were, men inured to danger, did not regard shunting as dangerous to the same extent as any hon. Members would do if they were sent to do shunting work; and, therefore, on the ground that familiarity bred contempt, they became far more liable to accidents than other people would be. Parliament must make it to the direct interest of the Railway Companies to urge men not to forget carefulness, and he trusted that the Board of Trade would take the matter up, and that in the Employers' Liability Bill some clause would be inserted tending in the direction he had indicated. Now, he gathered from the Returns that the Railway Companies endeavoured to hide from the public the enormous loss of life and injury which shunters suffered, because they mixed up the two very distinct occupations of shunters and porters in the Returns of railway accidents. The attention of the Board of Trade had, at various times, been called to the circumstances, and they had been urged to insist that the Railway Companies should separate these classes, and should specify in one column or schedule all who were railway shunters, and should specify in another column or schedule those who were porters. If that were done, the public would know the truth of this matter, and would find that the number of men engaged in shunting who were injured was out of all proportion, having regard to the ordinary doctrine of chance, to the number of men otherwise employed who were injured. Now, of all the accidents in shunting there was no one single cause which killed and injured more men than the accident of squeezing between buffers in coupling and uncoupling. In the seven years previous to 1886 deaths from that cause alone were 244, and the cases of injury 2,411, and yet there were improved appliances which might be employed, which the public knew of, and which had been pressed on the attention of the Railway Companies. These improved appliances, however, had not received either the attention of the Board of Trade to the extent they ought to have done, or the attention of the Boards of Directors. There were now coming into vogue what were called coupling poles, which were admitted to be safer, and, if possible, more expeditious, than the old method, and which entirely obviated the necessity of men coming between the railway trucks to couple and uncouple. The use of these poles ought to be made compulsory. They were very much better than anything which had been adopted or was known up to the present time; and those great and powerful corporations, the Railway Companies, could well afford to use them. Indeed, it was their duty to afford the requisite money for putting at once into employment these coupling poles, and so preventing men having to go between the buffers of railway trucks. The use of these poles, he believed, would cause an absolute stoppage of the deaths, and stoppage of the greater part of the accidents he had referred to. As soon as anything was found out, even if it were not of the most perfect description, which could obviate the number of deaths he had alluded to and the number of accidents, it was the duty of Parliament, in the interest of the subjects of the Queen, to insist on Railway Companies, even if it curtailed their dividends to some fractional amount, taking such steps as would effectually save the lives and the limbs of the poor men in their employ. Then there was the block system; he would not refer to that at any length, for it had already been alluded to by his hon. Friend (Mr. Channing). The notable accident to which his hon. Friend had referred brought to the notice of the public the fact that the Board of Trade Returns giving the number of Railway Companies that employed the block system absolutely were entirely illusory, for the block system could be suspended at any moment the Railway Companies thought fit. As a matter of fact, the Railway Companies chose to suspend the block system at the very busiest moment, just at the very moment when accidents were most likely to occur, and when there was the most imperative necessity for the block system to be maintained in all its stringency. Now, in England, all Companies had not even professed to have adopted the block system. The total number of Companies in England, or, at any rate, the total number of parts of lines where the block system was in force, was 97 per cent of the whole; and taking England, Scotland, and Ireland together, only 93 per cent of the miles of railways were under the block system; and, as he had already said, what was called an absolute block system in the Board of Trade Returns was anything but absolute. The same, only very much worse, applied to the continuous brake system. The Board of Trade Returns showed that 9 per cent of the engines and 15 per cent of the carriages were not fitted with the continuous brake, and it was not at all certain that the balance of engines and carriages were so fitted, although the Board of Trade Returns stated that they were. They were fitted with portions of the system. Some had the pipe, some had the mechanical appliances, some had brakes; but it was well known that the whole of the 91 per cent of engines and the 85 per cent of carriages were not fitted with any continuous brake system which would stand the test to which they were liable. Parliament ought to insist, for the protection both of railway servants and of passengers, that the continuous brake system, the automatic brake system, should be compulsorily enforced; and not merely so, but that there should be an uniform system for the whole country. Because, if there was not, when the carriages of one Company came on the lines of another Company, it was not certain that the appliances of the one Company would fit in with the appliances of the other Company, and, therefore, the best precautions that might have been taken might be rendered nugatory. The very simplest requirements of the Board of Trade were not even carried out by the Railway Companies. The Board of Trade Returns showed very startling facts under the column headed, "Non-fulfilment of the usual requirements of the Inspecting Officers of the Board of Trade." The "usual requirements" in respect of the concentration of signal and point levers had not been complied with in 4,674 cases; in respect of interlocking signal and point levers, in 4,400 cases; and in respect of the addition of safety points in goods lines, in 2,721 cases. All these cases already proved that the Railway Companies were not doing their duty to their servants or to the public in providing the best possible appliances that were known at the present day. He would not give the figures in reference to overtime, though possibly they were not known to many hon. Members. He did not propose, of course, that overtime should be absolutely forbidden in cases of breakdown and of special emergency; but it was most unreasonable for the safety of travellers, and unreasonable with regard to due diligence and care being exercised by the men, that overtime should be allowed to the extent it was in signal boxes. He had spoken to many railway men on this subject; he was speaking to a guard in whose van he travelled only yesterday, on the question of overtime. That guard told him that he had been a signalman himself for eight years, and that during that time his minimum day's work was 10 hours, but that he often worked a very much longer time. He added that he was a strong man, yet he found that the last two hours were always excessively trying, and that he was not in a position to do his duty as well as it ought to have been done. If the men only worked 10 hours a-day there would not be much to be said concerning it, but they worked constantly 12 and even 13 hours on the busier lines. It was stated two years ago by the secretary of the Railway Servants' Society that 80 per cent of the signalmen worked 12 hours a-day. If that was really the case, he contended that, in the interest of the travelling public and of the workmen themselves, Parliament was entitled to insist that this overtime should be stopped. There were two remedies which he ventured to suggest for this evil state of affairs, and one was that there should be a different class of Inspectors. It was very right to have experienced Inspectors—men who had high scientific training, men who were skilled engineers; but he believed that practical men, men trained in the railway service, men who had been engineers, drivers, guards, and signalmen employed on the large works of Railway Companies, men who had been brought up to this work from boyhood, would make better Inspectors than the most highly-trained experts of the Board of Trade. If they appointed such men Inspectors, they would give more confidence to railway servants, and would also open up an ambition to railway servants to do their duty well, in the hope that they would have some promotion of the kind offered to them in the course of years; but, above all, they would get a thoroughly efficient set of Inspectors, because they would get men who, knowing the dangers of the work, would be best able to find them out. In the second place, the remedy he had to suggest was that they should make the Railway Companies liable for injury to their servants. The men could very properly argue that they incurred risk, and the relatives of those who were killed could very properly plead that the men had lost their lives in the interest of the service of the Company. It could be properly argued that they had sustained injury in expediting the traffic, and in endeavouring to make the lines work smoothly. An immense number of accidents did occur in this way, and the Railway Companies were not doing their best to check them. When they considered that an immense number of these accidents arose from the non-observance of the block system, and through the want of continuous brakes and of proper coupling apparatus, and through the immense amount of shunting which went on in the dark, or with such inefficient lights that the men could not properly do their work, they must come to the conclusion that it was simply a question of money. If the Railway Companies would expend the necessary amount of money in providing better appliances, these accidents would not happen, and therefore it was not true that the accidents were due entirely to the carelessness of the men; as a matter of fact, they were due far more largely to the carelessness of the Railway Companies. It was quite evident that the enormous loss of life, and still more the enormous injury to limb which he had mentioned, was due, to a great extent, to causes which might be remedied by a more free expenditure of money on the part of the Railway Companies, and therefore he held that Parliament ought to hold the Railway Companies responsible. He trusted the House would insist, by every means in its power, upon the Railway Companies providing every precaution, no matter what might be the expenditure of money that was necessary.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable to deal more effectually with preventible causes of accidents to Railway servants and the public, and to reduce the excessive hours of labour among several classes of Railway servants; and that it is expedient to further extend, by legislation, the powers of the Board of Trade to insist on the adoption by Railway Companies of more adequate arrangements to secure the safety of their servants and the public, and to obtain from Railway Companies periodical returns of all cases in which their servants have been on duty for more than twelve hours at a time, or have been sent on duty without an interval of nine hours' rest."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.) said, the subject was one of very great interest and importance; but he thought that the evident disinclination of hon. Members to continue the debate showed that the House did not look upon the question as one capable of anything like immediate solution, if of solution at all, on the lines laid down in the Motion. The hon. Member for East Northampton (Mr. Channing) appeared to think that all he desired would be met by an increase of the powers of the Board of Trade; but the hon. Member for the Crewe Division of Cheshire (Mr. M'Laren) looked at the question from quite another point of view. He formally seconded the Motion, but he by no means seconded the speech of the hon. Member for East Northampton, because he seemed to think that the best way of preventing accidents in the future would be to increase the liability of the shareholders. The hon. Member spoke of the carelessness of the Company's servants, and seemed to argue that that could be cured by imposing greater liability on the shareholders, whose rules those men broke. He confessed that was an argument which he failed to follow. He did, however, think that the right way of dealing with this question was by maintaining and insisting upon the responsibility of the Companies rather than by imposing very onerous and impossible duties on the Government of the country. It was true that the law allowed the Board of Trade to exact very stringent conditions from new Railway Companies before giving them a certificate for the opening of their lines; but as soon as a line was opened, with one or two exceptions, the condition of things was practically this—that the sole and undivided responsibility for its proper working rested with the Company and the Directors. That might be right or it might be wrong, but it was a policy which Parliament had consistently maintained for many years, and he thought that it had had this advantage—that by the maintenance of that responsibility the Companies had been induced, in their own interest, to take steps for their own protection and for the protection of their servants and customers—steps which they could never have been induced to take had not the responsibility rested entirely on their own shoulders. The Board of Trade already had the power of inspecting railways and rolling stock at any time. They had the power and the right and duty, when an accident had happened, to send an Inspector to inquire and report, and the results were laid before Parliament and the public. The Companies in that way had the pressure of public opinion brought to bear upon them. This power of inspection and publication, together with the liability of the Company to heavy damages and the loss of custom through public mistrust, were penalties greater than any that could be imposed by any Act of Parliament. He thought it could not be denied that the present system, at any rate, had done good in diminishing the risk of accidents on railways. He would give to the House a few statistics with regard to this matter. During the last 15 years, since the Report of the Commission on Railway Accidents, there could be no doubt whatever that the precautions against danger taken by the Railway Companies had been very largely extended. In the first place, a general system of signals had been adopted, which was not in use before. In 1873 49 per cent of double line was worked on the absolute block system, but in 1887 the percentage was 93. In 1873 39 per cent of the points and signals interlocked, while in 1887 89 per cent interlocked. There was an equal improvement in the adoption of continuous brake power. In 1880 12 per cent of the engines and 7 per cent of the carriages complied with the conditions of the Board of Trade circular, and 15 per cent of the engines and 29 per cent of the carriages partly complied with it, making a total of 27 per cent of the engines and 36 per cent of the carriages wholly or partly complying with the circular, and 73 per cent of the engines and 64 per cent of the carriages not complying at all. In 1887 54 per cent of the engines and 59 per cent of the carriages complied wholly with the circular, and 39 per cent and 31 per cent partly, and only 7 per cent of the engines and 10 per cent of the carriages did not comply with the circular at all. The House must admit that that had been a great advance. The result had been that, though the number of travellers and the speed of the trains had greatly increased, the proportion of accidents had enormously diminished; and he thought the Record of English Railway Companies, considering the work they did, was a very remarkable one. The Returns showed that in 5,500,000 of journeys in 1874 one passenger was killed through causes beyond his own control, and one in 296,000 injured. In 1886, in 90,500,000 of journeys, one passenger was killed, and one in 1,179,000 injured. He quite admitted that the statistics were not so favourable with regard to railway servants; but even here there had been an improvement, considering the great increase of their work and the increased number and speed of trains. He thought it would be most unwise on the part of Parliament to alter the general policy which had been adopted in this matter by doing anything which would tend to hand over the direction or administration of the Railways to the Board of Trade, because if the Board of Trade was to be made responsible for the public safety generally on railways it must have power to order changes of a most important character. That was a position in which he hoped the House would never place the Government of the country. Of course, it had always been recognized that there were details of management as to which it might be right to entrust the Board of Trade with powers to enforce regulations upon the Companies. For instance, both as to the loss of life and the danger incurred, level crossings were no doubt a prolific source of accidents. Power was now given to the Board of Trade with regard to railways opened since 1863 to compel the substitution of a bridge for a level crossing, and he was disposed to think that that power might properly be extended so as to apply to all railways; but there, again, he would remind the House that year after year the Board of Trade had objected to level crossings in new Railway Bills, and yet until lately it had been almost invariably the rule that Private Bill Committees had neglected the Reports of the Board of Trade and permitted level crossings. The hon. Member had spoken a good deal of the accidents from the present system of coupling. That was no doubt a great source of accidents to railway servants; but though the method of coupling of which the hon. Gentleman had spoken, might be a great improvement on the want of system which now prevailed, there was no particular method so generally acknowledged as satisfactory that the Board of Trade ought to impose it upon Railway Companies. The Board of Trade ought not to impose any system which was still *sub judice.* It might be said that the block system and the interlocking of points and signals, accompanied by some sort of continuous brake, were things which the Board of Trade ought to have power to enforce. But the hon. Member who seconded the Motion urged that, unless the same form of continuous brake was employed, the danger would not be removed. He was not prepared to say that there was one form of continuous brake so much better than every other form that it should be forced on all the railways of the country. Whatever way they looked at the question they were face to face with considerable difficulties. He had followed the action of his Predecessor at the Board of Trade in declining to include the question of public safety in the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, because he had thought it impossible to deal with the many questions open to discussion which would be then raised without overloading the Bill to a degree which might endanger its becoming law this Session. But he could undertake, in reply to this Motion, that he would carefully look into those points to which he had alluded, and would endeavour, at the earliest opportunity he could find, to ask Parliament to deal with them in the sense he had indicated. He quite agreed with what had been said by the hon. Member as to the importance of obtaining returns from the Railway Companies with regard to overtime. He thought, however, that it would be absolutely impossible to prohibit overtime. You must have it in some cases where there was a special press of work, and what was overtime—he meant in the interest of the public—in one kind of employment would not be overtime in another kind. What was wanted was that the public should know what was being done in the matter. To that point also he would attend. He should be glad to deal with this subject before long, but he was afraid he could hold out no hope of doing so this Session. It would, however, receive his attention, because, while declining to relieve the Railway Companies of responsibility, he felt that there was a responsibility on the Board of Trade to care for the public safety so far as it properly could, and in these minor points he thought something could be done more than was done at present.

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he thought the hon. Gentleman who had moved the Resolution had done well in bringing it forward in a form which made it incumbent on the Government either to promise to legislate on the question or meet the Resolution with a direct negative. He was glad the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade had promised to legislate. Though the right hon.

Baronet's promise was not so full and ample as it could be desired, yet he (Mr. Mundella) thought the fact that the President of the Board of Trade acknowledged that he had not sufficient power to enable him to deal with railways which came before him at the Board of Trade, even to enforce the most reasonable requirements for safety upon some Railway Companies, was in itself an advantage, and one which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Channing) might be congratulated upon. The position of the Board of Trade in relation to railways had been correctly stated by the right hon. Baronet. It was quite true that when a railway was first inspected for the purpose of launching it upon the world, the Board of Trade might make demands upon it, and satisfy itself that in all respects the railway met the most modern requirements, and was about to be worked upon the most approved system; but after the railway had once started, the Board of Trade had no power to enforce even the most established and well-tried arrangements that might be necessary for the public safety. He (Mr. Mundella) remembered a case that was put before him about two years ago. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), who was not now in his place, was President of the Board of Trade, he had before him the case of a Scotch line, which had become very antiquated in all its appliances, and had run down its stock very much and had been subject to several accidents. Although letters were written on the subject and Inspectors reported against the line, nothing could be done to enforce even the most moderate improvements until the railway came to Parliament for a Bill, and then his right hon. Friend said to them: "Until you fulfil the necessary requirements for safety on your line, I will oppose your Bill, and every Bill you may introduce." That showed how utterly helpless the Board of Trade was to enforce upon Railway Companies even the most reasonable requirements for public safety. He (Mr. Mundella) had been very glad to hear the right hon. Baronet opposite enumerate the questions upon which he thought he had established proofs of the utility of appliances which had gone beyond the mere stage of experiment. He (Mr. Mundella) quite admitted that that would be very dangerous indeed to entrust the Board of Trade with power to enforce every new invention upon Railway Companies, but he was quite sure that there was no fear that the Board of Trade would arbitrarily force Railway Companies to unnecessary expense; but in enumerating the respects in which he thought the Board of Trade had a right to force the Companies the right hon. Gentleman had mentioned interlocking signals, continuous brakes, and an efficient block system. The right hon. Baronet, he thought, had expressed some doubt as to coupling, as that question was still *sub judice*, and no doubt it was true that there was no system of automatic coupling which, as yet, had arrived at such a pitch of perfection as to warrant the Board of Trade in requiring the Companies to adopt it. There was no doubt that the Companies themselves were largely interested in the adoption of the best improvements, but with regard to the greatest source of danger to which railway servants were exposed, there could be no doubt that the coupling pole, simple as it was, was efficient and remarkably expeditious. The best proof which he could give of this was to state that he was present at the trial which took place in 1886 at Derby with the whole of the Midland Railway Directors, when a number of trains were ranged before them and were coupled on different systems, and when the coupling pole was used so dexterously by the men in the employment of the Midland Company that the directors were perfectly satisfied that no better or more expeditious system had been up to that moment devised. There could be no doubt that if the coupling pole were in general use there would be a large diminution in the number of those frightful accidents which occurred from time to time amongst railway servants in consequence of the operation of coupling. He had no hesitation in saying that the coupling pole had passed out of the region of experiment into that of accomplished fact. He thought that when the right hon. Baronet brought in his Bill it would be well for him to require in it that railway servants in future should not be under the necessity of coupling by direct process and exposure, but should do the work by coupling poles. He quite agreed that it was marvellous that the passenger traffic of this country could be conducted with so few accidents and with such little loss of life as we generally experienced. It was marvellous that there was to be noticed a steady diminution in the number of passengers who suffered from accidents; but it was to be regretted that that was not quite the case with regard to railway servants. If the right hon. Baronet would refer to the statistics for a few years past—take the last three years for instance—he .would find that in that period not only was there no diminution in the number of accidents to railway servants as compared with the preceding years, but he was afraid they would show rather an increase than otherwise. But it was creditable both to the railway servants and to the whole railway management of the country that passengers could travel with almost absolute impunity so far as loss of life was concerned. The hon. Member for Crewe (Mr. M'Laren) had given them statistics from the Returns of 1887, dealing with the year 1886, and he (Mr. Mundella) found that, whereas only eight passengers were killed from accidents to trains, rolling stock, or permanent way, the number of railway servants killed by accidents to trains was 421, and from other causes 81, making a total of more than 500 railway servants killed besides 2,036 injured in 1886. The record of 1887, he was afraid, was not a favourable one. The concluding paragraph of the Return was as follows:—

> "Thus the total number of accidents reported to the Board of Trade by the several Railway Companies during the year"

—and this included cases of suicide and accidents to persons crossing lines—

> "amounts to 989 persons killed and 7,407 injured."

Well, that was a fearful tale of loss of life and injury occurring annually, and, so far as the railway servants were concerned, they were deserving of all the protection which could possibly be given to them in this House. He found that for the seven years ending in the year 1885, that the number of railway servants absolutely killed in the discharge of their duty was 1,075, whilst the number injured was 10,111. Now, the right hon. Baronet also foreshadowed that, in addition to laying down regulations for the use of such improvements as he had specified in his speech, and which he (Mr. Mundella) had enumerated, that they should have periodical Returns with respect to the hours of overwork and duty during which railway servants were employed. He thought the Return recently moved for by Earl De La Warr had thrown a good deal of light on the hours of duty and long service of railway servants. No doubt, guards and engine drivers of good strength were often shunted to sidings and had to remain there for hours on duty without being actively employed; but, still, when a man was on duty away from home for 19 or 20 hours at a stretch, sometimes exposed to inclement weather, they could hardly expect that diligence and self-control from him that they would have had a right to look forward to from those *employés* under other circumstances. He thought the right hon. Baronet was quite right in not having dealt with this question of safety in the Railway Bill before the House, because that Bill was essentially one for dealing with rates and not with the question of safety. He sincerely hoped that the right hon. Baronet would find time during the present Session to bring in a short Bill dealing with the question, and there could be no reason why that Bill should not be read a second time at once. It would be read a second time almost without discussion, and would go upstairs to the Grand Committee on Trade, and they might even during the present Session secure the passing of a measure which would accomplish very much of what had been foreshadowed. He thought the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Channing) would make a great mistake if he divided the House upon the question after the promise they had received from the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade. The hon. Member had every reason to expect that a fair and adequate measure would be laid before Parliament, and in case that measure should not be so full and ample as he desired, he would have an opportunity when it was before the House of moving Amendments upon it. After the very fair, reasonable, and satisfactory offer which the right hon. Baronet had made, he (Mr. Mundella) thought it would be almost ungracious to divide against him on this question. One word more as to the necessity for the Bill which the right hon. Baronet foreshadowed. The right hon. Baronet was desirous, and rightly so, not to put responsibility on the Board of Trade which ought to be borne by the Railway Companies themselves. Therein, no doubt, the House would support him, but what could be more unsatisfactory, more humiliating than that the officers of the Board of Trade should again and again, year after year, when accidents had occurred, report these accidents to this House without any result whatever following? One illustration of this would be sufficient—and he thought it was referred to by the hon. Member behind him—namely, the case of the Penistone accident. General Hutchinson reported that the collision would no doubt have been prevented if the train had been fitted with a good automatic continuous brake. He added that it was very unsatisfactory to find from the Returns for the half-year ending June 30, that this Company had done nothing towards supplying its rolling stock with automatic brakes, notwithstanding the warning it received in the very serious accident which occurred near Penistone, in July, 1884, when there was reason to believe that had the train been provided with a good automatic brake, the consequence of the accident would have been greatly mitigated. He (Mr. Mundella) could not conceive anything more humiliating than to have to report again and again that certain appliances which were in use in all the best railways, and which were necessary for the safety of the public—that they should report after a frightful accident in 1884, and another in 1885, and another in 1886, and still have no power to enforce their view upon the Company which took no steps to alter the state of things on its line. He sincerely trusted that the right hon. Baronet would strengthen himself against the helpless position in which the Board of Trade found itself. In conclusion, he would merely remark that there was something to be said for the suggestion made by one hon. Member, and that was that if the right hon. Baronet would introduce such a measure as that which he had foreshadowed, that under that measure he would appoint Sub-inspectors whose duty it would be to consider these points. There might only be one or two required, but they should be practical men, familiar with the working of railways, and it should be their duty to inspect the railways and railway management solely with a view to safety, so far as it was affected by the questions dealt with in this Motion. On the whole, he thought they ought to be grateful for the readiness with which the right hon. Baronet had promised to deal with the subject, and he trusted the hon. Member who had moved the Motion would not make the mistake of dividing against such a good offer.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) said, that though it was evident that the House was not in a mood for long speeches this evening, he must ask to be allowed to offer a few remarks on two particular points of the Resolution moved by his hon. Friend. There could be no denying the fact that the amount of overwork imposed on the various classes of railway servants by the excessive labour referred to in the Resolution, was not only injurious to the health of the men themselves, but dangerous to their lives, as well as the safety of the travelling public. The figures contained in the Returns of the Board of Trade disclosed such a state of things that great sympathy had been created for these men. Though they were told this evening by the right hon. Baronet—and they were very glad to hear it—that accidents to travellers on the railways had largely diminished, still there had been no satisfactory reduction in the number of accidents to railway servants themselves, and in the loss of life amongst railway servants; moreover, it was well known that the men were compelled to work under such a system of overtime as could not be conducive to their safety, a system which ought not to be allowed to be carried out to the extent to which it was now adopted, especially considering that these men carried not only their own lives in their hands, so to speak, but also the lives of other people. That it was time to pay attention to this question was evidenced and demonstrated by the fact that the men themselves were now fearlessly taking steps in the matter, and creating public interest in their demand throughout the length and breadth of the land; and if further argument were needed, and facts as well, they had but to follow these men through the various meetings which they now held in several centres to find reasons strong enough to make good their case. At a meeting of railway servants held at Cardiff, a fortnight ago, great interest was taken in the matter, and a resolution on the point was unanimously carried. The resolution was to the effect that that meeting of Cardiff railway men of all grades, and connected with five railways, testified their hearty approval of the action taken by Earl De La Warr, the Nobleman who moved a similar Motion in the other House, for Returns of the number of hours per diem during which railway men were required to work. The meeting declared that whilst the fact of this Nobleman calling public attention to this matter secured nothing to the railway servants through the Board of Trade, yet, as calling public attention to the subject, it would prove a wholesome deterrent, so far as the Railway Companies were concerned. The resolution also expressed a hope that every effort would be made, in and out of Parliament, to secure Returns on an improved plan. The chairman of the meeting had invited those present to give their experience as to prolonged periods of duty, giving it as his own personal opinion that no more conclusive evidence of the existence of a real grievance in that locality could be furnished than by the Board of Trade Returns, which showed that within a period of two months there were no fewer than 2,000 cases of over-work on the Taff Railway alone. A number of railway men accepted the chairman's invitation. The first urged the imperative need to the public, if only for the sake of their own safety, to come forward and insist on making these long hours of duty impossible. This person declared that the present system was not only dangerous to the railway servants and the public, but injurious to the health of the former, and that it had demoralizing effects generally. Another railway man said that the evil was the more pronounced in those cases where the men ended their 15 or 16 or 17 hours work late at night; that in such cases there was always danger of a man's falling asleep at his post. An engine driver at the meeting stated that the Board of Trade Returns, startling as they were, did not reveal the facts in all their soberness. Acting upon the suggestion of the chairman, the men submitted statements as to the hours they were on duty in the week. One man stated that during the past week he had been for two days working 17 hours a-day, one day 13 hours, and the fourth day 22 hours, 69 hours in all, or one hour over 17 hours a-day for four days. In another instance the hours were first day 20, the second day 10 hours, the third day 12, the fourth day 19—61 hours in all, or one hour over 15 hours a-day for four days. A paper was handed to the secretary showing that during the past week an *employé* present at the meeting had put in the following hours:—The first day 23 hours 40 minutes, second day 20 hours, third day 10 hours 30 minutes, fourth day 12 hours, and fifth day 12 hours, in all 88 hours in five days, or half-an-hour over 17½ hours in each of five days. Well, not to carry the matter to an extreme, it appeared to him that 15 hours per day was considered by Railway Directors and Railway Companies to be very fair and reasonable week. Fifteen hours a-day! It was the general experience of railway men of all grades as to the work they had to do that to travel in a train for 10 or 12 hours so unnerved them as to unfit them for further duty for that day, unnerved them more than the hardest day's work they could perform elsewhere. Such appeared to be the result of the shock the nervous system got in a train. That being the case with a traveller in a train, making, if they liked, every reasonable allowance for the usage, and being accustomed to stand on the engines and so forth, what could be said of a man who had to stand on his engine for 15 hours a-day? Not only had a man to stand in charge of a delicate piece of machinery, but he had to be looking out before him, watching this point and that point and turning round and staring about him all day. It was enough to unnerve any man, and it was no wonder that so many of these men were colour blind. The wonder was that they saw so much. It would be no surprise to him if they became stone blind, seeing what they had to do and the hours they had to work. A noble Lord, speaking on this subject in the other House a few days ago, said that there was an order on one of our great railways—namely, the London and North-Western—to the effect that all men who found themselves on duty for 15 hours must immediately report themselves, or report the circumstances to the master at the station at which they stopped, in order that relief might be ready for them at the next available station. Well, that being so, it seemed that that fixed the minimum number of hours work after which the men were entitled to seek relief at 15. They were not entitled to seek relief until they had been on their engines 15 hours per day. Certainly that was not much to boast of—it was not much for a wealthy Company to boast of, much less for the men themselves to be thankful for. Still much capital was made out of this fact that an order had been issued that the men were to be relieved after 15 hours' work. But he ventured to say in this House that that order, though good so far as it went, was either thoroughly impracticable under present arrangements or thoroughly unpopular with the railway officials—either one or the other, or perhaps both. The figures in the Returns alluded to clearly showed that the order had not reduced overwork upon that line to any appreciable degree, for no less than 5,710 cases occurred in one month in which engine drivers and firemen were employed for 16 hours and upwards. To talk about the regulation in face of figures of that kind was inconsistent; and it might with reason be asked if the regulation had lessened overwork at all, what would have been the condition of things if no such regulation had been made? Certainly, he said again, there was nothing to boast of. Had the limit been fixed at 12 or some lesser number of hours, some praise might have been awarded to the Company for this seemingly honest attempt to arrest the practice of working excessive hours; but when the Company allowed 15 hours to be worked before it thought it time to intervene, there was nothing whatever to be thankful for. It appeared to him that though the order in question had done but little good, had it not been made at all these railway servants would have been like perpetual motion machines, required to go round and round and round until they could go round no more—to go round until they dropped at their work, like the colliery horses, which some colliery proprietors worked till they fell, and then turned them aside for new ones.

MR. MAC INNES (Northumberland, Hexham) said, they had all of them to thank his hon. Friend the Member for Northamptonshire for what had been a very interesting and, he thought he might say, a profitable discussion, and perhaps, before the debate terminated, it might not be unreasonable if a few words were said by someone connected with the Railway interest. They had heard a good many suggestions to-night, and, amongst others, it had been proposed by the hon. Member who moved the Resolution, and the hon. Member who seconded it, that increased powers should be put into the hands of the President of the Board of Trade; but he (Mr. Mac Innes), for one, was not surprised to hear both the present holder of that Office and the right hon. Gentleman who sat below (Mr. Mundella) state that they were far from willing to accept that responsibility. The Board of Trade were always likely to be asked to accept fresh responsibilities, and to be pressed in various directions from different quarters. To-night it was suggested that, in addition to the many responsibilities that already rested upon them, they should undertake a further one in connection with railway management, and certainly, so far as Railway Companies were concerned, there was no responsibility they would more gladly see handed over to the President of the Board of Trade, and the officials who surrounded him, than the solemn responsibility of the safety of human life. He (Mr. Mac Innes) did not propose at that late hour to weary the House with any long observations, and he had risen for the purpose merely of saying a few words in reply to the insinuation which had been thrown out that Railway Companies, and those responsible for the management of railways, were indifferent to human life. Much had been said to-night about the small number of fatal accidents amongst railway passengers, and they were thankful that there was such a marked decrease in the number of those accidents; but so long as the railways of this country reckoned their mileage by millions of miles, and the public insisted upon their journeys being effected at great speed, they could not venture to hope that the days of terrible railway accidents were yet passed. So long as railway journeys were run at the present speed, and millions of miles were run every year, so long would they from time to time hear of what the hon. Gentleman below him had styled, and styled justly, those "ghastly accidents;" and when they read, as they were in the habit of reading from time to time, of these terrible accidents, who, did the House think, felt these circumstances most acutely? As people walked along the streets and saw on the newspaper placards the announcement, "Another terrible railway accident," they were all shocked; but to the ordinary passer-by it occasioned no more, possibly, than a sensation for the moment, whilst to the railway man it was something much more—something in the nature of a personal disaster, especially if the accident occurred on a line for which he was in any way responsible. It was not surprising, under the circumstances, that the President of the Board of Trade and the right hon Gentleman the Member for Sheffield both shrunk from responsibility as to the protection of life in connection with railway management. What were the suggestions with regard to the deficiencies of the railway system in connection with the prevention of accidents made to-night? They might be summed up in two words—want of safety appliances and want of further outlay of money. With regard to the first point—namely, want of safety appliances, it had been very well set before the House to-night by the President of the Board of Trade that the Board of Trade were unwilling to take upon themselves the responsibility of deciding upon the relative merits of the various inventions which from time to time were brought before the country. As a matter of fact, the Railway Companies' difficulty in this respect was the difficulty of arriving at a decision between one invention as against another, rather than a question of money. It was difficult for one Railway Company to make up its mind to accept an invention which might to another Railway Company have appeared desirable in preference to several other inventions. He himself had sat for some years on a Railway Board and had heard these questions very frequently discussed. He had heard questions with regard to signals and automatic brakes, couplings, and so on—questions affecting alterations and additions; and whatever might be the points which weighed with the Directors on these occasions, he had never heard any question of money brought forward when it was a matter of the saving of human life. Whenever there was a question of rendering human life more safe or of preventing the occurrence of accidents, he had never heard the money point put forward. Of course, it did not follow that the question of money did not come in, and regard might be had to it, for instance, in connection with a new brake when several inventions were before a Company which were regarded as of equal value in other respects. But when a Railway Company was satisfied that an inventor had made out his case, the money question did not come in. He had risen for the purpose of drawing attention to what had fallen from the hon. Gentleman who had seconded the Resolution, for he had seemed to imply that on this point the Railway Companies were influenced mainly by their pockets. The hon. Member had used several expressions of a rather strong character. He had spoken of the "requisite money" being found and had alluded to the fears entertained with regard to the adoption of certain arrangements curtailing dividends, and fears that greater compensation might have to be paid by the Railway Companies. He (Mr. Mac Innes) altogether denied that properly managed Railway Companies were influenced by such questions as this. The hon. Member had referred to the new coupling-poles, and it was notorious that these had been adopted by some Railway Companies, and that others had not availed themselves of them because they were not yet convinced of their utility. But did anyone think that the expense of purchasing these poles would deter any Railway Company from adopting them if they thought for a moment that they would be efficacious for the purpose of preserving the lives of their servants from danger? He deeply deplored the sad tale of death and suffering which had to be told in connection with the work of railway servants. He welcomed a discussion such as this, because suggestions were desired from every quarter which would tend in any way to diminish the fatalities amongst these people. When he heard the statement made as to greater care being taken of the life of the guard of a passenger train than of the life of the guard of a goods train, he wondered at its being possible for anyone to make such a suggestion; but when the House came to consider the case of a guard of a goods train, they would admit that they were approaching the consideration of a large class of the community who were undoubtedly engaged in a hazardous occupation. They found on all hands, if they looked at the mortality statistics, that there were many classes of the community exposed to far greater risks than others. Members of this House would admit that they and their families were not as a body exposed to such great risks as soldiers, sailors, navvies, dock labourers, and people engaged in rough kinds of work, who, at all times and in all countries, were more exposed to risks than other people. Railway servants must be placed in the same category, for, compared with the condition of other classes of the community, their occupation rendered it necessary for them to run great risks. He, for one, was thankful when he heard of any new appliance being brought out or when he heard any suggestion made, from whatever quarter it came, which tended to diminish the fatal and sad tale of suffering and death which they heard from time to time. With regard to the question of railway servants working overtime, he agreed with what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) that any Railway Company that would allow its servants to work 19 or 20 hours at a stretch was monstrously neglecting its duty; and when he had listened to the remarks of the hon. Member for the Rhondda Valley (Mr. W. Abrahams) he could not help wishing that the hon. Gentleman was able to give them full particulars of the cases to which he referred. He (Mr. Mac Innes) did not know the facts of the cases, but he could almost take it upon himself to say that in no case was a driver ever allowed to drive his engine 15 hours at a time. That, he should imagine, was quite an impossibility. He took it that the circumstances of the cases referred to would be these: that the drivers were in charge of goods trains in specially bad weather during the prevalence of fogs or snowstorms. They must have been detained through blocks from the snow or fog. Drivers were frequently prevented in this way from going forward for some hours, being obliged to remain on a siding or in a station, and beyond the fact that a man would be away from home for the long period referred to, and to some extent would be exposed to the inclemency of the weather, he would not be engaged in driving his engine, or would not be on the footplate the whole time. As to the case to which attention had been drawn of the Company that instructed its men, after 15 hours on duty, to apply for relief at the nearest station, the hon. Member seemed to think that 15 hours was considered the usual and regular working period for the Company's servants. So far as he (Mr. Mac Innes) knew anything about railway management he should say that the hon. Member added something like 50 per cent to the usual period that it was was understood that railway servants were employed. He believed 10 hours a-day was more like the time for which a driver or fireman was expected to remain on duty. Passenger drivers and firemen might be able to keep within those limits, but any hon. Member who thought over the circumstances attending our goods traffic up and down the country, would at once see that in exceptional weather such as we had in the month of January—and he believed the hon. Member's cases occurred in that month—when fog and snow prevailed, fireman and drivers must be detained sometimes for a long period away from home. He (Mr. Mac Innes) was the last man to wish to minimize the facts brought forward by the hon. Member for the Rhondda Valley. It had so happened that a case had been brought under his notice where a driver had been away from home 20¼ hours. The case at first sight appeared most startling, but, on inquiry, it was found that out of these 20¼ hours 10 had been spent at a terminus. No doubt, the man was away from home, and had to report himself on duty for 20¼ hours, but the House would see that the case was very different from that of a man who was employed at his ordinary work for that length of time, although he was reported as doing 20¼ hours' work. He had not risen to speak of this question of overtime, however, but to protest against the insinuation that any question of the curtailment of dividends, or of finding the requisite money for compensation, had any weight with those concerned in the management of our railways when they had to consider that most precious thing—the life and safety not only of the passengers they carried but of those they employed in their service.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said, he would not detain the House for more than a few moments. He regretted very much that in dealing with a question like this affecting the interests of between 200,000 and 300,000 railway servants, there was no person connected with that class in this House. He was sure that the railway servants in the country would be grateful to the hon. Member for Northamptonshire for the very able and lucid manner in which he had brought this matter before the House this evening. They would also be grateful to the President of the Board of Trade—if the right hon. Baronet would allow him to say so—for the conciliatory spirit in which he had received the Motion of the hon. Gentleman. He (Mr. Fenwick) did not claim to speak with any special knowledge of the question affecting railway servants, and his object in rising was chiefly to urge upon the President of the Board of Trade the necessity of doing something, and that as soon as he possibly could see his way clear, to shorten the hours of these railway servants. He was very glad to observe that the right hon. Baronet was much impressed with the important question of overtime, and probably this subject was one which was more prolific of railway accidents than any other cause whatsoever. He would chiefly call the attention of the President of the Board of Trade to a Report which was made on the accident that occurred at Chevington, on the North Eastern Company's line, in the month of October, 1887. The Report, dealing with this accident, was made to the Board of Trade by Major Marindin, and it would probably be within the recollection of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade, what the nature of that Report was. Major Marindin called special attention in his Report to the question of overtime, and after stating that there was a necessity for a greater amount of brake power on goods trains, especially fast goods trains, and stating the necessity for steam brakes on the engines, he said that the attention of the Company should be called to what might be considered as having probably been one of the principal causes of this collision—a collision in which much personal injury was done to those in charge of the train, and in which very considerable damage was done to the rolling stock—and that was the excessively long hours of work of some of the men employed. The House would probably be surprised to learn that one of the drivers in charge of one of these goods trains had been on duty for 17½ hours the day previous to the accident, and went on duty again after having been only allowed 7¼ hours rest. At the time of the accident this man had already been on duty 13½ hours—and if all had gone well he would have remained on duty three hours more—making in all, as Major Marindin said, a period of 31 hours duty out of 38¼ hours, leaving out of consideration the time occupied by the man in going from his home to his work and back. Major Marindin further reported—

> "Such hours of work should not be tolerated, either in justice to the men themselves or in justice to the travelling public, for it is quite impossible for the drivers, however good they may be, to work for such a time without becoming worn out and inattentive and unfit for such responsible duties."

The hon. Gentleman who spoke last (Mr. Mac Innes) had declared that the hon. Member for the Rhondda Valley (Mr. W. Abraham) had overstated the case when he related to the House the circumstance of an engine driver having been on duty 15 hours.

Mr. MAC INNES: I said, I believed he had overstated the case in saying that the man had been 15 hours on his engine.

Mr. FENWICK said, he held in his hand an analysis of the Return which was presented to the House of Lords a short time ago on the Motion of Earl De La Warr. He would not trouble the House with the whole of it, but he would give some figures as to the hours the drivers and firemen were on duty—and whether being on duty meant the driver being on his engine or employed in other responsible work he would leave the House to determine. The number of drivers and firemen in connection with the whole of the Companies given in the Return, who were on duty for 15 hours, was 88,444. Those who were on duty for 16 hours numbered 46,104; those who were on duty for 17 hours were 22,130; and those who were on duty for 18 hours numbered 20,843; so here they had an enormous number of firemen and drivers who were on duty not only for 15 hours but for 18 hours on a stretch. He thought that no hon. Member would be prepared to contend that men were fitted and capable for the discharge of such important duties as railway servants were called upon to discharge after having been on duty either for 18 hours or 15 hours, and he would press on the attention of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade, that in any measure which he intended to present to Parliament on this question he should endeavour, to some extent, to limit or to provide for the reduction of the amount of overtime during which railway servants were called upon to attend to their duties. It was as much in the interest of the travelling public as in the interest of the railway servants themselves that this question was pressed home upon the President of the Board of Trade. They might be told that it was not right for Parliament to interfere with adult labour; but the only way in which justice could be procured by the persons affected was by organizing themselves, and trying conclusions with their employers. That, however, would inflict considerable inconvenience on the travelling public, and the trade and commerce of the district covered by these lines of railway. They all knew what serious inconvenience was caused to the commerce of the country by the strike on the Midland Railway not long ago, and how the President of the Board of Trade had been pressed to interfere in the matter. The railway servants could only bring about a reduction of their hours in the way he pointed out, and if the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade could devise a scheme the effect of which would be to reduce the maximum of overtime work he would be doing good service to the country. No doubt, there would be great difficulty in getting rid of overtime altogether in the case of railway servants, but he hoped that something would be done to diminish the existing evil.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, that before the Motion was withdrawn he wished, as an Irish Member, to say that he agreed more with the putting forward of the Motion than with its withdrawal. He believed that this was one of those Motions designed to elicit a large amount of philosophical sympathy from both sides of the House, and which, having produced that effect, was withdrawn, and never came to anything. If, however, it were marked by a Division, in which the voices of hon. Members would be interpreted by votes, there would be something to go by. He considered that the hon. Member for Northumberland (Mr. Mac Innes) made a very sensible speech; but it must be remembered that hon. Members were not always able to divest themselves of those interests which they largely represented when they were called upon to discuss questions affecting those interests. The hon. Member was one of the Railway Directors who sat in the House, and what he (Mr. E. Harrington) complained of was, that in legislating here in the interests of working men they had opposite to them the monopolist, or his representative — who, though his views on questions of political principle might seem to be in harmony with theirs, was always opposed to them on social or economic questions. The hon. Member had said that it was impossible for a man to be employed for 20¼ hours on duty, and that in such a case it must be borne in mind that a driver would spend 10 hours at a terminus.

Mr. MAC INNES said, that in the Return it was stated that an engine-driver was 20¼ hours on duty, and he had desired the House to understand that when the matter was inquired into that 20¼ hours meant that period of time from home. The man was only 10 hours at work, the remainder of the time being spent at a terminus, where he was able to take refreshments and to go to bed.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON said, that it was obvious if the man was on duty that he was required to keep his eyes open for 20¼ hours. ["No, no!"] Then why was he not allowed to go home? They had it on the authority of the Railway Director who had just spoken that the man was 20¼ hours on duty. It was not a question of generosity on the part of the Railway Companies in dealing with their men, but it was a question how far this House should be called on to interfere for the protection of the public so far as to prevent an engine driver being engaged for 20¼ hours. It was no answer to him to say that the train was drawn up at a station, or that for five or six hours the man was waiting at a siding, and had five or six hours' rest—in the snow, as it had been stated just now. Whether or not it was an accident caused that delay, it must be remembered that every hour after a certain number that a man was on duty added intensely to the irksomeness of his work. He wished to say that the Motion before the House had the sympathy of the Irish railway *employés.* These people were called Railway servants, although they were not, as might be supposed from the use of such a phrase, the *employés* of the State, and the title clearly implied that they ought to have the protection of the State. The moment, however, it was sought to extend to them the protection of the House, several hon. Members representing the railway interest on both sides, stood up and dealt with the question as simply an ordinary one affecting employers and employed. He certainly thought it would be in the interest of justice if the House to-night took a vote upon this question. He would call upon everyone who had no pecuniary or other interest to serve in this matter further than the interest he took in the safety of the public and the interest he took in his constituents, to insist upon a Division. If it was carried to a Division, he should certainly give it his support. He was dissatisfied with the waste of time which had been indulged in eliciting statements of views which they knew every hon. Member held at the bottom of his heart, but which numbers of them abstained from acting on when they came to the practical test of a vote.

MR. CHANNING said, that after the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, he begged leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

CORRUPT LITERATURE.

RESOLUTION.

MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire) said, he rose to call attention to the Motion which stood in his name, and which was as follows:—

"That this House deplores the rapid spread of demoralizing literature in this country, and is of opinion that the law against obscene publications and indecent pictures and prints should be vigorously enforced, and, if necessary, strengthened."

He assured the House that nothing but an imperative sense of duty had led him to take up so painful and so disagreeable a subject—nothing but the knowledge that there had of late years been an immense increase of vile literature in London and throughout the country, and that this literature was working terrible effects upon the morals of the young. Such havoc was it making that he could only look upon it as a gigantic national danger; indeed, he questioned whether at the present time the people of this country were suffering more from the effect of an excessive use of strong drink than they were from the more subtle poison of vile and obscene literature. There was nothing that so corroded the human character, or so sapped the vitality of a nation, as the spread of this noxious and licentious literature, and he believed it was at the bottom of that shocking state of the streets of London, of which they were continual witnesses. The House would readily ask him for proof of his statement that there had been of late years a great development of this evil. He would, in the first place, refer to the public confession of one whom he charged to be the chief culprit in the spread of this pernicious literature—he referred to Mr. Vizetelly, the publisher of French novels, who in *The Pall Mall Gazette* a short time ago boasted that his house had been the means of translating and selling in the English market more than 1,000,000 copies of the worst class of French novels. That statement was made in *The Pall Mall Gazette* without a word of reprobation. Mr. Vizetelly boasted that at the present time he was selling in England 1,000 copies of the writings of Zola. He would quote a few lines from Mr. Vizetelly's statement—

"We, of course, know of the immense popularity of Zola in France and most European countries, and were aware that there was a tolerably large sale for the wretchedly-translated and mutilated American editions of his works imported into this country. After much hesitation, we determined to issue an unabridged translation of *Nana*, suppressing nothing, and merely throwing a slight veil over those passages to which particular exception was likely to be taken. The success of the work, although not rapid, was very complete, and induced us to reproduce the whole of Zola's published novels, and to purchase the English copyrights of all his new ones."

He was quite aware it was inexpedient to advertise works of this kind, but in this case the sale was so enormous throughout the country, the facts were so generally known, that he saw no object now in preserving silence. Of the character of these works he would say nothing more than that he believed nothing more diabolical had ever been written by the pen of man. These novels were only fit for swine, and their constant perusal must turn the mind into something akin to a sty. *The Saturday Review*, a short time ago—

> "Directed the attention of the police to the fact that books which no shop dare expose in Paris, or even in Brussels, are to be seen in windows in London. Books which have only escaped suppression in France through the astounding laxity which has allowed some parts of Paris to become nearly impassable to decent people—on the showing of Parisian papers themselves—are translated and openly advertised."

Some hon. Members might say that *The Saturday Review* was something of a purist, but no one would make such an accusation against *Society*, one of the society papers. This paper said, on the 21st of April last—

> "But of late has come a brutal change over this spirit of not too innocent fun, and the name of the worker of the transformation is Realism, and Zola is his Prophet. Realism, according to latter-day French lights, means nothing, means nothing short of sheer beastliness; it means going out of the way to dig up foul expressions to embody filthy ideas; it means not only the old insinuation of petty intrigue, but the laying bare of social sores in their most loathsome forms; it means the alternation of the brutal directness of the drunken operative of to-day with the flabby sensuality of Corinth in the past. In a word, it is dirt and horror pure and simple; and the good-humoured Englishman, who might smilingly characterize the French novel as 'rather thick' will be disgusted and tired with the inartistic garbage which is to be found in Zola's *La Terre*. Yet Messrs. Vizetelly, of Catherine Street, Strand, are allowed with impunity to publish an almost word for word translation of Zola's bestial *chef d'œuvre*. In the French original its sins were glaring enough in all conscience, but the English version needs but a chapter's perusal to make one sigh for something to take the nasty taste away."

He would now read a few lines as to a very painful incident; at least it struck him as a very painful incident. A writer in *The Sentinel* said—

> "The only acquaintance which the writer of this article has with Zola's novels is from two pages of one of the most notorious of them placed open in the window of a well-known bookseller in the city of London. The matter was of such a leprous character that it would be impossible for any young man who had not learned the Divine secret of self-control to have read it without committing some form of outward sin within twenty-four hours after. In this case a boy, apparently about fourteen years old, was reading the book. The writer immediately went into the shop, and accosting the manager in a loud voice, demanded that he should 'step outside and see this boy reading this infernal book in your window.' The shop was full of customers, and the manager naturally looked thunder-struck. Half-an-hour afterwards, when the writer passed, the book was gone."

Now, he asked were they to stand still while the country was wholly corrupted by literature of this kind. Were they to wait until the moral fibre of the English race was eaten out, as that of the French was almost. Look what such literature had done for France. It overspread that country like a torrent, and its poison was destroying the whole national life. France to-day was rapidly approaching the condition of Rome in the time of the Cæsars. The philosophy of France to-day was "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Some might have seen the very striking article on the present state of France in *The Nineteenth Century*. Mr. Myers, in the article entitled "The Disenchantment of France," pointed out that this kind of literature had led to the decay of all belief in a noble ideal of life, and the degradation into which what the late Mr. Matthew Arnold called the "Worship of the great goddess of Lubricity" had plunged the country, was vividly pourtrayed. Such garbage was simply death to a nation. Were they to wait till this deadly poison spread itself over English soil and killed the life of this great and noble people? Contrast our country with Germany. He passed through Germany last autumn, and made many inquiries as to the social life of the country. Novels of the Zola type were forbidden to be sold; indeed Germany surrounded its children with safeguards which were wholly wanting in this country. Nothing to him was more melancholy than the garbage on which the children of London fed. The chief literature on which London children fed was what was called the penny dreadful and the penny novelette. An enormous circulation of these papers took place; they were sold by hundreds of tons weight; they were almost the entire staple of the reading of many hundreds of thousands of the children of the poor and even of respectable artizans and the middle class. He read some time ago in *The Edinburgh Review* an analysis of the type of street literature that was mainly devoured by the children of London. He would quote a few lines which he thought would impress everyone in the House, as they did him, with a most painful sense of the noxious effect of this unwholesome garbage. The writer in describing very fully the various classes of the cheap penny papers, said—

> "The feast spread for them is ready and abundant, but every dish is a false one, every condiment vile. Every morsel of food is doctored, every draught of wine is drugged; no true hunger is satisfied, no true thirst quenched; and the hapless guests depart with a depraved appetite, and a palate more than ever dead to every pure taste and every perception of what is good and true. Thus entertained and equipped, the wide army of the children of the poor are sent on their way, to take part in the great battle of life, with false views, false impressions, and foul aims. The pictures of men and women to whom they have been introduced are unreal and untrue. The whole drama of life as they see it is a lie from beginning to end, and in it they can play none but a vicious and unhappy part."

Could anyone be surprised at the misery and degradation and immorality that abounded in London when he pictured to himself the intellectual food upon which the children had feasted for so many years? Need they wonder that they were rearing in London a population which to a large extent would prove a source of weakness to the nation? He regretted to say that in a great measure the Elementary Education Act had been a failure on account of the total want of safeguards to protect the children after they left school—on account of the innumerable temptations that surrounded them on every side, and amongst these temptations he ranked the sale of licentious literature, with which we were literally surfeited. This literature penetrated everywhere. He was informed there were men employed as agents going round to the middle class and upper schools of the country in order to place in the hands of boys and girls pictures of a vile kind and advertisements of a vile kind, so as to induce them to purchase these demoralizing works. He was told there was a well organized system of this kind which penetrated into nearly all the schools of the country. He came in contact with many persons who made it the business of their lives to try and rescue the young from these snares. Facts had been brought to his knowledge which had filled him with sadness, facts of so shocking a nature he could scarcely state them to the House. But one which he believed to be thoroughly authentic he would state; he had it from a lady who had investigated it with care and who had ascertained the true facts of the case. It had become the rule with a class of low booksellers in London to provide indecent literature for young girls, to offer them every inducement to come into the shops and read the books, to provide them with private rooms stocked with the vilest class of literature, where on making the small deposit of 6*d.* they were supplied with the literature. And he was told that in many cases these shops were in league with houses of the worst class, to which the girls when their minds were sufficiently polluted and depraved were consigned. This had become a trade carried on to such an extent that he was told there was one street in London where 10 shops were devoted to this purpose. He asked what the law of this country was doing? What were they doing to allow such abominations to continue? They debated and squabbled here about many matters of secondary interest. He maintained that this was a vital matter which lay at the very root of the nation's welfare, and he often wondered at the small amount of time this House spent on questions of this kind, and at the extreme difficulty with which any such question could be brought before the House. He could not conceive any subject with which Parliament, jealous of the highest interests of the nation, ought to be more anxious to deal wisely and rationally than such a question as this. In addition to these books—and if the Home Secretary chose to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the subject, he would supply him with proof of all the statements he made—there was an immense circulation of lewd photographs and prints of every sort and kind of the very worst type. There was an organized system for sending these pictures over the country. Only to-day he was told of a case in which a gentleman in the country received an advertisement of boots and shoes from a house in London, and inside that was a small notice that on application photographs would be sent. He made an application, and a parcel of most indelicate photographs of nude females was sent to him. He (Mr. S. Smith) asserted that in England we suffered from mistaken ideas of liberty. A class of vile scoundrels came over to England simply because the freedom of our laws enabled them to carry on their nefarious trade which their own country probably would not allow. Within his knowledge there was a large number of persons in London who had been driven from abroad, who had suffered imprisonment, and who dare not live in their own countries, because their characters were so well-known; they came here, and brought with them the vilest practices, and carried them on almost untouched. He was sorry to have to add to the papers which degraded the public mind—certain of our sporting papers. He had looked over some of the sporting papers, and he was bound to say that such wretched nonsense, mixed up with a great deal of lewdness, as he found there, it had seldom been his lot to read. How any cultivated man, or rational man, could amuse himself with reading such wretched trash as was printed in some of the sporting papers, he could not understand. Again, when in India, he was surprised to find on all the bookstalls an unlimited supply of French novels, and almost nothing else. He scarcely ever saw upon the stalls the book of any well known literary man; but he was told that the worst class of French novels were bought in tens of thousands, and were regarded as samples of European civilization. He would allude very briefly to another class of books. He had spoken mainly of the cheap literature sold to the masses in immense quantities. He was told there was also a very expensive class of abominable literature now published in London, and that there was a society devoted to the publication of this depraved and lascivious literature. There was one book which had recently been published at 10 guineas. Many Members would know the book to which he referred. It contained the most abominable suggestions, and there was so large a run upon it at the present time that copies were being sold at 26 guineas each. The author, he believed, was on the point of bringing out five additional volumes. He was told that nothing more loathsome had ever been printed; but he supposed there were men of such depraved mind who were only too eager to regale themselves with such filth. Why was it the law did not touch these things? The law had been put in force against the paper called *Town Talk*, and he congratulated the Home Secretary upon the fact that a very bad number of a very bad paper had brought about a prosecution. He noticed that 17 vendors of the paper were fined last week, and very properly so. But he was not aware that the owner or publisher of the paper was fined. Somehow or other our laws touched the weaker and not the stronger; they always struck at the agent and not the author. He asked why was this 10 guinea book, admitted by everyone to be most detestable, allowed to be purchased by the leading clubs of London, and allowed to be circulated in London without the publisher or author being prosecuted? That was a question to which he should like an answer. If there was such a demand for this class of literature, at its present high price, was it not perfectly obvious that in a few years time it would descend to the masses? If it paid the publisher to circulate it at 10 guineas, the time would come when he would publish it at a guinea, and perhaps at 1*s*., and then there would be an enormous overflow of this new class of poison. He was told that catalogues of these books were sent almost all over the country, that the trade was so organized that people were tempted in all parts—in the most remote parts—of the country by the agents of this vile trade. The streets were polluted with the advertisements of quack doctors. One of the greatest evils of late years had been the great increase of quack advertisements of a filthy kind. It was remarked to him the other day, by a gentleman who had spent much time on the Continent, that whereas in Germany he never knew one of these indecent advertisements to be thrust in his hand, when he came to London such advertisements were thrust into his hand frequently.

The well known clauses in the Metropolitan Police Act did not in any way touch the pernicious class of literature which was strewn broadcast in the London streets—namely, pamphlets issued by quacks, and thrust into the hands of every passer-by, and which made statements with regard to secret diseases which were frequently untrue, and which were mostly intended to induce to impurity of life, and also by working upon the fears of the readers to terrify them into consulting the medical quacks whose names might be on the pamphlets. He commended to the notice of the Home Secretary this weighty collection of vile literature, this social nuisance, which, he thought, ought to be dealt with in a far more stringent manner than it had been hitherto. Now he came to the daily Press. His firm conviction was that all these evils had been greatly aggravated, greatly increased, in the last few years by the action of some of our newspapers with regard to the reports of low divorce cases which they had published with such fulness. He believed that the reports of vile divorce cases, published with loathsome plenitude, gave an immense impetus to the demand for indecent literature. They had created a taste for it; because there was this characteristic about this class of reading, that the more a man read, the more he wanted to read. There was no doubt that the loathsome revelations of the Divorce Court some years ago had greatly increased the appetite for indecent literature, and would make it more difficult to stop its spread. If we, as a nation, decided upon new methods of stamping out this horrible disease, this pestilence, we must take some means of purifying the daily Press, and putting limitations on the power of publishing the details of Divorce Court proceedings. The House might ask what remedy he would apply. He would observe the law as it stood, for he thought it was sufficiently stringent. The Act called Lord Campbell's Act, if vigorously worked, would do a great deal to suppress this class of literature; but it was not vigorously worked, it had been allowed to fall into disuse. The administration of the law had become so lax that it was hardly of any value at all. Twenty years ago, no London publisher dared to print and put in circulation such books as were now published; they would have been indicted at once, and sharply and severely punished. But, from a false notion of liberty, we had allowed this plague to spread on all sides, and now many people thought it was too late to do any good. He could not assent to that. He believed that was the pessimism of despair. He believed that if we had an evil to grapple with we should go forward, in the name of God, and grapple with it. Let us attempt to do so, and he believed we would not do so in vain. He was told that magistrates who formerly were perfectly willing to initiate proceedings against the publishers and vendors of this literature now very frequently refused to do so. A case was mentioned to him yesterday in which some vile pictures were submitted to a magistrate, and he declared he could not encourage proceedings in respect of them, on the ground that it would be an interference with what was conceived to be the liberty of the British subject. He (Mr. S. Smith) believed in liberty to do right, but not in liberty to do wrong. He believed that liberty to deprave a fellow-man was much more honoured in the breach than in the observance. He considered the police were very inactive, and that they allowed things to go on which ought not to be permitted. We ought to have a Public Prosecutor. He did not know where the official called the Public Prosecutor was. He believed there was some one known by that title; but he seemed to be asleep, he seemed to have had his wings clipped. It might be said to him (Mr. S. Smith) that private persons ought to institute proceedings. But it was very disagreeable for private persons to take action, because it brought them into a great deal of odium. He believed that we had not done our duty; we ought not to have stood by while this terrible pestilence was spreading throughout the country. In other countries, the State undertook this duty; and he held that, on the whole, it was a much better and thorough way of dealing with this evil. What we wanted to do was to create a sounder public opinion. He believed this House could do that. A good discussion in the House, and a strong condemnation of these detestable practices, would have immense effect on the country. There were many who were wishing to get a little encouragement to put the law in force. He was happy to think the Home Secretary thoroughly sympathized with him. He did not bring the matter forward in any attitude of opposition to the right hon. Gentleman or of the Government. Indeed, he believed the debate would strengthen the hands of the Home Secretary. He was happy to think the right hon. Gentleman was willing to advance so far as the House would encourage him. He hoped the House would send forth such an expression of opinion to-night as would strengthen the hands of the officers of the law in coping with this enormous evil.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That this House deplores the rapid spread of demoralising Literature in this Country, and is of opinion that the Law against obscene publications and indecent pictures and prints should be vigorously enforced and, if necessary, strengthened."—(*Mr. Samuel Smith.*)

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, he thought his hon. Friend the Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) had done a great service to the country by calling attention to this subject, and he trusted the Government would accept the Motion. Some years ago the then Home Secretary, Mr. Bruce, had had his attention called to obscene prints extensively circulated about the streets, and had taken effective action with regard to them.

Mr. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid) said, he did not propose to make a speech in supporting the Motion of the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith), and for the reason that he had no plan to suggest, or any counsel to give, which would enable the Government to deal with this monstrous evil. But it was a matter of great satisfaction to him to be able to raise his voice, along with that of his hon. Friend who had preceded him, in support of a Motion of the kind. He believed that the greatness and the happiness of the nation depended chiefly upon the purity of its morals, and he did not know of a reason which any sane or prudent man could allege in favour of the propagation of indecent and demoralizing literature. He trusted that some endeavour would be made to see whether it was not possible to cope with the terrible evil which the Motion referred to. Unfortunately, the evil affected the class of persons who were least able to resist it. Those who were rich and had comfortable homes might keep the evil from their doors; but the poor, who had little scope for the higher enjoyments of life, naturally picked up the literature which was nearest at hand. It was a terrible evil that this filth should be thrown in the faces of the people day after day; and therefore he hoped that the House, if it did express an opinion on the matter, would speak most emphatically, and be prepared, if necessary, to limit that liberty of publication of which in most respects we were so justly proud. The highest duty of Conservatives was to safeguard the morals of the people; indeed, he was convinced that if they allowed the corruption of moral sentiment which had been going on for years to continue, there was no system of government which could be erected which would long stave off the threatening clouds of revolution.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he was quite sure there was enough in the arguments and facts brought forward to justify the introduction of the subject in that House. He expressed the satisfaction with which he had observed, as a Member for the last two Sessions of the Committee on Police and Sanitary Bills, the growing desire of Local Authorities to take more effective powers against the distribution of demoralizing advertisements and tracts. Local Authorities were taking steps in that matter, and clauses had been introduced into a considerable number of their Police Bills to enable them to deal with it, and, so far as he knew, this had been done without objection from any Member of that House. There was a kind of literature—circulars headed with scriptural texts, and looking like religious tracts —which in effect, though not in name, was demoralizing. He must protest against the action of those well-meaning people who, in their endeavours to improve the condition of the women of India, thought it right to circulate in English homes and among English women and girls a class of literature that was calculated to do permanent harm. He would earnestly entreat them, while thus zealous for the purity of Indian women, not to violate the sanctity of English homes.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, that it was beyond doubt that there had been of recent years a considerable growth of evil and pernicious literature, and that its sale took place with more openness than was formerly the case. The French romantic literature of modern days, of which cheap editions were openly sold in this country, had reached a lower depth of immorality than had ever before been known. In comparing such literature with classical literature, it must be borne in mind that while the latter was written with no evil purpose, the former was written with the object of directing attention to the foulest passions of which human nature was capable, and to depict them in the most attractive forms. Such literature was, in his opinion, calculated to do great harm to the moral health of the country. But it was not only French literature that ought to be condemned, much harm was also done by what the hon. Member had termed the penny dreadfuls, the quack advertisements, and the full reports of divorce cases which appeared in the public daily Press. All such classes of publications were pernicious in the extreme, and they ought to be brought within the reach of the law in every civilized country. It must, however, be remembered that the law in this country was a tolerably effective weapon as it now stood, and that under the powers conferred by Lord Campbell's Act, by the Metropolitan Police Courts Act, and by the Vagrants Act, ample powers were given which, if effectively used, would prevent the circulation of immoral literature. The reason why the law was not more frequently put in force was the difficulty that was experienced in getting juries to draw a hard and fast line and to convict in all cases that crossed that line. He had given careful attention to this question, and he should deprecate handing over to the Public Prosecutor, or anybody else, the task of deciding what was the strait and narrow line which divided what was punishable, criminal, and obscene within the meaning of the law, and what was merely indelicate and coarse. The public judgment was a safer guide than that of any official, and if the general moral sense of the community did not compel individuals to prosecute, no good would be done by trying to create an artificial moral sense by the action of the Public Prosecutor. The hon. Member had done well in directing public attention to the insiduous mischief which resulted from publications which trembled on the verge of indecency and which did much to vitiate the public taste. It would be most unwise and dangerous to direct public attention to certain obscure publications of a filthy character known only to the few by instituting a State prosecution, and thus give that wide advertisement which those who brought them out would desire more than anything else. The hon. Member would do great service if he would give the public authority the facts which he had stated to the House, which, he confessed, were new to himself. It was, indeed, a most deplorable thing that literature of this kind should be supplied to little girls or circulated among boys. There could be no doubt that such acts were within the Criminal Law, and he would certainly on reasonably good evidence direct proceedings if any such facts were brought to his knowledge. He could give the same assurance with respect to advertisements of vicious literature. There was no machinery by which the Public Prosecutor could get information of this kind, and he did not believe that public opinion would tolerate any system of organized spies for the purpose. If, however, everything were brought to the knowledge of the Public Prosecutor by individuals within whose cognizance such crimes came, no time would be lost in putting the law into motion. But serious evils arose from the failure of attempts to obtain conviction upon such charges. So far, however, as he could influence the Public Prosecutor, who was, to some extent, independent of any Public Office and acted on his own discretion, he would certainly urge prosecutions in any cases in which it did not appear that more harm than good would result. He had in his official capacity to consider the case not only of obscene but of blasphemous literature. But on inquiry he found that the offending publications were so contemptible and obscure that much more harm than good would be done by dragging them into the light of day. He was sure, however, that the hon Member and all those who had honest convictions would not shrink from the slight personal inconvenience of putting the law in motion in any case of real public mischief. He had no word to say against the Motion so far as it expressed the hon. Member's opinions on the subject itself, though he could not accept it if it implied any censure of Public Officials.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he had no desire to prolong the discussion by entering upon the legal part of it, so well expounded by the Home Secretary; but he would offer a few remarks in reference to the Motion of the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith), for which he, in common with every Member of the House, had entire sympathy. All were anxious to put a stop to the circulation of this abominable literature, but in this country, and in every country of Europe, the people had been educated to think, and some literature must be provided to meet the intellectual craving. He was glad to say that the spread of healthy literature in this country surpassed anything else of the kind ever known or dreamed of. Hundreds of thousands of standard works were published at so low a price as 6*d.* and even 3*d.* a volume, and the demand for such was enormous. It was not surprising that in this prolific soil some weeds grew up, but he hoped, and really believed, there was not that corruption of the mind of the country going on such as his hon. Friend feared. There was a large demand and a large supply of literature of every class. On the registers of our Sunday schools were the names of 6,000,000 children, a larger number than attended day schools, notwithstanding the compulsory powers of enforcing attendance. Was it not a fact that every one of those children possessed a copy of the scriptures, and were they not supplied with healthy literature at extremely low prices, or that it was lent to them through the libraries? Here was the antidote for this moral poison—the establishment of free libraries in all our large towns. In that respect the Metropolis was behind almost all the large towns of England—there was less public life, less civic spirit in London than anywhere else. As compared with our northern towns, the difference was one hardly realized. In two or three towns with which he was best acquainted—take Nottingham for instance—the Free Library circulated more than 1,000 volumes every day, and in Sheffield something like 500,000 books were lent every year. And that was only a part of the supply, which was supplemented by other institutions, such as mechanics' institutes, clubs, and Colleges, which added a supply of healthy literature to sound teaching. Here he saw the real antidote, the supply of healthy literature, and an intellectual training to preserve the young from the pernicious effects of the poisonous stuff to be met with. Something was said by the hon. Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell) in reference to the circulation among Members of Parliament of pamphlets in reference to what was going on in India and elsewhere.

Mr. F. S. POWELL said, he merely alluded to publications of an apparently religious character, and which he had no doubt were earnestly and sincerely meant to promote the cause of religion and morality, but which contained matter which must be most pernicious and injurious to the moral sense of the young.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he understood the hon. Member to refer to the circulation of letters in reference to practices alleged to be carried on in India.

Mr. F. S. POWELL said, he mentioned no names, and would rather not mention names, because that had the effect of advertising the sheets. He was speaking of periodical publications, intended, no doubt, to be of a religious character.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he would accept the statement in the broadest way the hon. Member would desire to make it; but this he might say—that they—the Legislators—ought to know, and ought not to be afraid to know, the truth, and the whole truth. Whatever was done within the British Empire, discreditable though it might be to our legislation and our moral nature, the House should know of it, and ought not to be afraid to know of it. They ought not to shrink from full knowledge of the facts that had been brought to the notice of Members, and though he should be sorry indeed if some of the circulars that had been placed in his hands recently should fall into the hands of young persons in his house, yet he was glad to know it if such things were done, and under the sanction of our countrymen, the rulers in our great Dependency. Every Member of the House should feel the full responsibility of tolerating such infamy. ["Hear, hear!"] It was in reference to that that he wished to say a word or two. He was anxious as anyone to suppress the publication of anything suggestive of indecency, yet, if indecent practices were carried on, if such things were done with the authority of our countrymen, Members of Parliament at least ought to know of it, if only that they might put an end to the practices, rather than to put an end to the statements that such practices existed.

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) said, for many years he had taken great interest in this most important question, and he sincerely thanked the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) for bringing the subject forward in the manner he had. Thanks, also, were due to the Home Secretary for the fair and candid manner in which he had met the Motion and expressed his desire, speaking with legal authority, to put down the pernicious growth of impure literature among us. As to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Flintshire, he (Mr. Mark Stewart) could not help thinking—and he had mentioned it before—that we must mainly look to other than legal process to check the spread of this literature. We should look to those large agencies, those societies that had done so much in the past, and would continue their work, to spread abroad the means of becoming acquainted with healthy literature. Of course, it was difficult, when a prosecution was instituted, to obtain a conviction on the merits of the case, and failure to convict increased the evil. But in town and country those agencies to which he referred were exercising a most salutary effect by depôts in towns, by colporteurs in country districts. In too many of the lowest parts of towns unwholesome literature circulated, because it was all that was at hand; but the efforts of the associations for the spread of literature of a wholesome class were directed to inducing shops to supply the better class of reading, and there was no unwillingness on the part of traders to do this when it was shown to them that it was their interest to do so. That he had on the testimony of a friend who visited the back streets and slums with that object in view, and had paid some 20,000 visits to shops which sold the bad reading for the masses. Those interested should give every encouragement to the good work. Meanwhile the schoolmaster was abroad; every child could read, and was eager to read, and should have within reach that which was, while interesting, instructive and religious in tone. The work was difficult, yet could be carried on by judiciously selecting centres and providing shops, stalls, and colporteurs to meet and to encourage demand. Much could be done in that way to promote the view expressed in the Motion. With regard to what had been said about the circulation of papers in reference to matters that had been commented upon in the House, though it might be useful to bring such matters to light, yet it should be done by some less indiscriminate method than had been adopted.

Mr. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth) said, there was much in the speech of the Home Secretary that must give general satisfaction; but his hon. Friend (Mr. Smith) had made one reference as to which some explanation would have been desirable. His hon. Friend referred to a recent prosecution for the sale of a certain publication, and rather pointedly challenged the Home Secretary to say why he did not proceed against the publisher, instead of the lads who were selling the publication. Unless there was a good reason for it—and for aught he knew there might be a sufficient answer—it did seem to him rather unfair to allow the prosecution of the sellers, while the greater sinner who made the larger profit, the publisher, was left untouched. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield for his remarks in reference to what had been said by the hon. Member for Wigan, and as one who had had a good deal to do with such matters, he could assure the latter that it was with the greatest regret this literature was circulated to Members in reference to the working of the Contagious Diseases Act; but it was the only way to make the truth known, and the only way to stop the dissemination of such statements was to put an end to the horrible system that rendered such dissemination necessary.

Mr. S. SMITH said, he desired to take the sense of the House on the question, not in the spirit of any censure whatever upon the Government, for he entirely sympathized with and heartily reciprocated the language of the Home Secretary; nothing could be more satisfactory. To the Motion, be believed, there was no opposition, and it would, no doubt, be accepted unanimously. This unanimous judgment of the House would have a very useful effect out-of-doors.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS—PARLIAMENTARY GRANTS.—RESOLUTION.

Mr. KERANS (Lincoln) said, in rising to address the House for the first time, he would offer no apology, for he had been a silent Member for two years; but he would ask indulgence while he endeavoured, with brevity, to put the case in support of the Resolution of which he had given Notice. As nearly every Member of the House would be aware, on reading the Resolution, it was practically directed to what was called Article 114 of the Education Code. That Article was founded on previous enactments, and the effect of it, briefly, was to restrict to a very large extent the Parliamentary grants made to voluntary schools by the Article; if the subscriptions and fees did not amount to the sum claimed as a Parliamentary grant, then by so much was the Parliamentary grant reduced. To begin with, he might say that he had had the advantage of a conversation with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella), who had, to a large extent, made him understand exactly how that came about. When the Education Act was passed, there was no school entitled to a grant of more than 15*s.* 9*d.*, and it was scarcely conceived possible that any school would reach the limit of 17*s.* 6*d.* But owing mainly to the establishment of board schools, and the impetus given to education in a large majority of schools, that limit was reached or exceeded. But it must be obvious to any hon. Member who had considered the question, that now that the grant was so often exceeded, there must be numerous cases of hardship connected with its allocation, that while in richer districts it might be easy to raise subscriptions to equal the Parliamentary grant, in poor districts it was extremely hard to do so. That applied not only to Church schools, but even more severely to those belonging to other and poorer Bodies. He would ask the House to consider whether it was fair or just in practice that a poor district, where the rateable value of property was extremely low, should be mulcted in a certain amount of the Parliamentary grant, while in a richer district, where rates were high, the whole grant was retained without difficulty. It was such a practical injustice that no man could avoid seeing it. In the Education Act of 1870, Section 97, Sub-section 2, it was provided that the grant—

> "Shall not, in any year, exceed the income of the year derived from voluntary subscriptions from school fees or from other sources except the Parliamentary grant."

No doubt, Parliament saw the injustice of this hard and fast line, for in the Act of 1876, Section 19, Sub-section 1, it enacted that such grant should not be reduced in any one year by reason of its excess above the income of the school if the amount of the grant did not exceed 17*s.* 6*d.* per child in average attendance, but should not exceed that except in proportion to the amount raised from school fees or other sources than the Parliamentary grant. He drew attention to the latter part of the Sub-section, for it provided that a school which had an endowment was entitled to the grant, whereas one would think that in the case of an endowment the amount of that endowment would be deducted from the Parliamentary grant. Such, however, was the present state of the law. He should be very reluctant to obtrude this matter on the House, if only for the reason that a Royal Commission was at the present time sitting to inquire into the subject of education; but he was still more reluctant, because the Vice President of the Council had given him reason to believe that the Government would consider with all earnestness this question of grants to voluntary schools. He would not detain the House longer; he would merely ask the Vice President to say whether there was any intention on the part of the Government to deal with the matter, which was one of extreme importance to the voluntary schools of the country. There were some doctrinaires who would have all education free, and would suppress all voluntary schools; but even those doctrinaires would admit that the time had not arrived yet for imposing such an additional burden as this would involve upon the taxpayers and ratepayers of the country. Meanwhile, until public opinion was ripe for such a change as that, they should do their best to remedy the defects in the Act and to complete the educational system on its present lines as far as possible with the growing demands of the country.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston), in seconding the Motion, said, he did not consider that any apology was needed for bringing it forward or supporting it; nor did he think that the possibility of the establishment, at some future time, of a general system of free schools was any reason against bringing forward any tangible and existing grievance. He was glad to have the opportunity of referring to the subject, for it was one that affected his own constituency. It was unnecessary again to travel over the explanation his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Kerans) had given of the manner in which the hardship to voluntary schools arose; but he should like to point out how the position of voluntary schools was affected as compared with board schools, and for that purpose he took two cases—a town having a school board and board schools; and one, like his own constituency, without a school board or board schools. The board school received its Government grant, and was never in danger of having that grant diminished, for it had always the power of going to the rates to make up a deficiency in other resources. But, on the other hand, there might be a school which, to its credit, had been carrying on an excellent system of education for years, put in a position of disadvantage by reason of the establishment of a board school, and, in the result, the voluntary school was mulcted of its fair share of the Government grant, gradually brought into a condition of decay, and the rates, as in London, were very largely increased by the consequent discontinuance of efficient voluntary schools. Where there were no board schools, there might be schools not rich enough to find from their own resources the requisite proportionate sum to meet the Government grant; they might be good schools, might give an education equal to any board school, but yet might find themselves in imminent danger of losing part of the Government grant, being in a poor neighbourhood and not having subscriptions or endowments to supplement the school pence. The education might be as good or better than that in the schools receiving the full Government grant, and yet, because they were unable to raise the sum equal to the Government grant, they were made still poorer by being mulcted of a portion of that grant. They had no power to call in the aid of the rates, and were deprived of that Government assistance their efficiency entitled them to, and were thus punished for their efficiency. In this there was a distinct hardship. He knew this matter was under the consideration of the Royal Commission, which he hoped would report before long, and that then the House would deal thoroughly with what was a serious mischief; but, at the same time, there was an advantage in calling public attention to what was keenly felt as a serious hardship to voluntary schools.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the principle of the Parliamentary Grant in aid of Voluntary Schools is unjust, and that the Grant should be allocated rather in proportion to the poverty of School Districts than their wealth."—(*Mr. Kerans.*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford) said, that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Lincoln (Mr. Kerans), who had brought forward the question, had himself mentioned that a Royal Commission was now inquiring into educational matters, and he must be aware that among the many thorny and difficult points with which that Commission had to deal, one of the most thorny and difficult of them related to the present Parliamentary grants and their bearing on board schools and the voluntary schools of the country. His hon. Friend would therefore not be surprised if he declined at present to enter upon the subject which he had introduced, seeing that the Report of the Commission would probably be placed in their hands before many weeks were over. When the recommendations of the Commissioners came to be considered, that question of the grant would, no doubt, have to receive the attention of the Government and of Parliament before long. Although he

(Sir William Hart Dyke) must now refrain from entering into the broader aspect of the question raised by his hon. Friend, he might, however, assure him, in regard to some minor points, that the interests of the voluntary schools in the poorer districts had not been neglected by the Education Department. The Department had for years strongly urged on the Inspectors that in the distribution of the merit grant reasonable allowance should be made for special circumstances — such as the shifting, or scattered, or poor character of the population of the district, or any other circumstance which made attendance at school difficult; and those instructions had been invariably followed—a fact which had proved of some advantage to the poorer class of schools. Again, Article 111 of the Code dealt with exceptionally poor districts with populations of 300 and 200. He found that in 1878, 614 schools connected with the Church of England were dealt with under the £10 grant, which applied to the case of 300 population; and 249 schools under the larger grant of £15 where the population was 200, making together a total of 863 schools in 1878 receiving a total grant of £9,742. In 1887, on the other hand, there were 1,261 schools dealt with under the £10 grant and 811 under the £15 grant; the total amount of the grant they received being £24,968, as against £9,742 in 1878. Another point in which some further advantage had been given to the voluntary schools was in regard to drawing, as to which some change was made in the Code last year. In conclusion, he could assure his hon. Friend that when the Report of the Commission had been presented, the grave subject which his hon. Friend had brought forward would be fully and adequately considered by the Government.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

——o——

OFFICE UNDER THE CROWN (VACATING OF SEATS) BILL.

(*Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Francis Stevenson, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Seager Hunt.*)

[BILL 98.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) said, he feared it was hopeless to attempt to move the second reading of the Bill at the very end of a Sitting—[*Cries of* "Move!"]—or to do much to win votes or sustain the arguments in favour of the Bill; yet he would essay to do what he could in the few minutes at his disposal. The Bill, no doubt, dealt with an important Constitutional principle; and it would ill become him to minimize its importance, though it occupied but four lines. He was quite aware that, dealing with what had long been a recognized Parliamentary custom, some apology was due from a junior Member for proposing to make such a Constitutional change. But, perhaps, a private Member was more able than an occupant of the Front Benches to advocate the Bill, inasmuch as right hon. Gentlemen might be suspected of some sinister motive, begotten of the desire to relieve themselves of the inconvenience of going through re-election when taking Office. As time was fast running out, perhaps he had better content himself with simply moving the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. W. F. Lawrence.*)

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) said, it was rather a strong measure to ask the House, at such an hour, to introduce such an important innovation in the Parliamentary and Constitutional practice of the country. Perhaps his hon. Friend was not aware that similar proposals to his had been made on previous occasions, and had always been opposed by the Leaders of either Party. It might be true that the original motives for that law had disappeared; but other reasons not to be neglected had come into play. Of course, as could readily be imagined, causes and combinations in Parliament might give rise to well-founded popular jealousy, and continue to afford justification for the principle that was attacked in the Bill. He was, perhaps, better able than others of his Colleagues who sat on that Bench to discuss the question, for he was not one of those whose position was affected by the operation of the law; but he did not think that his hon. Friend seriously meant that the expediency of such an important Constitutional change could be argued at such a time, and still less that it could be assented to without discussion. It was a matter that required the well-considered judgment of the House before any such proposal could be entertained.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said, bearing in mind the fact that a Bill would shortly come before the consideration of the House to provide a right hon. and gallant Gentleman who sat on the Front Bench with a salary in connection with a post that had lately been manufactured for him, he really thought this subject might have called forth a more fitting response from some Minister on the Front Bench. [*Laughter.*] It was in accordance with the usual treatment of Ireland by the dominant Party that Irish Members and Irish Bills should find a lack of courtesy and consideration. [*Laughter.*] But, to imitate the Chief Secretary, he treated the laughs and sneers of the Tory Party with the respect they deserved. When a Member of the House obtained a position of lucrative importance in the Government, he certainly ought to vacate his seat, in order that the constituency might express their judgment whether he was worthy of the reward, and fit to continue their Representative. The appointment of a Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and the provision of his salary was not now before the House; but it would be dealt with when it was. But when a right hon. and gallant Gentleman had such a position manufactured for him, and when a Bill like this was introduced, he sincerely hoped it was introduced in sober earnest, and not as a mere cat's-paw to be brought on late at night, in order that a Member of the Government might get up and say it was too late for serious consideration. He had been in the habit of opposing Bills brought forward at a late hour; but here was a subject that really called for a speedy determination.

Mr. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) said, he had great pleasure in supporting the Bill, and he felt very much disappointed at the way in which it had been received. The Bill was intended to abolish a practice obsolete, useless, and injurious to the country——

Mr. Stuart-Wortley

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon *Friday* 8th June.

MERCHANT SEAMEN (WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' PENSIONS) BILL.

Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Merchant Seamen (Widows' and Orphans' Pensions) Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 9th *May,* 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Suffragans' Nomination [35], *debate adjourned;* Public Houses (Ireland) (Saturday Closing) [3], *referred to Select Committee on* "Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland)."

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PUBLIC HOUSES (IRELAND) (SATURDAY CLOSING) BILL.—[Bill 3.]

(*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Lea.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone S.), in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said: I am glad to say that I need not trouble the House at any length in moving the second reading of this Bill. It is a question of great simplicity, and upon which in Ireland there is a considerable consensus of opinion. Within the last 10 years two Committees have sat, one in this House in 1877, and one in the House of Lords in

1878, and have inquired into the general question of the curtailment of the hours for the sale of intoxicating liquors in Ireland, and before these Committees a large amount of evidence was given applicable to the object of this Bill; and in not one single instance, either in 1878 or before the Committee of this House, has a witness given evidence hostile to the earlier closing of public-houses on Saturday night. All the witnesses have agreed that the reduction of the hours for the sale on Saturday night would be an unmixed blessing. I take the City of Dublin first. Since I became a citizen of Dublin we have had three Chief Commissioners of Police—Sir Henry Lake, Colonel Talbot, and Mr. Harrel—and each of these three officers is strongly in favour of early closing on Saturday night, differing as to the exact hour of closing that should be recommended, but agreeing in the principle of this Bill. Colonel Talbot, in his evidence before the Lords' Committee in 1878, closes his remarks by strongly advocating the closing of public-houses at an earlier hour. Mr. O'Donel, the Chief Police Magistrate of Dublin, gave evidence before the same Committee, and the House will find that in answer to Question 2,069 he expressed an opinion on earlier closing on Saturday, and had no hesitation in saying it would have a great effect in improving the moral condition of the population, removing the temptation to waste wages, and the consequent impoverishment of the working classes. More damage was done, he said, by drunkenness, violence, and disorder of every description between 6 and 11 on Saturday evening than in the whole of the rest of the week put together. Mr. Woodlock, another magistrate, gave similar evidence. I find in answer to Question 1,629 he said—

> "On Saturday night drunkenness reigns supreme in Dublin, and wages are spent in the most degrading manner,"

and he goes on to recommend closing not later than 7. So, whether you take Police Commissioners or Police Magistrates that have had charge of the affairs of Dublin during the last 25 years, there is not the slightest difference of opinion as to the propriety of closing at an earlier hour on Saturday. There is another witness I will call, and I am sure he will not be called a partial witness on my side. Many hon. Members will remember Mr. Michael Dwyer, late Secretary to the Publicans' Society. He says in his evidence—

> "I think that many persons even engaged in the trade—who, after all, are not so callous to the evils that exist in connection with it as may be supposed—know that there is an immense waste of wages and consequent misery caused by the excess of drinking on Saturday night."

Then, when asked—

> "Do you consider that the Saturday evening state of things is an imaginary evil?" he replied, "I do not; it is a real evil."

I will not hesitate to say that, in addition to this evidence I have cited from magistrates, officials, and the Secretary of the Publicans' Society, you will not find a Catholic or Protestant clergyman in the whole City of Dublin who has not agreed in the reality of the evil, and warmly expressed an opinion in favour of the change proposed by this Bill. Next I go to Belfast, the next town in importance and population, and I give the evidence of Mr. Thynne, before the same Committee. He was then District Inspector; he is now Deputy Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary. There is his evidence, found under Question 3,902.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg pardon. From what is the hon. Gentleman quoting? I did not catch the reference.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I am about to read the evidence of Mr. Thynne, given before the Committee of 1878. He says—

> "The drinking on Saturday nights in Belfast is something frightful. They keep the public-houses open until the last moment, and the working classes make their marketing generally on Saturday nights, when they spend a great deal of their money in public-houses. It is a most melancholy sight to see the working classes getting home after the public-houses are closed on Saturday evening. The arrests are no index to the extent of the drinking that goes on, because for every man arrested hundreds go home in a half-drunken state, and the police do not interfere with them if they can get them to go home. The drinking on Saturday night is very bad indeed."

Then the witness goes on to say—

> "It is not only possible but advisable to shorten the hours of sale on Saturday. I would say that they should close at 9 o'clock at the furthest, but I would be more inclined to say 8 o'clock. I think one of the greatest boons that you could confer on the working classes of Belfast would be to close the public-houses early on Saturday night."

Then I could quote to you the opinion of Bishops, Catholic and Protestant, fully and entirely in favour of Saturday early closing, though some of the Catholic Bishops are opposed to Sunday closing. Next I take a witness from the City of Cork. Some hon. Members will remember him—Mr. Nicholas Dan Murphy, who once represented Cork in this House, and who fought the Sunday Closing Bill in 1878 in the most pertinacious fashion. Mr. Murphy was examined before the Lords' Committee in 1878, and, in reply to a question from the Duke of Westminster, he said—

> "Speaking generally, I would be in favour of shortening the hours on Saturday."

When we get this from Mr. Murphy, when we put him in the box, I think we may fairly say—"Saul also is among the prophets." Then I quote a witness from Limerick—Mr. William Spaight—a magistrate, and I think twice Mayor. He says—

> "I would like to have closing at 7 o'clock on Saturday, closing on all Sunday, and not opening before 9 on Monday. I believe, if that were done, very rarely would people lose their work on Monday, as now they do."

In closing my references to the evidence, I desire to say that police opinion is unanimous throughout the country; that a great majority of the clergy, Catholic and Protestant, are in favour of the principle of the Bill; and amongst the representatives of working men who before the Committee supported or opposed Sunday closing there was a general opinion in favour of earlier closing on Saturday. To put it in the words of the Secretary of the Brassfounders' Society, "I do not think they would oppose it." Practically there is no opposition to my proposal, save and except from a certain class of licensed traders. I claim for the Bill that its proposal is very moderate. I do not propose to close public-houses on Saturday night all over Ireland at 9 o'clock. I take towns of 10,000 inhabitants and over and there apply this hour of closing on Saturday. I do not think that the evils of Saturday night drinking are equal in the country and in towns, and I confine the Bill to those places where the evil has principally to be dealt with. I am very anxious to hear the objections that will be urged against the Bill. I know we shall be told that the Corporation of Dublin have petitioned against the Bill. Of the Corporation of Dublin this much I may say—it is a very important Body, and I am not going to underrate its authority, but they were never elected upon that issue, and they passed their resolution for a Petition against the Bill before the Bill was printed, before they knew what it was. I saw the Petition presented at the Bar of the House by the *locum tenens* of the Lord Mayor, and I confess that gentleman played an appropriate part, for, divested of his robes, I discovered in him one of the biggest publicans in Dublin (Alderman O'Connor). He presented a Petition against the Bill from the Corporation of Dublin—not a disinterested Body entirely, seeing that 21 of its members are more or less interested in the drink trade. I know they are not all publicans, but every man who sells drink, one way or another, or who makes it, is interested in the trade. Members of Public Bodies all over Ireland are largely interested in the drink trade. I am not complaining of it, but only stating the fact, and the mere fact, that one or two of those bodies have presented Petitions against the Bill must not delude the House as to the merits of the question. I may be told that this earlier closing will be a serious inconvenience to working men who have to do their marketing and shopping on Saturday night, and I quite admit that there may be something in that argument, because the publicans in Ireland are often grocers and provision sellers as well. That is a great misfortune, but it is a fact. I am not underrating the objection, but this much I may say: that it is not a great objection; that in many cases wages are paid on Friday night, and, therefore, abundant opportunity is presented for shopping. Other wages were paid at 2 o'clock on Saturday, and, again, there was ample time to make purchases. In Dublin shop hours are late, and it would be a good thing to try and make them a little earlier. I advocate no violent social revolution. The change can do nobody any harm, and it will do a great deal of good. There is another argument I confess I approach with regret. It is an argument advanced by the Licensed Victuallers' Society, and I am told in the ordinary channels of information that it is adopted by the hon.

Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), and so I treat it with all respect. I am told that Irish social questions are not to be further meddled with by this House—they ought to be left to be dealt with by an Irish Parliament or by Local Government Boards. I will dispose of the last reference first. So far as the Local Government question is concerned, I may point out that even if the present English Local Government Bill were applied to Ireland, it would not touch Saturday night closing at all, because the Local Authorities get no power to deal with the liquor traffic on any day but Sunday. Therefore, the Local Government Bill does not touch the principle of my Bill. Then I am told by the Dublin Corporation and the Licensed Victuallers' Society that all these questions are to be left over for an Irish Parliament. I do not pretend to enter upon the political aspect of that question at all. There may be a good deal to be said for it, but it is unfortunate that it is an argument that is sprung upon us for the first time in connection with this Bill. There are on the Order Book of this House 25 or 30 Bills proposing to deal with education in Ireland, with national schools, with lunatic asylums, and everything known to Irish public life. These Bills are entered on the Order Book in the names of Irish Members, and I have never yet heard that they do not propose to ask the House to deal with these questions, but to leave them over for the decision of an Irish Parliament. I detect where the argument comes from, and, speaking as a politician, I should rejoice in what it contains. It would furnish me such an immense lever to appeal to the Temperance Party, and to show them, and prove up to the hilt, that the Irish Parliament would be dominated by the public-house interest, and that Irish Members are afraid to have this subject settled here—but I hope the argument will not seriously be put forward. As a politician, I should rejoice at it; but as a social reformer I should be heartily sorry if that argument is pressed. But what does it mean, the asking that the question should be relegated to an Irish Parliament? It emanates only from Irish drink-sellers. I challenge anyone to show me any authority, police, clerical, magisterial, or working men, to show there is any demand for the postponement of this question to the Greek Kalends or an Irish Parliament. No; I say, in default of any other argument, the publicans are driven to this line of defence. It is not a *bonâ fide* opposition that has been raised—it is a trade appeal to the National sentiment to stand by them in this matter. We hear much—not too much—of the woes of Irish tenant farmers, and hon. Members below the Gangway have done their best to mitigate the woes and relieve the hard lot of Irish tenants, and I have done what I could to help them; but I want to know this distinctly—are Irish tenant farmers the only class in the community to be relieved from real evils, from real grievances? The Irish tenant farmers have votes; they can fight their own battles; but the people I stand up to plead for to-day in my place in the House of Commons have no votes. I stand here to plead for the women and helpless children in our large cities and towns who are defrauded of their support from weekly wages by the public-houses being kept open till 11 o'clock. Let hon. Members think of the City of Dublin alone with its 30,000 families, or 150,000 human beings, living on an average in a room and a half each family, and of the public-houses blazing up brightly to an hour before midnight, and crowded with working men and labourers spending their money that ought to go to feed, sustain, clothe, and educate their children, and to make the lives of their wives and families happy and joyous instead of being a curse. I plead on behalf of these women and children who are without help or hope. I ask you to think of these deserted children without a chance in life. Are you not prepared to help them? Surely the House has not expended all its sympathy in helping tenant farmers, and will not refuse to help those who have not votes, but who plead for protection against the temptation of this most terrible of all curses. I have had experience that has not fallen to the lot of all hon. Members during the 25 years I have given earnest attention to this subject. I have been into the lanes and alleys. I have seen the men reeling home drunk. I have seen "the vitriol madness flashing up in the ruffian's brain." I have heard the filthy byeways "ring with the yell of the trampled wife;" and I say now, when there is no case for opposition, when the principle is sustained by public opinion, and even by those who have opposed Sunday closing—I say, when the moderation of my proposal is seen, I do not think the House will be disposed to put this aside to wait for an Irish Parliament. I will not say a word against an Irish Parliament now, nor discuss the propriety of this being settled by a Local Authority in Ireland better than here. I am not going to deal with that question at all. The House of Commons is here to legislate for the United Kingdom, and I think it is not likely to abrogate its rights until it has solemnly resolved to do so. Certainly, it is not likely to do so on a side issue like this. I ask the House to do something to mitigate the evil—to stay this plague of Saturday night drinking in our large towns. I shall be no party to postponement. I shall ask the House to give its decision to-day. If the House grants a second reading, I propose that the Bill should be sent to the Select Committee upstairs which is inquiring into the working of the Sunday Closing Act, and that the Committee be authorized to report upon it. Hon. Gentlemen who are Members of that Committee know that Saturday and Sunday drinking are inextricably mixed; that it is impossible to inquire into one without taking evidence on the other. To that Committee I would refer the Bill, and in the light of the evidence they will report to the House upon it. I am sure that if the House reads the Bill a second time it will be supported by public opinion in Ireland.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) said, he rose for the purpose of moving the Amendment which stood in his name—namely, that the Bill be read a second time that day six months; and he would also ask the House, if it should accede to the request of the hon. Member who moved the second reading, not to send the Bill for consideration to the Select Committee which was sitting upstairs. It was well known that he (Mr. J. O'Connor) had, to some extent, opposed the constitution of that Committee. He had opposed it on the ground that it was unfairly constituted, and he had endeavoured to show, by a criticism of its component parts, that those who were in favour of the views of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down were largely in the ascendant in the Committee, which made that body incompetent to deal fairly with the subjects placed before it for consideration. The hon. Member who moved the second reading had indulged in some very severe criticism of those who wished to postpone the consideration of this very important question until Ireland had the management of her own affairs, and he had said that there were other subjects brought before the House for consideration and decision, such as the education question. But the hon. Member must be aware that the Bishops of Ireland had postponed the consideration of the subject of education—he must be aware that they did not agitate that question for many years past, because they entertained the hope that it would be relegated to an Irish Parliament.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, he had referred to the National School teachers.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR said, the hon. Member shifted his position, of course. He now stated that he was speaking of the National School teachers; but even with regard to the National School teachers it must be pointed out that that body had done nothing for the past few years, except to apply to the House for grants of money to supplement their small salaries until such time as a Parliament on College Green had had an opportunity of deciding upon the justice of their claim. The hon. Member had also said that the publican element would dominate an Irish Parliament; but he (Mr. J. O'Connor) would venture to assert and to remind the hon. Member that there were those to-day who would take up a position in opposition to him (Mr. T. W. Russell) who were just as independent as he was, who were just as independent of domination as anyone else, and who would bring to the consideration of any subject which could be brought before this Parliament minds as free from bias, and as capable of deciding on the justice of the case, as the hon. Member himself. The Irish Members had other reasons, however, for asking the House not to decide on this important question. In dealing with the licensing question in England, it had been proposed to leave it to the

Local Bodies about to be formed under the new Local Government Bill. The House very properly postponed the consideration of this matter in which large interests were involved, and placed it in the hands of those who were best able to deal with it—namely, the Local Bodies about to be formed, and all that the opponents of the Bill asked for was that the consideration of this subject should be postponed until Local Bodies either of a national or other character were established in Ireland, for those Bodies would best understand the interests at stake, and would be best able to legislate on the matter on principles of justice. The hon. Member who moved the second reading had said that there was a consensus of opinion in favour of the measure; but had the hon. Member brought before the House one expression in favour of the curtailment of the hours of opening on Saturdays? Had the hon. Gentleman given them any evidence of that consensus of opinion? None whatever, because there had been no expression of opinion in favour of the Bill; but, on the contrary, there had been expressions against the Bill, and very decided expressions too. He would endeavour to place these expressions of opinion before the House. First and foremost, they had an expression of opinion from the leading Local Body in Ireland — namely, the Dublin Corporation, which had been criticized so very adversely by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). The hon. Member had said that that Corporation was dominated by the publican element; but he had failed to state that the resolution which was passed, and the Petition which was agreed to by that Body almost unanimously, had been moved by a man who had been once a Member of this House, and who had no connection whatever with the interests at stake, and that it was seconded by another gentleman who had no connection with the trade whatever — he referred to Alderman Dawson and Alderman Dillon. That resolution was also supported by Mr. Doherty, a man who occupied a very high social position in Dublin, a man who had been a teetotaller all his life, and who was engaged in large transactions in the building trade, where he employed a large number of hands. That resolution was passed by a Corporation the majority of whose members were not connected with the liquor trade. The fact was that there were comparatively few publicans voting on that occasion, and the vast majority of those who passed the Petition had no connection with the trade, as the hon. Member very well knew.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that he had not stated that this Petition was passed by persons connected with the trade.

MR. J. O'CONNOR said, the hon. Member should not have made any statement concerning the matter. He had failed to point out for the information of the House that two-thirds of those who signed the Petition in the Corporation were connected with the trade. What was that Petition? He would read it to the House. After several paragraphs of an introductory character, it said—

> "That inasmuch as the supply of drink is not confined to what is sold on licensed premises, your Petitioners fear the result, should the public be driven to resort to those illicit and other sources for procuring drink which are, unfortunately, so numerous in Dublin and other large cities. That measures granting increased facilities for the better housing of the artizan and labouring population of cities and large towns in Ireland would be better calculated than any restrictive measures could be to create a steady, decided, and progressive improvement in the morals and manners of the people. And your Petitioners trust that such measures will be introduced speedily, and respectfully submit that under the operation of such measures of social improvement the vice of drunkenness will gradually disappear, without the necessity for further coercive measures on the part of the Legislature. That no city having a population of 50,000 in the United Kingdom is at present subjected to a measure for the closing of licensed premises on Saturday evenings earlier than the hours at present in force in Dublin; and your Petitioners reepectfully submit that no justification exists for passing into law a measure of so dangerous and novel a character as the Public-Houses Earlier Closing on Saturdays (Ireland) Bill."

That was a very strong Petition. It was a Petition addressed to that House by the first Municipal Body in Ireland—the Corporation of the Metropolis—and he trusted that it would have due weight with hon. Members. The hon. Member had also said that he knew no Catholics in Ireland but those who had expressed opinions in favour of the Bill.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he had stated nothing of the kind. What he said was that he knew no Catholic

Bishop or Catholic clergyman in Ireland who did not support the Bill.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: The hon. Gentleman knew of no Catholic Bishop? There were 26 Catholic Bishops; and how many of these, he should like to know, had expressed an opinion upon the matter?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: Every one.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: No; only 10; and he would defy the hon. Member to produce to the House any evidence that would go to prove that a larger number than that had made any statement bearing upon the matter. But he (Mr. J. O'Connor) was not going to weary the House with the statements of the Bishops, although he could, if he chose, produce before the House for its information and enlightenment a statement, on the part of the Catholic Bishops of Ireland, where they expressed the opinion that if the public-houses were closed and were restricted in any further manner greater evils would arise. What they had to bear in mind was that, in considering these matters, some hon. Gentlemen always had the drunkard in their minds, and never had any regard to those who made a proper use of the public-house. The hon. Member had spoken about a consensus of opinion in favour of the Bill; but he had produced no evidence whatever in support of his assertion. He (Mr. J. O'Connor) had given the opinion of the Corporation of the City of Dublin. The Cork Corporation had, in like manner, passed a similar resolution, and the united trades of Cork had passed a strong resolution on the subject, as also had the congregated trades of Limerick. This was the resolution of the tradesmen of Limerick—

> "That this meeting of the congregated trades of Limerick emphatically protests against the present Bill before Parliament, for the total closing of public-houses on Sundays, or any curtailment of the existing hours on Saturdays and Sundays. We are strongly of opinion that if such a Bill becomes law, its result will be to encourage illicit trade, lead to the system of introducing drink into the houses of the people, and spread very extensively the contaminating vice of intemperance."

Here they had the very people who would be affected by the legislation protesting against the curtailment of the hours of opening. A strange fact in this controversy was this—that those who were affected by the legislation protested at all times against these restrictions. Those who made a proper use of the public-houses protested against the restriction, and for very good reasons, as he would explain to the House by-and-bye. Talking about tradesmen, in the very limited case the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) had put before them, he had read out the opinion of one tradesman—a brass founder—from Dublin, who gave his evidence long ago; and here he would remind the House that all the evidence produced by the hon. Member was a matter of ancient history. They were dealing with the present time, and they would have to judge the question by the effect of the restrictive legislation already in force in Ireland—of the effects produced since the period of which the evidence the hon. Member had quoted referred to. What was the use of evidence given in 1887, when the present Sunday Closing Act was not in operation? It was all guesswork, and even this brass founder, whose evidence had been quoted, did not seem to have a very decided opinion upon the matter. The tradesmen to whom he (Mr. J. O'Connor) had referred were the men whose opinions were entitled to due weight from the House; and, as he had said before, it was strange that those who opposed the restrictions were the people who would be injured by continued long hours for the sale of drink, if any injury were done at all. But the fact was that in this matter the more the restriction the less the effect, and that was proved by official figures. What were the figures in this case? He would give a few to the House; and he trusted the House would pay considerable attention to this branch of the case. They had contended all along that the operation of the Closing Acts already in existence had resulted in evil effects; and what he now desired to point out to the House was that on Saturdays and on every other week day there had been a decrease in the number of arrests and convictions for drunkenness, and the only day for which there had been no decrease was the day upon which the houses were closed. In the 40 weeks, from the 12th June, 1877, to the 12th March, 1878, the number of persons arrested in the Dublin Metropolitan Police District for drunkenness on Saturdays, according to a Return issued at the time by the promoters of Saturday closing, was 4,332, being an average of 108 each Saturday. Now, as the right hon. Gentleman on the Government Bench (Mr. Matthews) knew, these figures were not changed, and the evidence taken recently before the Committee sitting upstairs showed that the figures at the present moment were exactly the same. The following figures would illustrate the decrease which had taken place. In 1877-8, as he had stated, the number of arrests each Saturday were 108; whereas, for 1884 and 1885 taken together, the average number of arrests each Saturday was 60, the decrease in Saturday drunkenness in seven years from 1877-8 to 1885 being 44·5 per cent. In the years 1884 and 1885 in Dublin, on what teetotallers called the most drunken day of the week, the ratio of arrests for drunkenness to the population was as 1 to 5,900, showing a decrease since 1877 of nearly 45 per cent. Those were the figures as to the past. He had some other figures to put before the House as bearing upon this point. In the three years 1878, 1879, and 1880, the total arrests on Saturdays were altogether 15,269, and in the years 1883, 1884, and 1885 the total number was 9,155, showing a decrease of 6,114, or over 35 per cent.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Will the hon. Member state where he gets the figures from?

MR. J. O'CONNOR: They are official figures.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Will he please say where he gets them from?

MR. J. O'CONNOR: I got them from the Police Returns.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The fact is, the hon. Member for South Tipperary—[*Cries of* "Order!"]—I rise to a point of Order, and I say the fact is, the hon. Member is quoting figures given upstairs before the Select Committee, which Committee has not yet reported, and I wish to take your ruling, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as to whether it is in Order for an hon. Member to quote figures under such circumstances?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House will take the figures for what they are worth.

MR. J. O'CONNOR said, he thanked Mr. Deputy Speaker for his ruling. The House would, no doubt, take these figures for what they were worth, and he submitted to hon. Members that they were worth a great deal. If they were not valuable, the hon. Member for South Tyrone would not object to their being introduced to the House. These were the figures with regard to Dublin. That was a large statement, but they found on examining into the matter that the fact was the same all over the country. He would now take the case of a town of smaller dimensions—namely, that of the town of Clonmel in Tipperary, and what did they find there? Why, that in 1882 the number of Saturday arrests were 120; in 1883, they were 129; in 1884, 126; in 1885, 122; in 1886, 107; and in 1887, 76; a most remarkable decrease in Saturday arrests. Now let them take other week days. In 1884, there were 477 arrests; in 1885, 463; in 1886, 395; and in 1887, 233. Therefore, they saw that on Saturday and on every other week day there had been a gradual decrease in drunkenness and arrests for drunkenness, but what was the case with regard to Sunday closing in Clonmel? Why, that during the few years before the passing of the Sunday Closing Act the arrests on Sunday were 368; whereas for the 9¼ years since the passing of the Act, that was up to the present, the number was 305, and if an addition were made, taking the general average, for the three-quarters of a-year, in order to make 10 years to complete the comparison, the number would be brought up to 344. Therefore, he had shown that there was a very substantial decrease both in Dublin and Clonmel in Saturday drunkenness, and the only figures they had with regard to Sunday drunkenness showed that there had been little decrease worth mentioning since the passing of the Sunday Closing Act. Well, the same story was told by a town of another character—he alluded to the town of Sligo in the West of Ireland. In the year 1880, in that town there were 35 arrests and 37 convictions for drunkenness; in 1881, there were 38 arrests and 45 convictions; in 1882, there were 67 arrests and 72 convictions; in 1883, 41 arrests and 43 convictions; in 1884, 68 arrests and 71 convictions; in 1885, 49 arrests and 51 convictions; in 1886, 74 arrests and 78 convictions; and in 1887, 68 arrests and 70 convictions. That showed a large increase in the arrests and convictions for drunkenness on Sunday between the years 1880 and 1887. A gradual increase until the number of arrests and convictions became really appalling. These figures should bring conviction to every reasonable mind that, where restrictions were placed on legitimate trade, the result was the increase of arrests and convictions for drunkenness. The hon. Member for South Tyrone was not the first Member of the House who had proposed legislation upon this subject. There was an Irishman, and a patriotic Irishman, who introduced a Bill into this House some years ago—he referred to the late Mr. A. M. Sullivan, and had at that time predicted that if the Bill he introduced did not pass, there would be an appalling increase of drunkenness in Ireland on Saturdays. Had the House consented to Mr. A. M. Sullivan's request, and had these figures been produced here to-day, they would be said to be the result of Mr. Sullivan's Bill. But no restriction had been placed on the trade on Saturdays or any other week day, and this was the result—a decrease in the number of arrests and convictions for drunkenness; whereas on the only day on which restrictions were applied there was a gradual and appalling increase in the number of arrests for drunkenness. Such were the figures. They entirely proved his (Mr. J. O'Connor's) contention. Now, what were the opinions of those who were entitled to speak on the subject of this Bill? This was the opinion of the Mayor of Sligo. He was asked—

> "What would be the effect on the minds of the majority of the people of Sligo if the houses were closed at 9 on Saturday nights?"

and his answer was—

> "The closing of the shops at 9 on Saturday nights would be a social revolution in Sligo; it would be changing the habits of the people altogether."

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) rose to Order, and asked Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the hon. Member was entitled to quote the exact evidence given by a certain witness before the Committee upstairs before that Committee had reported? He had not understood that the ruling of Mr. Deputy Speaker went that length.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. Member is in Order in quoting the evidence.

MR. J. O'CONNOR said, he would not press the point. He would merely state that in public meeting assembled, and in meetings of Corporations, tradesmen and others whose opinions were to be considered as valuable by this House, and also the mayors of cities and others who came into close contact with the people, had stated that legislative restrictions of this kind were calculated to increase intemperance. The evidence of such persons was much more valuable than that of officials, such as had been quoted by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, for officials, as they knew, were always asking for more extended powers, and took nothing into consideration but the question of the ease with which they could carry on their avocations. He (Mr. J. O'Connor) protested against the acceptance merely of the evidence of police officials without putting side by side with it the more valuable, because the more likely to be true, opinions of the mayors of cities and of the representatives of trades. The opinions of magistrates in Dublin had been quoted in that House with regard to the closing of public-houses on Saturday nights. But what was the opinion of Mr. O'Donel with regard to what went on during the hours when public-houses were closed? This gentleman had also made this statement—speaking of what happened before 2 o'clock on Sunday, the hour at which public-houses opened—

> "In the low, squalid districts there are known houses, known to the police also, carrying on illicit trade, where crowds of people congregate and get drunk, but there is no getting legal evidence of the fact."

If that were so in the green wood, what would it be in the dry? In the darkness and turmoil of Saturday night, with the police kept busy in the crowded open streets, what would the masses do after their week's toil, with all their wages in their pockets? Let Mr. O'Donel tell them—

> "Can I believe that, like good little boys at school, grown up men—men with plenty of money in their pockets after their hard week's work, and earning good wages from 15*s.* to 20*s.* to £2 10*s.* and £3, and some of them more—if they have a desire for drink, will refrain because you pass an Act shutting up public-houses? If they can get it, will they refrain from drinking? My opinion is that they will not."

What a glorious harvest for the "shebeens" the author of this Saturday Closing Bill was preparing! At the present moment in Dublin, according to the Blue Book issued by the Commissioner of Police, there were 188 houses known to the police engaged in illicit trade in alcoholic liquors. A pathetic appeal was made by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, in which he spoke of the widows and the orphans; but he (Mr. J. O'Connor) could raise his voice, if he had the same ability, in terms as passionate and pathetic as the hon. Member had made use of, on the other side of the question. He would appeal on behalf of the widow and the orphan, and on behalf of men's families who would raise their voices against the respectable houses being closed against their husbands or fathers, and their being driven, as the figures he had quoted proved that they were driven, to illicit drinking houses, to the shebeen, and the low, squalid public-house, the owner of which was willing to run a risk and to cheat the law for the purpose of traffic. He would appeal on behalf of these people, who had over and over again expressed their desire that nothing should be done which would tend to increase the temptations of working men to frequent the shebeen and bogus drinking clubs. Those were the dangers and the evils which had been pointed out in the past, those were the fears which had been expressed in the past, and such was the realization of these fears, as that day had proved. The figures proved to the hilt the case brought against these restrictive laws, and the hon. Member who moved the second reading of the Bill knew it. Not only had convictions and arrests for drunkenness increased, but, according to official figures, the number of convictions against those who had indulged in illicit trading in Ireland had also increased beyond measure. Mr. Deputy Speaker had ruled that he (Mr. J. O'Connor) could not quote the evidence given before the Committee upstairs. The hon. Member for South Tyrone knew very well why he had objected to that evidence being used in the House.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL wished to say that he had consulted Mr. Speaker as to whether he could use such evidence in this debate, and the right hon. Gentleman had replied to him that he could not. That was the reason, and the only reason, why he had risen to Order.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR said, the reason he had made any reference at all to this evidence was the attitude the hon. Gentleman had himself assumed. He (Mr. J. O'Connor) had objected as the hon. Member knew, in Committee upstairs, to the use of this evidence in the House; but the hon. Member had declared that it was his intention to use this evidence. He (Mr. J. O'Connor) had been misled by the hon. Member. If the hon. Member had told him that he was not going to use the evidence given before the Committee, he (Mr. J. O'Connor) should not have troubled himself with preparing any extracts to give to the House, and should not have troubled the House with the statements he had made. It was the hon. Member's own conduct which had led to the present position. He (Mr. J. O'Connor) must express his regret that he could not give the House all the facts he had prepared, as some of them were of a very strong and interesting character. But there could be no harm in stating this, because it was a fact well known—and these were figures which Mr. Deputy Speaker had ruled it was quite proper to give—that in Derry, from 1872 to 1881, there were no prosecutions for shebeening; whilst from 1882 to 1887—that was to say, in five years—there had been six convictions. They knew it was a very difficult thing to detect shebeening. It was a very difficult thing to say who were entering a person's premises in order to cheat the law in Ireland, as elsewhere; and when there had been no less than six convictions for the offence of shebeening, it was only reasonable to suppose that there were 10 times that number of shebeens which had never been detected. He believed that the question had to be decided on entirely different grounds to those laid down by the hon. Member who had moved the second reading. They had it on the evidence of the Petition of the Dublin Corporation, and they had it stated on the authority of Mr. O'Donel, the Dublin magistrate—an opinion he expressed years ago, and which he reiterated very recently — that the true solution of this question was not to be found in restrictive legislation, but in the development of those various schemes which had been already adopted for the purpose of improving the social status of the working man, and for the purpose of improving the dwellings in which he was compelled to live. He (Mr. J. O'Connor) had heard it over and over again stated by mayors of cities and magistrates, and men who had studied the question, that improvements in artizans' dwellings—improving the working man's home—would have a greater effect in keeping him out of the public-house and in promoting temperance than any restrictive legislation which they could pass in that House. He thought the facts and opinions he had laid before the House would, as he thought they ought to, induce the House to believe with him that such legislation as that which was proposed by the hon. Member was tantamount to trying to get in the wrong end of the wedge. It went entirely on wrong premises. It was flying in the face of facts. When they proposed a remedy which had already failed in Ireland—and the Sunday Closing Act had unquestionably failed, as was proved by the figures — ["No, no!"] — yes; as was proved by the figures he had given to the House. ["No, no!"] Well, he contended, at any rate, that the facts and figures he had put before the House would leave no doubt in the mind of any reasonable man that these restrictions had failed, as all restrictions of the kind must fail. ["No, no!"] An hon. Member for Wales said "No." Well, if it were germane to the subject, he (Mr. J. O'Connor) could produce before the House facts and figures and statements from clergymen in Cardiff and other parts of Wales to prove that the Act in operation there had been a failure as well as that in operation in Ireland, and that it had led to the introduction of what these people termed "drinking hells." Aye, and if it were germane to the subject he could bring forward the opinion of the Provost of Glasgow, who, the other day, raised his voice against the Sunday Closing Acts in operation in Glasgow, on the ground that they had led to the establishment of bogus drinking clubs which the people were crying out against. The people were condemning the Acts because so many of their number were ruined and demoralized by being driven into these horrible dens. Well, he (Mr. J. O'Connor) opposed the second reading of the Bill because, as he said, it was flying in the face of the facts, because it was a remedy which had failed everywhere it had been applied; he opposed it because he believed in the figures he had quoted and in the opinions he had stated to the House, and because his own experience of the people who would be affected by the measure led him to believe that the Acts already in existence had been failures, and that any similar measure would also fail if passed into law. It was for these reasons that he opposed the Bill and begged to move the Amendment which stood on the Paper in his name.

Mr. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) said, he had noticed some remarks made by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) to most of which he took very strong exception. In the first place, the hon. Member had said that every Catholic clergyman and every Catholic Bishop in Ireland had pronounced in favour of the measure which he had introduced. Now, it was a fact that only 12 of the Catholic Bishops of Ireland had spoken at all on the subject, whilst 14 of them had remained silent; and as to the latter, he supposed it was to be inferred that they remained neutral on the question. Two Bishops he admitted had declared in favour of the measure, or rather in favour of total Sunday closing; whilst one of them had pronounced strongly against it, and the other partially so. Now, what he (Mr. M'Donald) stated with regard to the Catholic Bishops of Ireland, he could with equal confidence and equal certainty assure the House was the feeling amongst the Catholic clergy. They were largely divided upon the subject, though he believed that if opinions were individually and collectively taken, it would be found that the great majority were against any restrictive legislation in the matter. The hon. Member who moved the second reading of the Bill also said that there were no opponents of the measure but those connected with the trade. To that statement, also, he (Mr. M'Donald) took strong exception. He could say, as hon. Members on the other side knew, that the only promoters and advocates of the measure and of restrictive measures relating to the subject were temperance advocates, of which body the hon. Member for South Tyrone was a member—according to his own declaration he had been a worker in the cause for 25 years, and he had not always, as the House knew, been a disinterested one. The hon. Member had also referred to the Corporation of Dublin, and on that subject he (Mr. M'Donald) could supplement what had been said by his hon. Friend the Member for South Tipperary (Mr. J. O'Connor). The constitution of the Corporation of Dublin was entirely different to what it had been more than once represented to be in that House. The Corporation consisted of 60 members, and, since the hon. Member who moved the second reading of the Bill had spoken, he (Mr. M'Donald) had gone carefully over the official list, and had made a pencil mark against the name of every member of that body who was connected directly with the liquor trade, and he found that the total number was 12 out of 60—in other words, only one-fifth of the entire number. He must, at the same time, admit that there were a few others who were indirectly connected with the trade—that was to say, there were some few manufacturers of soda water, and so on, though it was hard to see the interest they had in the trade. He could supplement the statement of his hon. Friend, that at the meeting at which the resolution to which attention had been directed was passed, the great majority—at least two-thirds of those present—and who were in favour of forwarding the Petition to that House, were entirely unconnected with the trade. He (Mr. M'Donald) opposed this measure on several grounds, and he would trouble the House with a remark or two upon each of his objections. In the first place, he considered the measure totally uncalled for. And why did he say that? Because no public Bodies in Ireland had pronounced in favour of it, and no considerable portion of the Irish community had declared for or had asked for it. Nobody had pronounced in favour of it, but the professional advocates of temperance, who were the speakers at this meeting to-day and at that meeting to-morrow, and at another meeting the day afterwards—gentlemen who were merely the promulgators of temperance ideas—pale-faced gentlemen who, simply because a certain amount of drink was not suited to their constitutions, like the dog in the manger thought that no one else should have anything to do with it. Now, that attitude he took strong objection to, and he maintained that in this free country, and at this time of day, it was not at all consistent with the requirements of the general public and with the requirements of freedom that people should be coerced and interfered with in doing that which they had a perfect right to do, as they had so often heard from the Government Benches. His second objection to the Bill was that it was a piece of class legislation; and why did he say that? Why, because only a fractional portion of the community asked for the legislation, and desired to tie down to their own views and habits others who differed from them, perhaps constitutionally and physically, and in many other respects. It was, to his mind, utterly unfair that any limited or sectional portion of the community should coerce the majority in a matter of that kind. He would also ask why, if this Act were good for Ireland, they did not also introduce it for England? Why had not such a movement as this been made by the temperance advocates in England, and why had no movement on the subject been made by the present or any past Government? The first he had heard about any Government dealing with this question was in the County Government Bill, the provision introduced therein, with which he thoroughly and entirely agreed, being that the decision in this case should be left to the people themselves; and that brought him to the question of Local Option. He was no opponent of Local Option. He considered that if the community felt they were entitled to a certain privilege or duty, or to have a certain law made and carried into effect, their wishes should be complied with; but he would not narrow the area of Local Option within any small limits. He would say, let the whole county or the whole borough, as the case might be, decide; but do not let a particular ward in a borough or a particular parish in a county decide for all the rest, or even decide for themselves, as that would be totally inconsistent with common sense. Now it had been mentioned, and mentioned very truly, that all the Corporations in Ireland but two had declared strongly by majorities and by Petitions against this measure, and the two to which he referred were Belfast and Londonderry, and neither of those had pronounced either one way or the other. Consequently, it must be conceded that the great majority of corporate and representative Bodies in Ireland were opposed, and strongly opposed, to this measure; and as to the statement that these corporate Bodies did not represent the wishes of the majority of the people, he declared that unquestionably they did. The same might be said of the Poor Law Boards and other representative Bodies, and he would ask the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) whether he could point to a single representative Body in Ireland which had declared in favour of this Bill? Not one; and, in the face of these facts, he would ask the House to consider seriously before they expressed an opinion by vote or voice to-day on that subject. He was not surprised that the public Bodies in Ireland had expressed themselves in the manner in which they had done. He had with him some figures which were not taken in recent evidence. They were official; and he could in confidence give the name of the person from whom he had obtained them if it was required; but he would not state it in public. These figures showed the number of arrests on Sunday arising out of Saturday night drinking in the City of Cork. In 1874, before the passing of the Act, the number of arrests was 230; but in 1885, long after the passing of the Act, it was 378, or, in other words, 148 more, or about 50 per cent more than before the passing of the Act.

An hon. MEMBER: Is that in one year?

MR. P. M'DONALD: Yes. The evidence of the senior Divisional Magistrate in Dublin, Mr. O'Donel, had been referred to. Well, that gentleman strongly objected to any earlier closing on Saturday night than 10 o'clock. That gentleman said his former opinion was different, but that he had modified and changed that opinion in consequence of his larger experience, and he quite felt that it would be detrimental to the interests of the people, and injurious in other respects, if the people were deprived of the privilege of buying their necessaries at an earlier hour than 10 o'clock. Now, as he had already stated, he (Mr. M'Donald) would not rely upon any expression of opinion on the part of any professional witness in the present or the past. He would take the opinion of the people themselves, and if the people themselves were consulted, as he hoped they would be before any legislation was proposed, he could assure the House that the great majority would vote in favour of the continuance of the existing system for the exempted cities and partial Sunday opening elsewhere. If they did make a change in the law, there would be another question they would have to consider, and that would be the question of compensation. They would not deprive the traders of England of those vested interests which, according to public opinion in this country, belonged to them, and if they did not do that in England, why should they do it in Ireland? He only asked for equal legislation for the two countries. Unfortunately, they had not equal legislation for the two countries. He had noticed in his time, before he came into the House, through reading the public papers, that every measure of a restrictive character was first tried in Ireland. It seemed as though Ministers were anxious to try their 'prentice hands in Ireland, and to see how their legislation worked there before bringing it over to England. If they found their restrictive measures worked in Ireland, they very soon brought them over to England. But he also noticed that in the case of an ameliorative measure it was always introduced first in England and denied to Ireland for a time, if not altogether. It was only after there had been strong and persistent agitation that they could get such measures as were passed for England extended to Ireland. He called to mind at present a measure in which he (Mr. M'Donald) was particularly interested, and which the hon. and learned Gentleman sitting opposite (Mr. Madden) was perfectly familiar with—he meant the measure dealing with the Law of Bankruptcy. That measure had been denied to them in Ireland. They had called out for legislation on the subject, but goodness knows when they would get it. And so it was with all measures of a like nature. He would appeal on this question to English Gentlemen sitting on the opposite side of the House, and to other Gentlemen opposite who might be interested in this question. He would appeal to them to hesitate before they voted in favour of this Bill that day. If they did vote for it, and sent it to a Committee, they would break down the outwork of the trade in Ireland, and when they did that he promised them that it would not be difficult to attack the English citadel afterwards. Therefore he warned hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side to be careful what they did. In any case, he would strongly urge that even if the Bill were read a second time it should not be sent to the Committee upstairs, for, looking at the manner in which that Committee was constituted, the result would be a foregone conclusion. How could a small minority hold their opinion in the face of a strong majority opposed to them? He had great pleasure in seconding the Amendment of his hon. Friend.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months." — (*Mr. John O' Connor.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) said, he should not have intervened in the debate at all but for the challenge of the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. M'Donald) in stating that the agitation in favour of the Bill had been got up entirely by the temperance advocates. Although he (Colonel Waring) had always been a temperance advocate, he did not come under the designation given by the hon. Member, of persons who went about from platform to platform advocating the abolition of the sale of liquor. He had never been a total abstainer, either in theory or practice; but, nevertheless, he desired to express his own opinion, and that of his constituents in the North of Ireland, that the Bill would be one of the most beneficial measures which could be suggested in the interests of the labouring classes. He had two objections to the measure. One of them was the objection which applied to almost every measure introduced for Ireland—namely, that it extended to Ireland only; the next was, that its operation was confined to towns with over 10,000 inhabitants. He could not for the life of him see any reason why that limit should be chosen. If the Bill were read a second time, and sent to the Committee upstairs, he hoped that that limit would be struck out, and the measure made to apply to the whole country. He believed that a larger proportion of drunkenness and squandering of the wages of the people took place on Saturday night than in the whole of the rest of the week. No doubt, some figures had been quoted by hon. Members who had spoken on the other side, carefully culled and selected, to show that in one or two towns there had not been any large amount of increase in Saturday drinking. He believed, however, that if the statistics for the whole of Ireland were given in full, the result would be altogether different from that which had been given to the House. With regard to Sunday closing in Ireland, he was able to speak from his own experience in a very unbiassed manner; because, when the Bill was first proposed for enforcing Sunday closing, he was an opponent of it, thinking that it would increase the number of shebeens, but he confessed that in the district in which he resided his anticipations in that respect had been entirely erroneous. The shebeens had not increased, and the consumption of illicit drink had diminished. He had strong reasons for holding that view, and he did not think that the district of which he spoke could be taken as more than a specimen. Lurgan, the principal town in the County of Armagh, near which he lived, stood at the head of the list in all Ireland for the small number of public-houses it contained in proportion to its population, and he took credit to himself for that fact as one of the magistrates who were required to decide the licences granted at the Licensing Sessions. His experience of the change, so far as the question of intemperance was concerned in Ireland, was that the amount of drink consumed had been enormously reduced, and a less portion of the wages of the working classes was dissipated in the public-houses than was formerly squandered in that way. Hon. Members who opposed the Bill had referred to the opinion of some of the public Bodies in Ireland. Now, he did not think that the opinion of public Bodies who were elected for a totally different purpose ought to have much weight.

The Boards of Guardians, it was stated, were opposed to the Bill; but what had the Boards of Guardians to do with the question? They were not elected for the purpose of licensing public-houses, or looking after the liquor traffic at all, and he thought that if they would confine themselves strictly to their own legitimate business it would be much better for their own country. As for the opinion of the Corporation of Dublin, he certainly did not possess that intense respect for it which appeared to be entertained by some hon. Gentlemen opposite. It had been suggested that bogus clubs had been increased since the traffic had been restricted. Now, if bogus clubs had sprung up, surely that was a reason for increasing the stringency of the Act applied to public-houses, and applying it to clubs also, rather than for allowing public houses to remain open at undue times. It was certainly no reason, because an Act was evaded, that a similar Act should not be passed to enforce the provisions of the law in the direction in which they had been allowed to fail. He had no wish to delay the House upon the question. He thought it was likely that they might come to an early decision. All he had desired was to say a few words to show that it was not only total abstainers who were supporting the Bill, but also those who took a very moderate view of the question.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said, he desired to protest with the greatest sincerity against the tone of the observations of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just sat down, and of other hon. Members who had expressed themselves in favour of the Bill. He thought that the hon. and gallant Gentleman had gone much further even than the advocates of temperance. The hon. and gallant Gentleman, as a non-teetotaller, confessed that he went much further in the direction of restrictive legislation than teetotallers themselves in regard to two very important points —namely, in confining the provisions of the Bill to Ireland, and limiting their application to towns of more than 10,000 inhabitants. As to the first part of the hon. and gallant Gentleman's observations, the view he had expressed was exactly one of his (Mr. Flynn's) reasons why he objected to the Bill. If they were to pass a measure of this kind as an experiment, why confine it to Ireland? Why should Ireland be the only place—the *corpus vile*—on which to try measures of a restrictive character? If there was any principle which ought to be brought out prominently in connection with the Temperance Question, it was the principle of Local Option. He agreed with the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. P. M'Donald), who spoke a few minutes ago, in his remarks as to Local Option. It was quite true that the Local Government Bill did not deal in the Licensing Clauses with the shortening of hours. It only gave to the new Boards power to restrict or diminish the number of licensed houses. But it would not be difficult, if they were prepared to apply the same principles of legislation to England and Wales as the Bill sought to apply to Ireland, but would be a matter of extreme simplicity, and he would commend the suggestion to the attention of the hon. Baronet the Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), who took such a philanthropic interest in the Temperance Question, in Committee upon the Local Government Bill, when dealing with the Licensing Clauses, to give the new County Councils or Local Bodies power to deal with the question of Saturday closing. In that way they would ascertain the opinion of the House in regard to the whole of the question. At present the Government went out of their way, both on platforms outside and in that House, and they had actually inaugurated a new principle in dealing with vested interests in licensed public-houses. What did they do, however, in regard to Ireland? The hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), in a speech of great ability, had moved the second reading of the Bill. Two or three speakers followed the hon. Member, and what were they prepared to do? They wanted to know especially what the Government were going to do. That was a matter of very important consideration. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had marred an otherwise excellent speech by introducing into it observations which had really nothing to do with the question. That was an unfortunate habit of the hon. Gentleman, and he (Mr Flynn) trusted that in future he would eliminate such remarks from the speeches he was accustomed to make. One of the observations of the hon. Member was that practically there was no opposition to the measure in Ireland, except from the licensed victuallers. There were two mis-statements in that assertion. In the first place, there was a division of opinion on the question among the people generally; and, in the second place, there was a great division within the ranks of the Irish Party. Further, a good deal of opposition came from those who, like himself, viewed the question impartially from a disinterested point of view, and were prepared to consider it on its merits as it affected the interests of the people. He claimed to be as strong an advocate of temperance and as strongly opposed to the great evils of drunkenness as any professed advocate of teetotalism in that House; but instead of adopting restrictive legislation, he should be prepared to proceed on different lines, and should be inclined rather to look to the extension and improvement of artizans' dwellings, the establishment of public libraries, and other conditions that were likely to elevate the working man and remove him from temptation to go to the public-house. Those were the lines on which they should endeavour to proceed, and he maintained that legislation of that character was of that grandmotherly character which all sensible men deprecated, but that it would fail to accomplish the object at which it aimed. The hon. Member for South Tyrone often reminded him of a fac-simile of a famous piece of statuary which was exhibited in the Paris Exhibition in 1878, in which an old woman, getting hold of a very dirty boy, proceeded in a somewhat rough and violent manner to scrub him clean. The hon. Member for South Tyrone was desirous of getting hold of every man who was not a teetotaller by the scruff of the neck, and addressing speeches to him as a very dirty boy. He maintained that the Irish people were not such very dirty boys, after all, and that intemperance did not prevail in Ireland to such a degree as some hon. Gentlemen believed. Certainly it did not exist in Ireland to so large an extent as in Scotland, and undoubtedly it did not exist to the same amount as in certain parts of England, and he, therefore, protested altogether against the character of the Irish people being taken away in this hasty manner, and he did not believe that any good result would follow from legislation of that character. The hon. Member for South Tyrone, in moving the second reading of the Bill, made a statement which was open to great exception—namely, that a general consensus of public opinion existed in Ireland in favour of the measure. He (Mr. Flynn) believed that every hon. Member who listened to the speech would recognize that the hon. Gentleman entirely failed to substantiate that very strong statement. The hon. Member quoted the opinion of the Roman Catholic Bishops, but any argument derived from that fact was very weak.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. FLYNN resumed. He said that when an hon. Member moved that the House be counted, he (Mr. Flynn) was proceeding to question the statement of the hon. Member for South Tyrone when he said that the public opinion of Ireland was in favour of Saturday closing. He (Mr. Flynn) maintained that the hon. Member had already failed to substantiate that proposition, and the evidence which he brought forward in support of it was of the most unsatisfactory character. He would not say that the opinion of 10 or 12 Roman Catholic Bishops of Ireland were not opinions of the greatest possible value, but what expression of opinion did the hon. Member bring forward from those classes who would themselves be affected by the measure? He had not given even one. He had referred to the evidence given before the Committee many years ago as to arrests for drunkenness in Dublin on Saturday nights; but he quoted no evidence whatever from those who would be affected by the measure. His (Mr. Flynn's) objection to the Bill was that it was essentially class legislation of the most oppressive kind. Those who were above the working classes, those who belonged to clubs and kept good houses, could afford to have their own wine cellars, or could drink at any hour they liked at their clubs. A working man could not do that, and the whole question involved was whether Saturday night closing would benefit the working classes or not. He respectfully urged that that was the entire question. But earlier Saturday night closing would, or might possibly, lead to an increase of illicit drinking—to an increase of what were known as shebeen houses, and all those means of dishonourable, illegal, and unlawful practices which might lead on the working classes to their ruin. That, to his mind, was the whole gist of the contention in regard to Saturday night closing. It could not be proved that there was any demand for it by the working classes, and, therefore, he maintained that a strong argument had been made out against the view of the hon. Member for South Tyrone as to the current of public opinion. He would now take the other side. The hon. and gallant Member who just spoke (Colonel Waring) had cast a sneer against the opinion of the Dublin Corporation; but hon. Members would know how sneers against the Dublin Corporation were coloured by certain political antipathies. He would, therefore, pass by those sneers with the contempt they deserved. The view entertained by the Corporation of Dublin in opposing the Saturday night closing was not confined to the Dublin Corporation, but the Corporations of Waterford, of Limerick, and of Cork had also petitioned against the principles of the Bill, while both in Limerick and in Cork the associated Boards had passed resolutions against the provisions contained in it. Then he would ask did they intend to consult the opinions of those most interested in the matter or not, or would they insist upon giving this grandmotherly legislation? Was the House of Commons such a superior Body that it knew better than the people themselves what was good for them? If there were any merit in the principle of the Bill, the hon. Member who introduced it and those who supported him were bound to prove to the satisfaction of the House that there was a strong opinion in its favour on the part of the working classes who would be affected by it. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had referred to the inquiries of two Committees which sat upon the question of Sunday closing some years ago, and said that a large body of evidence was given in favour of Saturday closing. He (Mr. Flynn) believed that that was so; but since that time the people of Ireland stood in a more advantageous position in regard to restrictive measures of the kind than they did in 1860. He hoped that fact would not be disputed by those who advocated the Bill. In the metropolitan district of Dublin, upon which the hon. Member for South Tyrone relied as justifying the measure, the Return as to Saturday drunkenness showed a steady decrease. From 1877 to 1878, the average number of arrests for drunkenness in the City of Dublin on Saturday were 108 in a population of 350,000. In 1883-4 the average was 60, in 1884-5 it was 56, and in 1885-6, 65; that was to say, that there had been a large decrease in the last 10 years in the average number of arrests on the Saturday in the Dublin metropolitan district, which district had been made the chief argument in favour of the measure. Indeed, the decrease amounted to from 40 to 45 per cent. Surely, those figures proved that there was no necessity whatever for that legislation. The hon. and gallant Member for North Down (Colonel Waring) said, in reference to another branch of the question, that restrictive legislation of that kind would not tend to introduce bogus clubs, shebeen houses, and illegitimate drinking. He (Mr. Flynn) quite disagreed with what the hon. and gallant Member said, and that was one of the reasons why he was strongly opposed to legislation of that character altogether. The Chief Police Magistrate, Mr. O'Donel, in speaking on the question of law drinking and unlicensed houses, commonly called shebeens, said that in the squalid districts of Dublin it was well known that there were houses carrying on an illicit trade in which people congregated to get drink. That occurred before the Sunday opening at 2 o'clock, and, if such things occurred in order to avoid the operation of Sunday closing, surely it was only natural to expect that on Saturday nights the same thing would prevail to a much larger extent. He would, therefore, urge upon the House that it would be far wiser to leave the matter as it stood at present, than to take what would be practically a leap in the dark, with the possible consequence that instead of promoting temperance, sobriety, and thrift, they would in all probability increase illicit drinking. Again, he took issue with the hon. Member for South

Tyrone with regard to his contention that the opposition to the Bill was confined to those who had an interest in championing the cause of the Licensed Victuallers' Association. He had no connection with that association whatever, and he claimed to be as unbiassed and as impartial as the hon. Member for South Tyrone himself, even if not more so. He opposed the Bill on the distinct ground that it would not be to the advantage of the working classes, nor to the advantage of the people, who would be chiefly affected by it, and he asked the House to reject it upon that ground. He had asked the hon. Baronet the Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland a few moments ago to give his attention to the suggestion he had ventured to throw out with regard to Local Option, and the possible introduction of certain principles into the Licensing Clauses of the Local Government Bill in England. He strenuously protested against the two main cardinal lines of legislation to which the House seemed to be committed more and more as years rolled by. The first was that restrictive legislation of all kinds, whether dealing with the great question of temperance, or with combinations, or agrarian societies—that restrictive legislation of all kinds and character the House was prepared to adopt for Ireland, and to pass against the protests of the Irish Members, while ameliorative legislation only of reforming and expansive character was passed for England, but never granted to Ireland at all, or only after years of strenuous, persistent, and incessant agitation. If hon. Members voted for this Bill, they should be prepared in consistency to support the hon. Baronet (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) in his proposal to develop the Licensing Clauses of the Local Government Bill in the direction which the Temperance Party thought desirable. If, on the contrary, they did not, but gave themselves a free hand in reference to the matter, they would be applying two distinctly opposite sets of principles to Ireland and England. He contended that they ought to be consistent, or prepared to give up legislation altogether. He apologized for having detained the House so long; but he had wished, above all things, to make his opinions in regard to the measure clear, and to show that he and a large number of Irish Members were opposed to a measure of the kind, because they believed that it would not be good for Ireland, or for the working classes of the country whom it would principally affect.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, that they had had ample experience in Scotland of the excellent effects of restrictive legislation of the character which it was proposed by this Bill to extend to Ireland. It was a remarkable fact that when a Bill of so much importance to Ireland was under discussion, only one Representative of an Irish constituency was at that moment present in the House, while not more than five or six Irish Members had been present during the whole of the debate. A great deal had been said with regard to the dangers of restrictive legislation. Now, his experience had not been that restrictive legislation, carried out to a reasonable extent, had had the effect of increasing the evils of illicit traffic in any proportion in comparison with the benefits which had resulted from that legislation itself. He was quite certain that no Scotchman in whatever part of the House he sat, or whatever views he might take on any other question, would hesitate to concur in the statement that restrictive legislation in Scotland had had a most beneficial effect upon the community. The hon. Member for South Tipperary (Mr. J. O'Connor) said that the greater the restrictions were, the less their effect was. He (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) challenged the accuracy of that assertion, for which there was no foundation whatever. The hon. Member also said that all restrictions of the same kind would fail, as he alleged that the restrictions on Sunday trading had failed. He (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) was not in a position to say whether the suppression of Sunday liquor trading in Ireland had failed or not; but this he would say, that no measure passed for the abolition of Sunday trading in any part of the United Kingdom could be tested as to whether it had failed or not, until it had run a far longer course than the Irish Sunday Closing Act had run. All Sunday trading in intoxicating liquors had been put a stop to for many years past in Scotland with the most beneficial results, and he was satisfied that no man in Scotland, who valued the moral elevation of the community and had regard for the sacredness of the day of rest, would for one moment suggest that it would not be a great mistake to remove the restriction as regarded that country, and to revive Sunday trading. He was quite certain of this—that any such attempt would be met with practical reprobation on the part of the whole community of Scotland. He might be asked what about Glasgow? Whatever the Lord Provost of Glasgow might have said about the establishment of bogus drinking clubs, he (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) was perfectly certain that no suggestion proceeded from that gentleman in favour of the re-establishment of the opening of public-houses in Glasgow on Sunday. He would venture to say that no burgh magistrate in Scotland would have the least chance of retaining the position he occupied, or of being elected on any Town Council, who would be prepared to make such a proposal. No doubt, those who desired to carry on excessive drinking would endeavour to carry out their efforts in spite of any legislation. But those efforts must be met by counter efforts on the part of the Legislature and of the police. He was quite certain that the bogus clubs in Glasgow, however much harm they might do, could only affect an infinitesimal portion of the population out of all proportion to the evil of restoring the old state of things under which public-houses were open in that country. It was said that the number of arrests in Ireland for drunkenness had increased since the passing of the Sunday Closing Act. He should like to know whether that did not arise from this fact—that whereas the police had now only a limited number of drunken people to deal with, they arrested them all; whereas in former years, when Sunday trade was carried on in Ireland, there were so many persons drunk on Sunday that the police were compelled to make a choice of those who made themselves most obstructive to the peace of the community, and dealt only with the worst and most hardened offenders?

Mr. J. O'CONNOR said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman said that the assertion was that there had been an increase in the number of arrests and convictions for drunkenness on a Sunday. What he had represented was that there had been no increase, but a decrease.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD apologized for having misunderstood the hon. Member. He had thought that there had been an increase.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, there might have been an increase in regard to certain places; but if the right hon. and learned Gentleman thought there had been a general increase of drunkenness since Sunday closing was introduced into Ireland, he was entirely mistaken. There had been no such increase.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR said, he had only referred to certain cases by way of illustration.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, that there was nothing more certain than this—that if they had drunkenness to any great extent in any place, the police could not cram the gaols with drunken men, and they were obliged to deal with those who caused the greatest commotion. On the other hand, when a measure was passed by which drunkenness had been enormously reduced—and there was no doubt to his mind that it had been reduced by the passing of the Irish Sunday Closing Act—it was not only possible, but reasonable to expect that the number of arrests in a particular town might be as large as it was before the passing of the Act, because, all illegal and illegitimate temptations having been removed, the police naturally used their efforts to take into custody all persons who were found in a state of drunkenness on that day, in order by that, as well as by other means, to discourage drunken habits. But, however that might be, he would only say that on that matter their experience in Scotland did not bear out the prophecy of the hon. Member for South Tipperary—that the greater the restrictions the worse the effect. It had been said also—and it was that which had led him to intervene in the debate earlier than he would otherwise have done—that the earliest attempts at restriction were made in Ireland. He thought what he had already said plainly indicated that that was not the case. The suspension of Sunday traffic in Ireland followed at a very long interval, indeed, the suppression of the Sunday traffic in Scotland. There was one other matter which had not been referred to which he desired to mention, and that was what he understood to be now the law in Ireland—namely, that publicans supplying liquor to be consumed on the premises also carried on the trade of grocers and provisions dealers. He did not propose to make a long speech; but he wished to make two or three suggestions to those who were in charge of the Bill, in the event of the Bill being read a second time and being sent to a Committee. He was certainly very much astonished to find that this was still the law in Ireland, as it had not for a long time been the law in Scotland. Anything more pernicious than such a custom he could not conceive. By the Act which was passed in 1853 it was made illegal to allow licences in Scotland for the sale of liquors to be consumed on the premises to any person who dealt in other articles of food or drink. He was sure that no one could object to the prohibition of such a custom as that, although, no doubt, the provision ought to be carried out in a reasonable way, and not done all of a sudden. Everyone who was in favour of temperance knew the temptations that were offered to persons who, when they went to shops, to buy a supply of non-intoxicants for their families, were brought into contact with drinking in places where drink was allowed to be sold on the premises. The danger of such a custom could not possibly be exaggerated. It exposed the public to the most aggravated temptations, and it was a traffic which ought not to be permitted. Then it was urged that prohibition always led to the increase of shebeening. That had not been found to be the case in Scotland. There could be no doubt whatever, that if they passed such a measure as this for restricting the hours during which public-houses were to be open; for a time, there would be a hot and severe struggle between the illicit dealers and the police; but with efficient arrangements and an efficient police they would be able to reduce shebeens to the lowest possible limit, and would be successful in preventing illicit drinking to a very large extent. No doubt, whatever was forbidden by the law led to illicit attempts to break the law. He did not suppose for one moment that even the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) would suggest that if his theories were expressed in legislation, it would be possibly wholly to prevent persons from having their glass of grog, or prevent every human being in the United Kingdom from getting some alcohol for consumption. As a matter of fact, he presumed the hon. Baronet was of opinion that it was practically impossible to put down all liquor traffic. [Sir WILFRID LAWSON: No.] He was sorry for that, because he had always imagined the hon. Baronet to be a reasonable person. His contention was, that if they adopted that principle—and he hoped they would adopt it for England too—they would do a great deal to put down shebeens. In Scotland, if the magistrates had reasonable grounds for suspecting on credible testimony that the sale of liquor was being carried on in an unlicensed place, they could cause that place to be searched, and if more than one gallon of spirits were found, the persons found there could be arrested, and all the spirits and other intoxicants found on the premises were liable to be seized. He thought that would be a legitimate arrangement, and of great benefit both to England and Ireland. There was one other suggestion he desired to make, and it was this—that if the House considered it desirable to restrict the sale of liquor in Ireland to the hours mentioned in that Bill, there could be nothing more pernicious, or dangerous, or uncalled-for, than to confine the operation of the measure to certain towns. With the means of locomotion now enjoyed, it would be a most fatal mistake to have a sharp line drawn just outside a large town, beyond which liquor might be sold and within which it could not be sold. By a limitation of that kind, what would they do? Every person who, knowing that he had a day of rest before him, went out into the country for purposes of recreation would be exposed, as he approached the town on his return, to the temptation to have a good drink before he got back. He thought that that drawing of a line within which a certain thing might not be done, but outside which it might be done, would be most dangerous. Furthermore, it would tend to an undue accumulation of public-houses around all the large towns and cities just outside the area of restriction, instead of providing that, as the public went outside the town into the suburbs, they should meet with fewer and fewer temptations of the kind. In Scotland it had been proved conclusively that the indiscriminate granting of licences to all persons who applied for them, invariably led to an increase of consumption; whereas, on the other hand, the restriction of the number of places in which liquor might be sold, always had the effect of reducing the consumption. Nor must it be forgotten, in that connection, what a long string of public-houses on the way home meant to a man. He went into one, and if he were not exposed to any further temptation, it was all very well; but if, after the exercise of the virtue of self-denial, he was induced to pass three or four, there might still remain a fifth, and, turning another corner, he would be undoubtedly exposed to a new temptation. Therefore, he thought there was something they could do, with a view of preventing drunkenness, short of this absolute prohibition of which he believed the House would strenuously disapprove — [Sir WILFRID LAWSON: Oh, no!]—it was certainly his belief. He had at first considerable doubt as to the course which he should take on the Bill; but after hearing what had been urged against it, he had come to the conclusion that he should vote for the second reading. He believed the Bill would be, on the whole, beneficial in its effects if it were properly worked out in Committee, and he might say of the greatest possible benefit to the community. The question of the hours at which public-houses might be open was one not so much relating to the general principle as to the special circumstances of the localities. If it were true, as he believed the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) had shown, that there was a vast and apparently increasing evil in consequence of the present hours of closing on Saturday nights—[Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR: No figures.]—then he thought that restrictive rules might well be applied, and that some reasonable change might well be made. They had taken a step last year with reference to Scotland which could not be otherwise than beneficial—namely, to close public-houses in some places at 10 o'clock. He should vote for the second reading of the Bill, and he hoped that in Committee it would be carefully considered whether the hour proposed for closing was not rather too strong a step to be taken at once. He doubted whether it was not unreasonably early, and he thought that, as in the case of the Early Closing Act for Scotland passed last year, the exigencies and requirements of each case should be left to the magistrates to decide.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) said, the political course of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) was so distasteful to him that he would excuse him for saying that he could have wished this Bill had been in the hands of another sponsor. That, however, would not deter him from supporting the measure by following the hon. Member into the Lobby. He understood that some of those with whom he usually acted did not intend to follow that course, and he wished, therefore, to say a few words as to why he differed from them. He understood the objections of those hon. Gentlemen were not to the measure itself, but that their view was that, whether it was good or bad, they were disposed to wait until a Home Rule Parliament could settle the question. Having himself a very strong hope that Home Rule was in the near future, there was a great deal to be said in favour of that view; but there was one thing which to his mind was conclusive against the argument. It was said that this matter ought to be decided by the Irish people. But he did not quite understand the logic of that position. His hon. Friends, day by day and week by week, were introducing measures dealing with all kinds of topics, social and political, covering the whole field of social life. They were asking the consent of the House of Commons, so that they might be passed into law; and, that being so, he had some difficulty, as he had said, of seeing the logical force of saying that this, of all other conceivable topics, was to be excluded from the jurisdiction of the House. But there was another position which could be fairly taken up on this matter, and which would appeal to him with far greater force. He had heard some of his hon. Friends say—and if what he read in the newspapers were true, the view was taken by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell)—that this question of closing public-houses was of so angering and embittering a nature that it was inexpedient to raise it at the present time because of the effect it would have on the Party to which he belonged, and destroy amongst them the union which then existed. That, of course, was an argument which could not but have weight with the Members of the Irish Party, and he confessed that it had considerable weight with himself; on that view he proclaimed himself absolutely in accord with his Leader. He said it was a wrong step to take now; but the responsibility lay on the shoulders of the publicans, and not with the supporters of the Bill. He felt on the question of temperance as strongly as any Member of the House; but, notwithstanding that he felt that some legislation was required, he had suppressed his own views in the interests of the Party to which he belonged. If the understanding arrived at between the Members of the Party generally had been observed, he, for one, would not have been heard raising his voice in favour of the Bill. But that had not been the case. The truce had been deliberately broken last year by the publicans, who had themselves raised the whole liquor question. No one had attacked them or introduced any measure which could have done them any harm; but, notwithstanding that, they invited the House to appoint a Select Committee to consider the Sunday Closing Question; having done that, they could not expect those who thought differently from themselves to restrict the discussion to any particular point, and must be prepared for the discussion of the whole matter. With regard to the merits of the Bill, he said, with all seriousness and solemnity, as well as with the strongest sense of responsibility, that the question of Saturday Closing in Ireland was practically a non-contentious question. There was in Ireland no difference of opinion on the subject. There was on one side the publicans only, and on the other the whole of the rest of the population. It was natural that publicans should object to a measure of this kind, and he did not blame them for doing their best to thwart legislation of this kind; but what they must understand was that they had no backing of public opinion behind them. He had himself been conducting a little agitation in the City of Cork within the last few months, and he felt it his duty to do that in consequence of the line which the publicans and their friends were taking. It seemed to him that it would be a bad thing for them to have all the talking on their side; and as they had passed resolutions in Ireland, it seemed right to him to show that everyone did not agree in the views expressed. As a preliminary to public action on the matter, he took some steps towards getting a requisition signed in the City of Cork for the purpose of calling on the Mayor to summon a public meeting of the citizens on the question. It had been asserted that this was a packed meeting, but he said it was nothing of the kind. It was, no doubt, called in support of Sunday Closing, but it was absolutely free. They were not, of course, going to call a meeting which would end in a row and other disturbance. Meetings of the kind were for the public discussion on certain matters, and those who differed in their views should call their own meetings. The meeting was, therefore, called to consider the question of Saturday and Sunday Closing. Five-sixths of the clergymen of Cork signed the requisition, which was a very striking circumstance, because it was only to be signed by persons in favour of Saturday Night and Sunday Closing, and he believed no one would contradict him when he said that upon this question the opinion of the Protestant clergy did not differ from that of the Catholic clergy. The meeting which they held was at the largest hall that could be got for the purpose in the City of Cork; there was a large and influential platform, and the body of the hall was filled, not with the upper classes, but with the working men of the City, and it was on behalf of the latter that he claimed to speak.

MR. J. O'CONNOR asked, how many persons the hall would contain?

MR. MAURICE HEALY said, it was estimated that the hall would contain 1,200 persons, and there were 1,000 working men present. He had not seen a better attended meeting. Now, the publicans had been circulating a document setting forth their reasons why Irish Members should vote against this Bill, and they would excuse him for saying that the document was not by any means compiled in a candid manner. He would only deal with that statement in it which related to matters within his own knowledge—namely, that which affected the City of Cork. It was said that the Mayors of Cork and other places were of opinion that this question was to be settled, not by direct but by indirect legislation, dealing with the improvement of the condition of the working classes. But, so far from that being the case, the Mayor of Cork came over to London, and before a Committee of that House declared himself strongly in favour of direct legislation; and not only there, but in Cork, in the Corporation over which he presided, he had over and over again, in public and in private, declared himself in favour of Saturday Night Closing. He (Mr. Maurice Healy), therefore, found it difficult to understand why a document should be circulated which might induce that House to think that public functionaries like the Mayor of Cork were opposed to this measure. There was also a statement in the document referred to in reference to the Corporation of Cork. The publicans there said that the Corporation had passed a resolution against Saturday Night Closing. He denied that they had done so. They had done nothing of the kind; and there was no resolution on the books of the Corporation dealing with the question at all. The Corporation had passed an illegal resolution on Sunday Closing, in consequence of which he waited on them with a deputation, and asked on the part of the citizens of Cork to rescind that illegal resolution. They called a meeting, at which the whole question of Saturday and Sunday closing was raised and considered, and the majority of the Corporation of Cork voted in favour of that principle; but, notwithstanding that, the publicans had the audacity to circulate the statement that they had voted against it. He thought that a cause which was supported by a statement of that kind could not be a very strong one, and he recommended the gentlemen who drew up that document to be a little more cautious in future as to what they put forward. But he asked the House to consider what was done. The Corporation of Cork passed an illegal resolution dealing with the question of closing, and the publicans provided that every newspaper in Cork should insert it as if the Corporation had decided against Saturday closing. These were the tactics by which it was sought to show that the feelings of the people of Ireland generally were opposed to the principle. He had gone about a good deal in the City of Cork, he had talked with all sorts and conditions of men in that city, and he could say that the difficulty was to find anybody who was against Saturday night closing. His hon. Friend the Member for South Tipperary (Mr. J. O'Connor) had not been in Cork lately; but in answer to him he might say that the Trades had not officially pronounced on the question. The President of the Trades, however, had given notice of a motion in favour of this proposal of Saturday night closing; and, therefore, he repeated that the difficulty was to find anyone in the City of Cork who was against Saturday night closing, except it were someone directly or indirectly interested in the trade. He ventured to differ from the opinion which had been expressed by the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, because he thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman had not gone far enough. This Bill was restricted to 19 towns in Ireland. He quite admitted that in those towns the want of Saturday closing was most felt; but his own opinion, and that of most people in Ireland, was that this measure, which was a beneficial one, ought not to be restricted to them. For his (Mr. Maurice Healy's) own part, he was in favour of the principle of the Bill being extended throughout the country. He had taken some trouble to ascertain the feelings of persons in Ireland upon the subject, and he had been struck with the statement made by a reverend father that no measure would be of use that did not close public-houses at 8 o'clock. What was the case now? Publicans generally had their premises open every day from 7 o'clock in the morning until 11 o'clock at night, or for 16 hours a-day. For six days a-week a publican had his house open for no less than 96 hours, and he pointed out that no trader of any sort or description had his shop open for two-thirds of that time. All the Bill asked was that two hours only should be taken from that number of hours—although his demand would have been that three hours should be taken. That was a proposal which certainly ought not to fill the publicans with apprehension. It was a fact well known to all who had studied the question that there was ten times more intemperance going on from 7 o'clock to 11 o'clock than, he might say, during all the rest of the week. It was not for the purpose of legitimate trade that these four hours were wanted. It was ridiculous to suggest that anything in the shape of the legitimate sale of drink could not be carried on in the time which the Bill would leave untouched; it was idle to suggest that persons who wanted drink for legitimate purposes, and not for the purposes of debauch, could not get what they wanted before 8 o'clock in the evening. He declined to argue this question as one of statistics, and he believed that if the figures given were examined they would be found to be on the side which he represented. The value of statistics as to the number of arrests for drunkenness depended entirly on whether the activity of the police was a constant quantity, and in Ireland it was well known that that was not the case. For the last few years, unfortunately, the police in Ireland had had something else to do than arrest people for drunkenness; and, moreover, he declined to admit that arrests for drunkenness were any indication of the amount of drinking going on. They wanted to put an end not merely to drunkenness, but to wasteful drinking, by preventing working men from spending in the public-houses the wages which ought to go to their wives and families. An enormous amount of drunkenness went on with which the police could not in any way interfere, and therefore he declined to take the number of arrests into the question. The test in this matter was to walk the streets of Cork or any other great city on Saturday night, to hear the blasphemies resounding on all sides, and to see the working man's wife waiting at the public-house door to try to induce her unfortunate husband to come out before he had spent his last penny. He had heard a magistrate say that such was the state of things that the wives of working men had to wait until the public-houses were closed at 11 to buy the provisions necessary for Sunday, and that for that reason the provision shops were kept open considerably later than the public-houses. Everyone knew that, and also that the pawn shops were kept open longer to enable the people to take out their Sunday clothing, which could not be done until the men had been turned out of the public-houses at the last minute. He could only repeat that he should cordially co-operate with the hon. Member for South Tyrone, or anybody else, no matter what might be his political views, in the endeavour to obtain from that House a measure that tended to put an end to this condition of things.

MR. MAHONY (Meath, N.) said, he had great difficulty in making up his mind on this question. He saw great force in the argument that this Resolution should come from an Irish Parliament, and he had no doubt whatever that it would in that case have greater strength and efficiency. But he found himself face to face with the question —Will this measure, if passed, do any good at all? Would it save any unfortunate men from some of the evils from which they suffered? He could not deny that he believed it would do some good, and therefore, although he perfectly understood the position of some of his Colleagues who could not vote for the measure, notwithstanding that they were favourable to its principle, he could not accept the responsibility of voting against the Bill. But there was one point in connection with the subject advanced by the hon. Gentleman who brought forward the Bill which he could not allow to pass unnoticed, and that was the way in which he had adverted to the argument that this legislation ought to be reserved for an Irish Parliament. The hon. Member put before the House, very properly, the great importance of this legislation as affecting the interests of the working men of Ireland. But he wanted to call attention to the action of the hon. Member a year ago at the Burnley Election. The hon. Member was well known among the advocates of temperance in Burnley; but when he went down there, did he support the temperance advocates? He asked and implored the temperance people to vote against the temperance candidate, and that had been his action at other Elections in this country.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is straying very far from the Question before the House.

Mr. MAHONY said, he intended to vote for the Bill, because he believed that although it would not do anything like the amount of good which it would do if it came from an Irish Parliament, it would effect some little good for the people in Ireland.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, he desired to take exactly the opposite course to that which his hon. Friend was about to follow. He believed, and he said it with a full sense of responsibility, that every effort of legislation made in that House against the wish or over the heads of the people of Ireland at the present time, was an indication to them of a motive for making common cause with the publicans. Every move in that direction was really against the aims of those who had the best interests of the cause of temperance at heart. He knew that those Gentlemen who treated this matter from what he must call the ferocious advocacy standpoint, would not concede that men who voted against such measures would at all wish to see the working men sober or cared for. He believed there were in that House men who wished to see themselves and others kept within the bounds of sobriety, and there were many men who, although themselves abstainers, did not believe in this sort of coercive legislation. The result of this legislation would be, that while the working men were allowed to be employed till very late hours, the provision shops would practically be closed against them, because it must be remembered that the men who sold drink also sold bread, flour, and other necessaries. It was a bad arrangement, no doubt, but it produced a state of things which it was necessary to face. They would have men's wives going to these licensed houses to buy provisions, and then the police would be coming down upon the owner, especially if he were a Nationalist. If the House knew how those things were worked by the police, he did not believe there was a Member of the House who would vote for the Bill. He would be one of the first to vote for the measure in an Irish Parliament; but he had seen how the Sunday Closing Bill was allowed to work. The man who was in any way in the confidence of the Executive was allowed to do a roaring trade on Sundays; the police might see hundreds of men drinking in his shop, but he would never be prosecuted. But it was only the other day that the Local Government Board, at the head of which was the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, refused to appoint a man to the position of clerk in a Union because there had been a record against him as publican many years previously; and there were some 15 men now in Kerry deprived of their living, merely because they were members of the National League, by the local magistrates for political motives refusing them licences. He should not have any hesitation in voting against the Bill; as he believed the Act would be worked to the detriment of honest men pursuing a legitimate trade, he did did not think he need apologize for the vote he was about to give, and he hoped, therefore, that the House would reject the Bill. Until the matter was dealt with by an Irish Parliament, he thought that they should try to provide the people with some recreation which would be an inducement to them to stay away from public-houses, and then he, who was now greatly opposed to this measure, would be as strongly in favour of it as the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) and the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Maurice Healy).

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, they were asked to agree to the second reading of a measure which did not meet the views of a single Member of the House. He thought they were entitled to some explanation as to why the Bill was in this particular form. One reason for that was no doubt that the advocates of restrictive measures were not at all at one on the nature of the restriction they required; and, although the hon. Member for South Tyrone had mentioned the names of several different Bodies, as far as he knew he had not mentioned one that advocated the exact restrictions imposed by the Bill. In opposing the second reading of the Bill he was entirely in favour of strictly regulating the sale of intoxicating drinks. He did not intend to refer in detail to the evidence put before the House by the Sunday Closing Committee, but he thought he was entitled to say that it had strongly impressed on his mind the belief that a great deal more might be done to promote sobriety by carefully framed regulations strictly enforced than by a system of repression. His complaint was that a Bill framed as this was should, so to speak, be thrown at their heads, and that they were then to be told that it was not the Bill that was wanted, that it was in a crude state, and that it was to be sent to a Committee appointed for a different purpose to be moulded into something useful. As a Member of the Committee referred to, he had no right to object to any work put upon it; but he feared that if the committee had to go into all the evidence on this subject, in addition to that already before them, it would be impossible for them to report this Session. If any change in the scope of the Committee were made, he could not help expressing a hope, after the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman would become a Member of the Committee.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said, he was not prepared to justify nor was he concerned with the consistency of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) in using the argument he had against the claims of Irish Members at the General Election. The hon. Member for North Cork (Mr. Flynn), who addressed the House a short time ago, had said that hon. Members who voted for the second reading of the Bill must be prepared to accept responsibility for all the Amendments standing in the name of the hon. Baronet the Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) in connection with the Local Government Bill. He was prepared to accept his share of that responsibility by voting for the second reading of the Bill. The hon. Member also, in his closing remarks, challenged them to say that the principle of the Bill if accepted by the House and carried out would be to the interest of the working classes. It was precisely because he believed that a limitation of the hours for the consumption of drink on licensed premises would benefit the classes in question that he rose to support the second reading. The ridiculous statement put forward on platforms, and in the House of Commons, was to the effect that the working men were only to be benefited so long as they had easy access to the beer barrel or the whisky cask. He had seen it, too, stated in newspapers that if the working men drank less their wages would be less, but as a Representative of the working men he gave a flat and direct denial to the statement. It might not be in the knowledge of hon. Members that the estimated amount of money spent on drink was equal to 27 per cent on the wages earned by the wage-earning classes. Therefore he held that a restriction of the hours during which drink could be sold was most desirable, and that it was a most absurd statement to make that the working classes would not be benefited by this measure. The hon. Member for South Tipperary (Mr. J. O'Connor), who moved the rejection of the Bill, spoke at considerable length on what he was pleased to term the legitimate sale of drink; but throughout his whole statement he was careful not to state what he considered to be the legitimate sale or trade in drink. Surely if there was such legitimate trade it could be confined within reasonable hours, and he held that the number of hours during which drink was now sold were anything but legitimate. The State had already protected young persons and women engaged in dangerous operations in factories and workshops; it had interfered to limit the hours of work to 56 in the week, but they had it stated—and it was well known—that barmen and barmaids were engaged in the sale of strong drink for 96 hours a-week, and in some cases for 108 and even 123 hours. He was perfectly correct in stating that the worst cases which came into the hospitals, especially in London, were those of the unfortunate persons who were engaged in the sale of drink for 16 and 18 hours a-day; and it was because he believed that the passing of this Bill would be of untold advantage to the working classes, and especially to those immediately engaged in the sale of drink, that he had no hesitation in supporting the Motion of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. If the provisions of the Bill could be secured for the people of Ireland, he hoped they might regard it as an indication of the desire to extend them to the rest of the United Kingdom.

MR. HARRIS (Galway, E.) said, the hon. Member who had just spoken seemed to think that the average of working men spent money on drink which should go in support of their families. He quite agreed with him in that argument; but, on the other hand, he thought there was the danger that if drink were taken away from them, the money which now went in drink would go to the employers. He believed it was admitted by political economists of all classes that it was the interest of capitalists to keep the working classes on as low a mode of living as possible, and that being so, he believed the working classes would not in the end find that they were, so far as wages went, benefited by the measure. Many observations had been made by the advocates of the Bill to the effect that nobody in Ireland was against the Bill but the publicans, and he believed, so far as its object was concerned, every man, woman, and child in Ireland would be in favour of it; but while there was a very strong feeling in Ireland against excessive drinking, there was also an equal, if not much stronger, feeling against rash legislation of this kind, and certainly there was a most widespread objection against giving further powers to the police to interfere with their wants. He did not know that he had ever been more divided in opinion on any measure than he was upon this. But the argument of the hon. and learned Member for West Kerry (Mr. Edward Harrington) with regard to the way in which the police used their powers had made a strong impression upon him, and on that ground he regretted to say that he should be compelled to vote against the Bill. He would ask his hon. Friends, however, why it was that they had begun their work at the bottom of the scale instead of at the top? It seemed to him rather strange that the advocates of temperance should not turn their attention to the suppression of the manufacture of strong drink by putting such an amount of taxation upon it as would have been in the nature of a prohibition. They seemed to take that part of the matter very easily, and the Government themselves dealt very lightly with the great drink manufacturers. After all that had been said and done with respect to public-houses, the Government got the larger portion of the profit, and allowed what was going on in them for the sake of the Revenue; and then to turn round upon the poor working man as well as the publican, was, he maintained, going the wrong way to work. He asked how it was that the majority in the country invariably supported the drinking system in this way. The reason was, no doubt, that they would interfere with the Revenue.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: Has the discourse of the hon. Member, Mr. Deputy Speaker, anything to do with the Bill before the House?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member is taking no doubt a very large survey.

Mr. HARRIS: That was because it was a very large subject. He recognized in the interruption only another instance of the intemperance of the temperance advocates. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) would, of course, say that a large amount of money had to be made up; but he believed that if the injustice of that revenue were explained to the people, and the reasons why the aristocracy of the country supported the present system, this very long discussion would have been saved. It would have been settled that for the purpose of Revenue, land and capital should be properly taxed, and then the benefit of the drink taxes would have really been handed over to the working classes. It was a principle of political economy that labour should not be taxed at all, and it was, in his opinion, a great injustice to put a tax in any shape or form upon the wages of working men. Another principle was that consumption should not be taxed, and, therefore, looking at the present question, he said that the tax on drink was on the one hand opposed to Free Trade, and on the other that it was a taxation of labour. For these reasons he should vote against the Motion of the hon. Member for South Tyrone.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): I wish, before the Division is taken upon this Bill, to have the opportunity of saying a few words to explain my personal position, and also the course I intend to take. I say my own personal position, because I am only speaking for myself, and I do not, in any way, represent the views of any of my hon. Friends, who will vote according to their own views and judgment. I suppose I may assume that at this time all Members of the House, and Members on both sides of this question, desire to increase temperance among the people, and that they desire to promote and support well-considered measures towards increasing sobriety and temperate habits among all classes of the people. That, at all events, is my strong desire. I think I came into Parliament as a supporter of Sunday Closing originally. I have watched the different phases of the Parliamentary struggle on this question, both in England and Ireland, for 10 or 12 years, with the utmost interest. I at first used to take part in this struggle. I voted, I think, at its first introduction, in favour of the Irish Sunday Closing Bill. But I came to the conclusion, after a time, that the true interests of temperance were not likely to be served by the way in which that measure was accustomed to be brought forward; that it was attended with greater evils than those which it sought to cure, and that the effect of the Sunday Closing Act of Parliament of 1874 was not such as would be likely to increase the desire of the people of Ireland for temperance, or to force them to adopt temperate habits. I am still most desirous that there should be greater temperance, greater abstinence from drinking. I believe it is a very great evil. I am, with, perhaps, a single exception, the largest employer of labour among the Irish Members of all Parties, and it has been brought constantly to my notice that the question of intemperance is undoubtedly a very great impediment to the progress of the industries of Ireland, and to the success of manufacturing and other operations, as well as to the welfare and well-being of the people; but I am firmly convinced that the measures proceeding from the House for the promotion of temperance will not have any chance of fair play in Ireland; that the backs of the people would be put up against them in advance; that there will be defects in the administration which will largely increase that disposition, and largely nullify the good intention of the Legislature in passing such measures; and that the result, so far as the spreading of temperance is concerned, will be disappointing to those advocates of temperance who have so conspicuously proved their good faith and their earnestness in their constant advocacy of temperance in both this country and Ireland. Believing this to be so, and also considering that the question of temperance is a matter of grave moment in Ireland, though not graver than in England or Scotland—because I cannot admit for a single moment that the Irish are a less temperate people than the English or the Scotch—I will not draw any comparison, because comparisons are always odious, but certainly the balance is not against us, and may be in our favour—I cannot see that any good is likely to result from the passage of this Early Closing Bill at the present moment. What would be the advantage of the measure? Delay is what I should advise—postponement, but not abandonment. Your Local Government Bill for England proposes to assign the question of Sunday Closing to the Local Authorities, and also assigns other extensive powers under the Licensing Act with reference to the closing of public-houses, compensation to their owners, and so forth. The Government and the Conservative Party, in their programme at the General Election, announced that they were in favour of Local Government for Ireland and England; and at the commencement of this Session it was announced from the Front Government Bench, with all the weight and authority of a Cabinet decision, that Local Government for Ireland should go, as far as possible, *pari passu* with Local Government for England. There has been some change, unfortunately, in the councils of the Government in that respect since then, and they now say the matter must be postponed. How long we do not know; but what I would suggest is that, as you are going to have a Local Government Bill for Ireland, you should wait until you are in a position to pass it, and that then you should assign to the Bodies constituted the same powers with reference to this question that you now propose to give in the English case, or that experience in it meanwhile in England may induce you to give to them hereafter. If you insist upon passing a measure of this kind now, it will be exceptional treatment as regards Ireland. You not being the Representatives of Ireland, but the great majority being Representatives of England, Scotland, and Wales, will interfere with the decision and direction of the question which you have expressly handed over to the charge of

Local Bodies in the case of England, because I presume you do not consider Parliament is the best authority to deal with it in regard to England. When your position is so much less advantageous in the case of Ireland, why should you persist in dealing with it? I care not what system you leave the superintendence, arrangement, and direction of this question to in the future—whether to County Boards or to the larger system of autonomy proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). In the hands of either such Bodies and any such system, the question is safe. I believe that Irishmen acting at home, discussing this question amongst themselves, free from your interference, will decide this question much more advantageously and much more suitably and justly than you can ever hope to decide it here, and their decision will be attended with much better and happier results for the people. The question is one that is most intimately connected with the subject of local self-government. It is most exactly suited for the superintendence of local Bodies, which I hope you propose to set up in Ireland. By your own admission it is not suited for Parliament in the case of England. Much more so, I contend, is it unsuited for this Parliament in the case of Ireland. If you pass this Bill you will grievously hamper the efforts of social reformers in Ireland, and you will strike a blow against them, you will prejudice the section of the Irish people—that greater section of the Irish people who desire to see large legislation—in all probability, legislation going beyond the limits of this Bill—you will take away from the strength of the great section of the Irish people, and increase the strength of the smaller section representing the spirit trade in Ireland, who offer resistance to the passing of this measure. I believe, conscientiously and from the bottom of my heart, that no greater blow could be dealt to temperance in Ireland than the passage of such a measure as this; and I am convinced, also, that the working of the Sunday Closing Act has not been so successful as people imagined. It has not diminished drunkenness as it ought to have diminished it. It has not increased temperance, and I believe that since its passage there is less disposition on the part of the Irish people in favour of temperance, less public enthusiasm for temperance and temperance principles, than there was before the measure was passed; and, therefore, because I am a temperance man, and because I believe as strongly as the hon. Member who introduced the Bill that one of our great works in the future must be to make the Irish people more sober than they are, to make them co-operate with their governors—that is a matter of most vital importance—and their lawgivers on this question, I am convinced that only in this way can you secure your object to spread temperance among the people by voluntary action among themselves and by their own Representatives. For these reasons, I must decline to take the responsibility on the present occasion of voting for the measure.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down commenced his speech by telling us that he spoke not for his Party but for himself. Perhaps he will allow me to imitate him, and explain that the position which I now intend to take on this question is my own, and that I do not commit any of my friends to the views I lay before the House. I have listened to the debate with great interest. It has been marked by several speeches of considerable ability and great eloquence. These speeches have not all been on the same side, although I am bound to say that the palm, on the whole, lay with the advocates of the measure. It has been stated that wages would be reduced if they were not spent on drink, and that the greedy employer would be the only person to benefit. This singular travesty of the doctrines of political economy surprised me not a little.

MR. HARRIS: If the right hon. Gentleman had been John Stuart Mill, he would not have been surprised at some of my arguments.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not in the least wish to enter into any rivalry with the hon. Member as to the principles of John Stuart Mill, or any other distinguished political economist, of whom I have heard for the first time today the hon. Member is a devoted student. The hon. Member for Kerry (Mr. E. Harrington) advocated in a far less plausible form what I took to be the main contention of the hon. Member who has just sat down. He was of opinion that if this Bill were passed by this Parliament, the working men of Ireland would insist upon getting drunk.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I never said that. The right hon. Gentleman must be dreaming about my speech. There was nothing that could be taken as even approaching to the right. hon. Gentleman's statement.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As to the exact purport of the hon. Member's observations, my friends near me assure me that they took them in the same sense as I did; but I have no desire to misrepresent him, and if he says I was mistaken I will withdraw the observation.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I stated a case where the Local Government Board, of which he is the head, refused the saction of a Nationalist's appointment merely because his licence was endorsed. As the law was used by the police for the prosecution of Nationalists, I said I could not give them any further instrument of coercion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: One moral, I think, may be drawn from the controversy on this question to-day, and that is the extreme difficulty of collecting from Irish Members what really is the state of Irish public opinion. I constantly have it thrown in my teeth that I disregard in this or in that particular the "undoubted desire of the Irish people;" but we have heard the Representatives of Ireland give entirely different versions of what is the "undoubted wish of the Irish people." There is not merely a difference of opinion between Irish Representatives; that is perfectly natural and legitimate; but each side has asserted on its behalf that it had behind it practically the undivided opinion of the Irish people. That being so, it illustrates what I have all along said—namely, that it is by no means easy, by a mere survey and consideration of speeches delivered in this House, to determine what is or what is not the unbiassed wish of any section of the Irish people.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR endeavoured to speak, but

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER called upon Mr. Balfour to continue his speech.

MR. J. O'CONNOR, however, exclaimed—I should not be misrepresented.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I never referred to the hon. Member.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: I never said any such thing. [*Cries of* "Order."]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I never mentioned the hon. Member's name. Another point which I think deserves attention, is the most remarkable statement which fell from the hon. and learned Member for Cork City (Mr. Maurice Healy). He made a most eloquent, impressive, and interesting speech in favour of this Bill, and he warned some of his Friends sitting near him not to vote against their convictions by opposing this Bill on account of the fact that it was brought forward in Parliament of the United Kingdom. The hon. and learned Member, when he made that statement, knew, I presume, what he was talking about. He had reason for believing that there were some of his Friends who desired to see the object of this Bill effected, but who, because it was a Bill brought before the united Parliament, and would be carried by a united Parliament, would be prepared to vote against it. I think, again, that that is a fact which ought not to be lost sight of by those who try to ascertain the precise value of the opinions of the Representatives of Ireland given in this House. I do not say that the procedure is not legitimate, and I am not complaining of it. It may be perfectly legitimate, from their point of view, to vote against measures which, under other circumstances, they would approve of; but it would qualify very materially the estimate which we should form of the opinions so expressed. I ask the House to take note of it, and to bear it in mind, when the unanimous opinion of two-thirds of the people of Ireland is cast in their teeth. It cannot, I think, be doubted that the evil which the hon. Member who introduced the Bill desires to redress by this Bill is a very great evil. Nobody who listened to his speech, or who is acquainted with the condition of those towns where large sums are paid away every Saturday afternoon in weekly wages, can deny that a vast amount of money is spent in the most lamentable way before the Saturday evening has closed. The evil to be dealt with is undoubted, and no one will deny that if it can be redressed without creating greater evils we ought to take the work in hand. I confess I have always entered into the controversies on the drink question with a very cautious and doubtful spirit. I am one of those who greatly distrust any effort made by the Legislature to forcibly make the population—or any portion of the population—more moral. I think we ought to approach this, and any proposal of a similar character, not with our eyes constantly closed against the truth, but in an extremely critical spirit; and I think we ought to have all the facts on which a judgment can be based very fully before our minds before we come to any final decision on this question. I, perhaps, take a stronger view than many hon. Members upon two or three questions which are closely connected with the controversy at issue. I hold that it is a perfectly legitimate thing for the working men of this country to desire to take a fair proportion of alcoholic drink. No one denies that privilege to the upper classes, and I cannot see why it should be denied to the working classes. While I regard the desire for drink as a perfectly legitimate desire, and that it is perfectly ridiculous to try to crush it out, I also regard the liquor traffic as legitimate. I decline to stamp with any special mark of infamy or disgrace the body of men engaged in this traffic—a traffic which always exists in every community allowed free play in this matter. I also think it absurd to legislate on this question against the manifest desire of the majority of the people. You must carry with you the moral sense of the people whom you seek to reform before you try to reform them; and I further feel that before any restrictive legislation is adopted, very full inquiry should be instituted, and very full knowledge obtained before this House commits itself to deal with this matter. Under these circumstances, I should not have voted for the second reading of this Bill in the present state of my own knowlege of the subject if it were not that I understood that the hon. Member who introduced the measure desires that after the second reading is passed the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. There is, as the House is aware, a Select Committee sitting at this moment on the Sunday Closing Question, and I understand from Gentlemen on that Committee that a very large amount of evidence has been given on the collateral and closely cognate subject of Saturday closing. I think it would be a great misfortune if the evidence thus collected should be rendered wholly useless when it could be used for the purpose of coming to some kind of opinion upon the merits of the Bill now before us. I desire to see the scope of the inquiry of that Committee extended so as to include Saturday closing, and the Committee empowered to take evidence with the view of considering Saturday closing, not as connected with the Sunday Closing Question, but on its own merits. If that object is carried out, and this House does consent to refer this Bill to the Select Committee, I believe that the results of the labour of that Committee will be to give us in no considerable time a vast amount of useful information upon the subject, which will really enable us to do that which—in the face of the conflicting testimony given from the various parts of the House by different Irish Representatives—we are unable to do at present—namely, to give a definite opinion founded upon evidence, the value of which we can test. I hope, therefore, that the House will not refuse to grant the second reading, on the understanding which I have stated. I think that we should wait for the evidence which the Committee may collect before we gave a final decision upon one of the most difficult social questions which the House can have to decide.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, he had only a few words to add. The hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), in his weighty speech, had practically pleaded for delay; he did not understand the speech delivered by the hon. Member to be a speech against the Bill. On behalf of those who were supporting the Bill, he could not take the responsibility of further delay in this matter. Whilst they were delaying, men, women, and children were dying and being destroyed, and he could not possibly consent to have any further delay in the matter. The hon. Member for Cork further declared that he did not believe the Bill would achieve the results that were aimed at. He would put against the hon. Member's opinion, not his own opinion, but an opinion which the hon. Gentleman was perfectly certain to respect very highly—it was the opinion of the hon. Gentleman's own constituents. At the meeting referred to by the hon. Gentleman the junior Member for Cork (Mr. Maurice Healy), which was presided over by one of the warmest supporters of the hon. Member (Mr. Parnell)—namely, the Mayor of Cork, and addressed by many clergymen, strong advocates of the political views of the hon. Gentleman, this resolution was passed—

> "That we are convinced that enormous benefit would result from the closing of public-houses at 7 o'clock on Saturday evening."

That resolution was moved by the Rev. Canon O'Mahony; and he (Mr. T. W. Russell) had no doubt the hon. Member for Cork would recognize in that rev. gentleman one of those who was decidedly competent to express an opinion on this question. They had the hon. Member for Cork with his fears, and they had his own constituents passing this resolution. [Mr. J. O'Connor: No, no!] The meeting was composed of the constituents of the hon. Member for Cork. [Mr. J. O'Connor: Only a section.] Well, suppose he said a section of them. At all events, the meeting was presided over by the Mayor of Cork, an ardent supporter of the hon. Member for Cork; and the resolution he had read was moved by another strong supporter of the hon. Gentleman. As he (Mr. T. W. Russell) had said, he could not possibly take the responsibility of delay. He did not know when they were to have a Local Government Bill for Ireland. The sooner it came the better he would be pleased, but that was an entirely different thing. He could not act upon any assumption. He said he did not know when that Bill might come; but he knew that so far as the Local Government Bill now before the House was concerned, it gave no power to the Local Authorities to deal with the hours during which public-houses shall be open on week-days. He could not wait for a Local Government Bill, much less could he wait for an Irish Parliament; and he begged now to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put accordingly, "That the Question be now put."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 195; Noes 97: Majority 98.—(Div. List, No. 100.)

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House *divided*:—Ayes, 178; Noes 102: Majority 76.

AYES.

Acland, A. H. D.
Anderson, C. H.
Anstruther, H. T.
Asher, A.
Asquith, H. H.
Austin, J.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, Sir G.
Barbour, W. B.
Baring, T. C.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Beaumont, H. F.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Biggar, J. G.
Bolton, T. D.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Broadhurst, H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Childers, rt. hon. H. C. E.
Churchill, rt. hn. Lord R. H. S.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Coghill, D. H.
Collings, J.
Colman, J. J.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Corbett, A. C.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cossham, H.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Craig, J.
Craven, J.
Crawford, W.
Currie, Sir D.
Curzon, hon. G. N.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
Dixon, G.
Duff, R. W.
Dugdale, J. S.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Ewart, Sir W.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Firth, J. F. B.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Forster, Sir C.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fry, L.
Fry, T.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Godson, A. F.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Gourley, E. T.
Graham, R. C.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hankey, F. A.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heneage, right hon. E.
Hingley, B.
Hoare, E. B.
Hobhouse, H.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Hoyle, I.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hunter, W. A.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, hon. W. H.
Joicey, J.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Lalor, R.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lea, T.
Leighton, S.
Lewis, Sir C. E.
Lewis, T. P.
Lowther, J. W.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lyell, L.
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
MacInnes, M.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Maclean, F. W.
M‘Arthur, A.
M‘Arthur, W. A.
M‘Calmont, Captain J.
M‘Donald, Dr. R.
M‘Kenna, Sir J. N.
M‘Lagan, P.
Madden, D. H.
Mahony, P.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, right hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morrison, W.
Mulholland, H. L.
Mundella, right hon. A. J.
Neville, R.

O'Connor, A.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Parker, C. S.
Pease, A. E.
Pease, H. F.
Pickard, B.
Picton, J. A.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Priestley, B.
Rankin, J.
Rathbone, W.
Reed, H. B.
Reid, R. T.
Richard, H.
Richardson, T.
Roberts, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Round, J.
Rowlands, W. B.
Rowntree, J.
Samuelson, G. B.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw, T.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, W.
Simon, Sir J.
Sinclair, W. P.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stevenson, J. C.
Stewart, M. J.
Stokes, G. G.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, A.
Swetenham, E.
Talbot, J. G.
Thomas, A.
Thomas, D. A.
Thorburn, W.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Waddy, S. D.
Waring, Colonel T.
Warmington, C. M.
Wayman, T.
Wiggin, H.
Will, J. S.
Williams, J. Powell-
Williamson, S.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Winn, hon. R.
Woodhead, J.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, C.

TELLERS.
Healy, M.
Russell, T. W.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Allsopp, hon. G.
Baden-Powell, Sir G. S.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Bective, Earl of
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Boord, T. W.
Brookfield, A. M.
Byrne, G. M.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Compton, F.
Crilly, D.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Ellis, J.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Fellowes, A. E.
Field, Admiral E.
Finch, G. H.
Finucane, J.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Flynn, J. C.
Foley, P. J.
Fulton, J. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Grimston, Viscount
Gunter, Colonel R.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E.B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Havelock - Allan, Sir H. M.
Hayden, L. P.
Healy, T. M.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Holloway, G.
Hunt, F. S.
Jackson, W. L.
Jarvis, A. W.
Kenyon - Slaney, Col. W.
Kilbride, D.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Leahy, J.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Legh, T. W.
Lennox, Lord W. C. Gordon-
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lowther, hon. W.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Donald, P.
Morgan, hon. F.
Mowbray, right hon. Sir J. R.
Muncaster, Lord
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T.
Nolan, J.
Norris, E. S.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Keeffe, F.
O'Kelly, J.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, hon. F.
Power, R.
Price, Captain G. E.
Quinn, T.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Robinson, B.
Ross, A. H.
Sheehan, J. D.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Stack, J.
Sullivan, D.
Tanner, C. K.
Temple, Sir R.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Trotter, Colonel H. J.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Wardle, H.
Whitley, E.
Wilson, Sir S.

TELLERS.
Campbell, H.
O'Connor, J.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL claimed to move, "That the Main Question be now put."

Main Question put accordingly, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Select Committee on the 'Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland).'"

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was characterized by all the vices of this Administration. The right hon. Gentleman had made it appear that the hon. Gentleman the junior Member for Cork (Mr. Maurice Healy) had said that although some Members of the House might be in favour of the principle of certain measures, they would not vote for those measures because they came from this House. There was nothing said upon which that observation could be founded. He (Mr. T. M. Healy) approved of the early closing of public-houses on Saturday night; but he feared that such a measure as this would not be fairly and honestly administered. That was one of the reasons why he hesitated to support the Motion of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). He found that in everything relating to temperance legislation, the Nationalist was oppressed, while the Orangeman and the licensed ex-constable of police was allowed to keep open as long as he pleased. Notwithstanding this, he should have supported the Bill had it not been for the Closure Motion. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had given them another proof that measures such as this, which were presumably intended to promote the cause of temperance, were only to be carried in the House of Commons by practically shutting up the voices of Irish public men. If the application of the law was not put into other hands than those of the Resident Magistrates and those interested in the carrying out of the law at Dublin Castle, he should offer the Bill the most strenuous opposition. He had only another observation to make, and that had reference to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. That speech was full of sarcasm against his (Mr. T. M. Healy's) Colleagues, and he had heard it with the greatest indignation. It was a speech that was thoroughly characteristic of the manner of the right hon. Gentleman, and one which the Irish Members would not forget. He considered that these proceedings, which might have ended well, were certain to terminate in an unfortunate manner.

MR. J. O'CONNOR said, he moved the rejection of the measure which had now been read a second time, because he believed Parliament to be incompetent to deal with the question. With regard to this particular Motion, he had to say that the Committee to which it was proposed to refer the Bill was utterly incompetent to give it a fair and impartial consideration. How was that Committee composed? The great majority of the Members of the Committee representing Irish constituencies were in favour of the Bill, and in favour of any drastic legislation respecting the liquor traffic in Ireland. Although he supposed the Bill would be referred to the Committee now sitting upstairs, he had no fear of the result. The figures he had quoted to the House to-day were official figures, and so far he had no reason to complain of the result of the labours of the Committee. Therefore it was that, though he was utterly devoid of any confidence in the capacity, or the competence, or the impartial character of the Committee now sitting upstairs, he did not wish to offer any very determined opposition to the present Motion. They were at present investigating early Saturday night closing in connection with Sunday closing. They were taking evidence upon the point, and he did not think it would matter much if they extended the scope of the investigation of the question as regarded early Saturday night closing upon its merits, and for that reason, though he must again pronounce his want of confidence in the Committee, he would offer no opposition to referring the Bill to the Committee upstairs.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to consider the subject matter of the said Bill, and report thereupon.

SUFFRAGANS' NOMINATION BILL.

(*Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. John Talbot, Baron Dimsdale, Mr. Francis Powell, Admiral Field, Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Mr. Dixon-Hartland.*)

[BILL 35.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, that the Bill was a very short one, and he hoped the House would allow it to be read a second time. Its object was one which the House sanctioned last Session, but, owing to the exigencies of other Business, the Bill which he then had the honour to introduce, though read a second time, did not pass. The sole object of the Bill was to enable Bishops who needed Suffragans and desired to put in operation the Act of Henry VIII., which enabled Bishops to appoint Suffragans and give them a certain legal *status*—to enable them in all cases to take a title for their Suffragans from places in their own dioceses. The Bill being so simple, and the time being so short, he hoped the House would now agree to the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, he understood that the Bill was practically identical with that introduced last year—the only difference was that this year the Bill was amplified with certain "whereases."

MR. TOMLINSON: The wording is slightly different.

MR. CONYBEARE said, the wording was slightly different, no doubt. There were now considerable recitals to the Bill, which he did not think improved it; but, whether that was so or not, he desired to remind the hon. and learned Member and the House that this was the Bill which was popularly designated last Session as the "Bogus Bishops Bill." The hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) described it as——

It being half an hour after Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon *Tuesday* next.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 10*th May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Ordered — First Reading* – Official Secrets * [256]; School Boards (Scotland) Electors * [257].

Second Reading — National Defence * [235]; Small Debts (Scotland) * [41]; Railway and Canal Companies Charges * [49]; Reformatory Schools Act (1866) Amendment * [161]; Railway and Canal Traffic * [190], *referred to Standing Committee on Trade and Agriculture.*

Committee — Criminal Evidence [132] — r.p.; Victoria University [198]—r.p.

Considered as amended—Re-committed—Committee —Report—Considered—Third Reading—Local Government (England and Wales) Electors * [181-253], and *passed.*

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

QUESTIONS.

TRUCK ACT—ARMAGH SPINNING COMPANY.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to persistent breaches of the Truck Act by the Armagh Spinning Company, by the payment of wages in goods from the Company's store, and by illegal deductions from the wages of the *employés;* and, whether the Government will take action in the matter?

Mr. Conybeare

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Inspector of Factories that inquiries are now being made by him as to the alleged breach of the law by the Armagh Spinning Company. Detailed statements are in the course of collection, with the view to the enforcement of the law.

SOLWAY FISHERY ACTS—THE EDEN FISHERY DISTRICT.

Mr. R. T. REID asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is the fact that in "licences to fish for salmon in public or common waters with movable instruments" within the fishery district of the River Eden, the Eden Fishery Board granting the licence interpret therein the word "coasts" to mean "so much of the said Solway Firth as lies south of the middle of the low water channel, between the coasts of England and Scotland;" and, whether this interpretation of the word "coasts" has the effect of bringing the district of the River Eden in some places within 300 yards of Scotland, and under what authority this interpretation is adopted.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach): The Conservators of the Eden Fishery District can only interpret their jurisdiction according to the terms of their certificate. The terms used include in the district "so much of the said Solway Firth as lies south of the line drawn midway between the coasts of England and Scotland." Such a line might have the effect indicated in the Question of the hon. Gentleman. Any authoritative interpretation of the terms of the certificate would naturally rest with a Court of Law.

ADMIRALTY—NAVAL MEDICAL SERVICE—THE "SICK BERTH STAFF."

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether in all Naval Hospitals, since the abolition of Captain Superintendents, the power that they had of dealing with their men employed as nurses was relegated to the Inspectors General of the said hospitals; and, whether it is true, that at the present time no medical officer ashore or afloat has the slightest power of dealing with the "Sick Berth Staff;" and, if so, can he state the reasons for which this change in the Regulations of the Naval Medical Serhas been made?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): On the abolition of the appointment of Captain Superintendent at Naval Hospitals, the administration and control of the establishment were placed in the hands of the Inspector General, who now deals entirely with cases of neglect of duty or misconduct on the part of civilian nurses. The men of the "Sick Berth Staff" belong to the Service afloat; and, being subject to the Naval Discipline Act, are dealt with by the Commanders-in-Chief at the ports on the representation of the principal medical officers. All medical officers, whether on shore or afloat, have full power over the "Sick Berth Staff" by means of reporting them to the commanding officer, and in this respect there has been no change.

METROPOLITAN POLICE — THE SPECIAL VOTE.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in view of the fact that London is the seat of Government, and that a large force of police is required for the protection of Royal and political personages and public buildings, and by reason of the number of strangers who annually visit London, and for other Imperial purposes, he will consider the justice and expediency of continuing some portion of the present Imperial grant for the maintenance of the Metropolitan Police?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): There are special duties performed by the Metropolitan Police other than the duties of the police in ordinary circumstances. For these a special Vote is taken, and it is proposed that this shall be continued.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — LICENSING COMMITTEES IN COUNTY OF LONDON.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham) asked the President of the Local Government Board, How it is intended to make up the Licensing Committees for such Electoral Divisions in London as may be separate Licensing Divisions before the District Councils are constituted?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The constitution of the Licensing Divisions will devolve on the County Council. When District Councils are set up in London each district will be a Licensing Division. Until then it will devolve on the County Council to constitute Licensing Divisions by grouping Electoral Divisions for that purpose.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—CLAUSE 8—COUNTY COUNCIL FOR LONDON—THE THAMES CONSERVANCY BOARD.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he proposes, under Clause 8, Sub-section 2, of the Local Government Bill, to transfer the powers at present vested in the Thames Conservancy Board to the County Council for London?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Subsection 2 of Clause 8 makes no transfer of any powers, but provides a means by which certain transfers of powers may be made. There is at present no proposal that the powers now vested in the Thames Conservancy Board should be transferred to the County Council for London; and when it is borne in mind that the jurisdiction of the Thames Conservancy extends from below Gravesend to Cricklade, in Wiltshire, the difficulties which would attend any such transfer will be obvious.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —THE POSTMASTERSHIP AT HAVERFORDWEST.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Postmaster General, Whether there has been a vacancy in the office of Postmaster at Haverfordwest since October, 1887; and, whether any, and what, steps are being taken to fill the vacancy?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I have taken steps for filling up the vacancy at Haverfordwest by the appointment of an officer of experience whom I consider qualified for the duties; but I am awaiting the result of certain inquiries before carrying the arrangement into effect.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF LONDON.

Mr. WHITMORE (Chelsea) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he can now state what will be the number of Elective Councillors in the County Council of London?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have already undertaken to lay on the Table of the House a statement of our proposals with reference to the number of Elected Councillors for the counties. This I hope to do shortly after the House re-assembles. I am afraid I must ask my hon. and learned Friend to allow me to postpone the information he asks for until that statement is laid on the Table.

MERCANTILE MARINE—WRECKS AND LOSS OF LIFE AT SEA—WRECK OF THE "OSBORNE."

Sir JOHN SIMON (Dewsbury) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the circumstances connected with the wreck of the barquentine *Osborne* off Bamburgh Bay on the night of the 2nd of March, 1886, particularly as to the refusal of the Coastguard men to lend their boat or a lantern, or otherwise assist in saving the lives of the captain and crew, numbering 13 persons, who, but for the bravery of four men, who at the risk of their lives waded through a stormy sea to the vessel, must have perished; whether, even at this distance of time, it will be possible to institute an inquiry into the matter, and have the four men, William Dixon, Thomas Leighton, William Weatherstone, and William Tarbit, who rescued the crew, confronted with the Coastguard men and examined; and, whether he will consider the possibility of conferring some reward on these men for their heroic conduct?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): An inquiry was held into the wreck referred to by the hon. Member by the Inspecting Officer of Coastguard at the time of its occurrence in 1886, and his report was submitted to the Board of Trade and to the Admiral Superintendent of Royal Naval Reserve. I see no reason for re-opening the case, nor can I now consider the question of conferring a reward.

WAR OFFICE (AUXILIARY FORCES)—LOANS TO VOLUNTEER CORPS.

Mr. FINLAY (Inverness, &c.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will consider the possibility of making provision for loans of public money to Volunteer corps to meet the expense of erecting drill halls and other buildings for regimental purposes?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply said, as at present advised, he should not be prepared to extend the public credit to the purposes to which his hon. and learned Friend alluded. He was alarmed at the vast number of objects for which the public credit was now being continually invoked, and it would be with great regret that he would add to their number.

SOUTH WALES—TURNPIKES ON MAIN ROADS—EXEMPTION FROM THE WHEEL TAX.

Admiral MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he would explain to the House how he proposes to deal with those parts of South Wales where turnpikes still exist; and, whether they will be exempted from the Wheel Tax, or the turnpikes abolished?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): There will be no exemption from the proposed Wheel Tax in South Wales, although tolls may be levied on the turnpike roads. As has already been stated in reply to a similar Question, if there is any general desire that the Acts relating to the levy of turnpike tolls in South Wales should be repealed, and the provisions of the Highways and Locomotives Act of 1878 made applicable, and an Amendment to that effect is moved when the Local Government Bill is in Committee, the proposal will be fully considered by the Government with the desire of meeting the wishes of those locally interested.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS — HORSES OF AUXILIARY CAVALRY.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrew's, &c.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the horses of officers of

Auxiliary Cavalry ridden during permanent duty will be exempt from taxation to the same extent as those of officers of the Regular Cavalry?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): An officer of Auxiliary Cavalry required to use his horse on duty shall, on proof to that effect, be repaid the duty on the licence taken out for the horse so used. Officers of the Regular Cavalry will not be required to take out licences in respect of any horses which the Regulations of the Service require them to keep.

MR. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) asked, if horses used by Volunteer officers would be exempted?

MR. GOSCHEN said, there would be no exemption; but a repayment would be made at the end of the year in respect of horses thus employed.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON (Wick, &c.) asked whether, seeing that a hawker's licence was reduced from £4 to £2, hawkers would also have to pay the Horse Tax?

MR. GOSCHEN: The horse of a hawker is certainly not a pleasure horse.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION—EDENDERRY UNION.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) (for Mr. CAREW) (Kildare, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When a Sub-Commission will sit to hear land cases in the Edenderry Union, particularly in the portions of it belonging to the Counties of Meath and Kildare; whether several leaseholders who served originating notices on Mr. J. R. Joly, a landlord in this Union, have been served with ejectments, which are listed for hearing at the Sessions now being held at Trim; whether these ejectments are for the recovery of penal rents reserved in their leases; whether the tenants are obliged by the terms of the leases to pay all rates and taxes; is he aware that these tenants have now no alternative but to submit to these decrees, and that when made they will, by the service of eviction notices through the post, lose all the benefits of the recent Land Act which was passed for their protection; and, whether he will take immediate steps on their behalf?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that the Sub-Commission at present sitting in County Meath has listed for hearing 11 fair-rent applications from Edenderry Union. They will probably be heard before the end of next month; two of them are from leaseholders on the property of Mr. Joly. I have no knowledge as to the alleged serving of ejectments on leaseholders on this landlord's estate, nor am I aware of the terms and conditions of their leases. A tenant can only lose his right to have a fair rent fixed by a default on his own part in failing to avail himself of the Equitable Clauses of the Act of last Session.

THE THAMES EMBANKMENT GARDENS—STATUARY, &c.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether, having regard to the very small space in the Embankment Gardens left for grass plots and flower beds, the Metropolitan Board of Works will refrain from further diminishing that space by placing in them large statues of very doubtful artistic merit; and, whether the Board will consider the advisability of placing the statues of Burns and Raikes in the Shaftesbury Avenue, or some other thoroughfare, where they would not interfere with any flower beds or grass plots?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): I cannot, I am afraid, give the hon. Member a pledge that the Metropolitan Board will allow no more statues to be placed in the Embankment Gardens; but I may safely say that, in the event of the Board's permission being asked for another statue to be placed there, the Board, in considering the application, will have regard to the primary purpose for which the Gardens are intended, and which the hon. Member has in view. The particular statues referred to in this Question, although placed in the Gardens with the Board's consent, were not erected by the Board, or at the Board's expense. The Board, I may say, has no power to incur expenditure in removing these statues to some other part of London, even if such a proceeding were thought desirable.

JURIES (IRELAND)—GRAND JURY OF COUNTY CLARE.

Mr. O'KEEFFE (Limerick, City) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that only one Roman Catholic was empanelled on the last Spring Assizes Grand Jury for Clare; and, whether, considering the overwhelming majority of the Catholic population of Clare, 95 per cent, and that very numerous persons of that faith are entitled by their valuations to serve as Grand Jurors, he will recommend a more liberal selection in future of Grand Jurors for the fiscal and criminal administration of Clare?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have no knowledge as to the matters of fact stated in the Question. The Government have no power to make any recommendation as to the selection of persons to serve as Grand Jurors to High Sheriffs, who are entrusted by law with the duty of empanelling Grand Jurors, subject only to the directions contained in the Grand Jury Act.

LAW AND POLICE—SENTENCE ON TWO GIRLS AT WESTMINSTER POLICE COURT.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he can get the sentence of hard labour passed on the girls Macdonald remitted?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have made further inquiries into this case, and have come to the conclusion that the sentence of hard labour may be remitted on this occasion.

RELIEF OF LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND)—THE GRANT OF £127,000.

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government have finally decided on the purpose to which they intend to devote the £127,000 granted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the relief of local taxation in Ireland; how the money will be distributed; and, what machinery will be employed for carrying out the distribution?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): Sir, the £127,000 granted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be in the main substantially devoted to the relief of local taxation; and I am afraid I cannot make any statement to the House on the subject at present.

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD called the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressed the idea that this sum might be devoted to the relief in some measure of the county cess; and he wished to know whether that project was now before the Government?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, of course county cess was a form of local taxation; and as the £127,000 was to be devoted to the relief of local taxation, the diminution of county cess would be one of the subjects which the Government would take into consideration.

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD: How soon will the right hon. Gentleman be able to give the information to the House?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, the information would be given in ample time for discussion.

COAL MINES, &c. REGULATION ACT, 1887—BAXENDEN COLLIERY, ACCRINGTON—THE WEIGHING CLAUSES.

Mr. BURT (Morpeth) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to complaints that the weighing sections of the Coal Mines, &c., Regulation Act are not being carried out at the Baxenden Colliery, near Accrington; and, if this be so, whether he will take steps to enforce the provisions of the Act?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; it is the fact that the weighing provisions of the Coal Mines, &c., Act of 1887 are not carried out at the colliery referred to, which has an exemption from the weighing provisions of the Act of 1872. The legal question involved is not free from difficulty; but I have directed a prosecution to be instituted in a similar case, the effect of which will be to determine whether or not the Act of 1887 has done away with exemptions under the Act of 1872, or makes their revocation compulsory.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES—CONVERSION INTO COMPANIES.

MR. MOWBRAY (Lancashire, Prestwich) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether Friendly Societies registered under the Friendly Societies Act, if converted into Companies, will or will not be subject to the provisions of the Life Assurance Companies Act?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): Friendly Societies registered under the Friendly Societies Acts, if converted into Companies, will be subject to the provisions of the Life Assurance Companies Act, if they do life assurance business within the meaning of Section 2 of that Act; but whether any particular Company is so subject must necessarily depend on the nature of the business transacted.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—BELFAST TOWN COUNCIL—THE ACCOUNTS OF 1885-6—THE ROYAL VISIT.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Has the attention of the Local Government Board been given to the following items of expenditure objected to before their auditor, Colonel R. M. Studdart, as appearing in the accounts of the Belfast Town Council in the years 1885 and 1886, in connection with the visits of His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant and of T.R.H. the Prince and Princess of Wales, and amounting altogether to the sum of £1,370 4*s.* 3*d.*:—1. Payment of £30 for decorating Ulster Hall; 2. Payment of £200 for decorating and illuminating the Town Hall; 3. Payment of £217 16*s.* for decorations; 4. Payment of £180 for furniture and fitting up rooms for T.R.H. the Prince and Princess of Wales; 5. Payment of £85 for decorating Town Hall; 6. Payment of £75 for decorating and illuminating Albert Memorial Clock; 7. The balance for expenditure of a kindred nature; did the auditor report that the Corporation was justified in this expenditure; and, if so, will he state under what statute was the expenditure legal?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): A few ratepayers, apparently about eight in number, who were professionally represented before the auditor, objected to the payments in question, and the auditor carefully considered the objections. He was, however, of opinion that the expenditure was authorized under the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act and the Belfast Improvement Act of 1845, and he reported accordingly.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): May that be taken as a precedent for the Corporations in the South of Ireland, where similar decorations are erected to the people whom they decide to honour?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I suppose the auditor will be guided in each case by his view of the law.

THAMES (BLACKWALL) TUNNEL.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, If he can state what progress is being made by the Board of Works with the Thames (Blackwall) Tunnel.

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford), in reply, said, that the Board of Works was taking steps for the acquisition of the property required for the approaches to the Tunnel, and that the preparation of the contract drawings had also been begun.

METROPOLITAN POLICE—CONSTABLE DAVIDSON—CHARGE OF ASSAULT.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) (for Mr. PICKERSGILL) (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of "R. *v.* Ray," heard at the Marylebone Police Court on Monday last, in which Constable Venn and Constable Davidson were concerned, and to the evidence given by Mr. A. J. Pile, of Goldney Road, and Mr. Charles King, of Perth Villa, Shirland Road, who, whilst testifying to the excellent conduct of Constable Venn, swore that—

> "Constable Davidson went straight up to Venn and his prisoner, and, with his truncheon, knocked the latter down like a bullock, without reason or provocation;"

and, whether, he will call the attention of the Public Prosecutor to the alleged conduct of Constable Davidson, or take other action in the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have seen the notes of evidence in this case, from which it appears that Constable Davidson came to the rescue of a brother constable, who was being savagely assaulted by the prisoner Ray and many others. I find it stated in Mr. Pile's evidence that the constable struck Ray on the head with his staff, making him unconscious and causing blood to flow. The magistrate told the prisoner that if he applied for a summons against the constable it would be granted. This would be the proper course for the prisoner to pursue if he feels aggrieved; and it does not seem to be a case for the interference of the Public Prosecutor.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N. W.) asked the right hon. Gentleman, whether, in view of the fact that the Metropolitan Police murdered several men last November, he would issue instructions that they should be more careful in future?

[No reply.]

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT, 1885—THE MARYLEBONE FREE LIBRARY—DISTRIBUTION OF VOTING PAPERS BY THE POLICE.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is now prepared to grant an inquiry as to the distribution by the police of the voting papers on the proposal to establish a free library in Marylebone, and of the charge that the police in some cases distributed with such voting papers a printed paper asking the ratepayers to vote "No," and defeat the proposal?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I can only repeat the answer I made on the 14th ultimo, when I said I should be happy to consider any evidence the hon. Member might lay before me.

Mr. BRADLAUGH asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman had not received a letter from him undertaking to produce evidence before any Body appointed to inquire into the matter in support of his specific allegations—namely, that the police in some cases distributed the voting papers with a request to the elector to vote "No;" and in other cases handed over the voting papers, together with the direction to make a similar request to boys?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he had received a letter from the hon. Member stating that he could produce evidence to that effect; but he had not produced it.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: What I ask is, will the right hon. Gentleman direct an inquiry? I will undertake, on my responsibility as a Member of this House, to produce the evidence.

Mr. MATTHEWS: I cannot undertake to direct an inquiry till I know what is the evidence that will be forthcoming.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) desired to know if it was the duty of the police to deliver these papers?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, it was no part of the duty of the police; but it was frequently done by the men as a special duty, for which they were specially paid.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I wish to know whether, in addition to my special pledge to produce the evidence, the right hon. Gentleman requires me to furnish beforehand the names and addresses of all the witnesses?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I have only to repeat my previous answers. If the hon. Member will lay before me any materials on which he thinks an inquiry ought to be made, I will consider them.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Then, Sir, I beg to give Notice that in consequence of that answer I shall submit the evidence on the Vote for Sir Charles Warren's salary, and the House will then be able to judge of it.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH OFFICE AT CARRIGALLEN.

Mr. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has received a Memorial from the people of Carrigallen, asking to have a telegraph office provided for that town; and, whether, considering that the connection with the nearest wire would only entail a comparatively trifling expense, he will see his way to grant the request of the Memorialists, who represent all classes of the community?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): Yes, Sir; I have received the Memorial to which the hon. Member refers; but I fear it may not be possible to establish a telegraph office at Carrigallen, except under guarantee. I have called for fresh Reports on the subject; and I shall be pleased to communicate the result to him as soon as I receive them.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPLICATIONS LISTED AT CARRIGALLEN.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there were 71 applications recently listed for hearing before the Land Commission from the district of Carrigallen; whether the Land Commission was applied to to fix Carrigallen as the place for hearing these applications; whether that request was refused, and on what grounds; and, whether, in consequence of this refusal, the suitors were obliged to walk 14 or 15 miles, and most of them to be absent from their homes from Tuesday to Saturday, being detained to suit the convenience of the landlord, who did not attend when the cases were called?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners report that, unfortunately, they have been unable to furnish a reply, the Notice being insufficient.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE POSTMISTRESS AT KINLOUGH, CO. LEITRIM.

MR. CONWAY (Leitrim, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has fully considered the Memorial recently sent to him, and signed by the principal inhabitants of Kinlough, County Leitrim, in favour of the retention of Miss Annie M'Gowan as postmistress of Kinlough; whether he is aware Miss M'Gowan has had the management of the post office for the last two years, and given every satisfaction to the inhabitants; and, whether one George Whitten, who has had no experience of post office routine, is to supersede her; and, if so, why?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I have fully considered the Memorial to which the hon. Member refers; but I regret to say that Miss M'Gowan is not qualified for the appointment of Sub-Postmistress, as she is not a householder, and the office in which she is assistant is inconveniently small. I have, therefore, appointed Mr. Whitten, who is qualified in this respect, and who is also considered the best qualified in other respects for the satisfactory performance of the duties of the office.

MR. CONWAY: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he is aware that the mother of Miss M'Gowan is the occupier of the house where the post office is now held; and, whether she is not willing to hand over the house to the daughter, and give her every facility for carrying out the duties of the office?

MR. RAIKES said, he was aware that the mother of the girl was the occupant of the premises, and he understood she was willing to hand them over to her daughter; but, as he had already explained, the premises themselves were insufficient for the accommodation of the public.

MR. CONWAY intimated that he should call attention to this matter on the Post Office Vote.

ARMY (INDIA)—LICENSING OF IMMORALITY.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, with respect to a Paper to which his attention has been called, which purports to be a copy of a Circular Memorandum issued from the Office of the Quartermaster General in India, relating to the subject of prostitution, Whether he is now able to state if such a Document, or any Document substantially of that character, has been issued from that or any other Government Office?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): Yes; the Secretary of State is informed by the Government of India that the Quartermaster General's Memorandum of 17th June, 1886, is authentic, and that the document is on its way to this country. It will be laid before Parliament when received.

LAW AND POLICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE SALVATION ARMY—TORQUAY HARBOUR AND DISTRICT ACT.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the case that several members of the Salvation Army were on Monday, May 1, convicted of an offence under the Procession Clause of the Torquay Harbour and District Act, and fined 40*s.* each or an alternative of imprisonment; whether they have refused to pay the fine; whether the alternative in one case, that of a man of very delicate health, is one month's imprisonment, the offence being the walking in a procession in which three or four musical instruments were played; whether it is the case that warrants have been issued for the arrest of these men; and, whether, in view of his recent statement of the views of the Home Office as to the inadvisability of the insertion of such a clause in Private Bills, he will cancel or mitigate the sentence on these men?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Clerk to the Justices that on April 30 six Salvationists were convicted of an offence against the Act quoted. One man was fined 20*s*., which he paid. Four men were fined 40*s*., or in default three weeks' imprisonment. One man was fined £5, or in default one month's imprisonment. Of these five three are now in prison, and warrants have been issued for the arrest of the other two. I have no information as to the state of health of the man whose alternative was a month's imprisonment. I believe he has not yet been arrested; but I have asked for a Report as to his state of health as soon as he is received into prison. I should not be justified in interfering with the discretion of the magistrates in enforcing the clauses of a local Act merely because the Home Office objected that clauses of that character were matter for general rather than local legislation. If any special circumstances connected with the case of any of these men are brought to my notice, I will consider whether I can advise any interference with the sentences.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—BOROUGH POLICE.

MR. TROTTER (Colchester) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, under the Local Government Bill, Town Councils of boroughs of between 10,000 and 30,000 inhabitants will continue to exercise exclusive control over the police in such boroughs?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Town Councils of boroughs of between 10,000 and 30,000 inhabitants which have a separate police force will continue to exercise exclusive control over the police of those boroughs.

SAVINGS BANKS — THE SEVENOAKS TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANK.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is true that serious defalcations have been discovered in the accounts of the Sevenoaks Trustee Savings Bank; whether the late treasurer, having committed suicide, led to the discovery, and whether any officials of the bank have been arrested in connection with the defalcations; whether the Savings Banks Returns presented to this House have, for the last four years, included in the assets of the Sevenoaks Bank the sum of £145 5*s*. 2*d*. stated to be due from the estate of the late treasurer's predecessor; and, whether the Government will, in accordance with the provisions of the Trustee Savings Bank Act of 1887, obtain the appointment of a Commissioner to inquire into the case of the Sevenoaks Bank?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt have just received from the Trustees of the Sevenoaks Savings Bank official notice that the actuary and secretary has committed a serious defalcation and misappropriation of the bank's funds, to the extent, it is thought, of about £1,630, extending over a series of years. The Commissioners are further informed that the Trustees and Managers have passed a Resolution expressing their intention to hold themselves jointly responsible for any deficiency to the depositors. I have no knowledge as to the late treasurer having committed suicide, nor as to any arrests of officials of the bank having been made. My answer to the hon. Member's third Question is in the affirmative, so far as it relates to the accounts hitherto presented to Parliament. As regards his fourth Question, it would, of course, be premature for me to make any declaration before I have the facts more fully before me; but I can assure the hon. Member that I have every desire to exercise the valuable powers given by the Act of last year where the circumstances seem to warrant my doing so.

Mr. HOWELL asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the auditor who passed the accounts of the Sevenoaks Trustee Bank was, according to the Returns which had been presented to the House, the auditor of 13 other Trustee Banks in various parts of the country, and also the actuary of a London savings bank?

Mr. GOSCHEN: I am not aware of the fact. The hon. Member may feel perfectly certain that the circumstances shall be investigated to the very bottom, and every necessary action shall be taken.

ASIATIC TURKEY—AMERICA—THE BRITISH CONSULATE AT VAN.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is a fact that the inhabitants of Van have, as is stated in a telegram bearing date the 5th of May, protested against the action of an official or *employé*, which it is alleged is with the sanction of the English Consulate; whether any intelligence has been received by the Foreign Office concerning a Petition signed by 90 prominent inhabitants of Van addressed to the Porte on the subject, and demanding the abolition of the English Consulate; what were the charges preferred; and, will an inquiry be made into the circumstances of the case?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): The hon. Member has not mentioned the newspaper in which he has found the telegram he refers to. On examination, I find it in *The Times* of the 7th, among Reuter's telegrams. I observe that it goes on to say—

> "The charge is, however, entirely without foundation, and the complaint has not been communicated to Sir William White."

Her Majesty's Government have no knowledge of the matter, and there does not appear to be any ground for inquiry.

AFRICA (WEST COAST) — TRADE ON THE RIVER GAMBIA.

Sir WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he has received information that Customs Duties are now being levied on trade in the territories of the British River Gambia under the authority of the French Government; and, whether the amount of such duties paid to French officials, being in addition to those levied by the British Government, will be restored to the merchants in the Gambia by Her Majesty's Government?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham) (who replied) said: No information has been received by Her Majesty's Government as to the alleged levying of duties by French officials within the range of British jurisdiction or protection at the Gambia; but a Report on the subject will be called for.

TRADE MARKS AND DESIGNS ACT, 1883—AMENDMENT.

Mr. F. HARDCASTLE (Lancashire, S.E., Westhoughton) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce into Parliament this Session an Act to amend the Trade Marks and Designs Act of 1883, in order to carry out the recommendations contained in the Report of the Committee of the Board of Trade presided over by Lord Herschell, and presented to the House in April?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): Yes, Sir; a Bill to amend the Act of 1883 is in course of preparation; but I cannot say when the state of Business will allow of its being introduced.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—CLAUSE 21 (4)—ALLOWANCES IN RESPECT OF IN-DOOR PAUPERS.

Mr. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If the clause in the Local Government Bill allowing 4*d.* per day to in-door paupers, or any other of the proposed arrangements in the Bill, will affect, either directly or indirectly, the question of boarding out of pauper children; and, whether he can state if the number boarded out during the past year has been above or below the average of former years?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It will be observed from Clause 21 (4) of the Bill that, in connection with the proposed payment of 4*d.* per head per day in respect of in-door paupers, the term "in-door paupers" is to include pauper children who are boarded out by the Guardians. The number of children boarded out during the past year has been above the number of previous years.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL—GRANT IN AID OF DAIRY SCHOOLS.

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) asked the Secretary to the Local Government Board, When it is proposed to distribute the sum of £5,000 to be given to dairy schools; and if he will consider the desirability of stating at an early day the intentions of the Government on this subject, seeing the 15th and 28th May are the term days in Scotland, on which farmers make arrangements with their dairymen and landlords respectively for the coming year?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Long) (Wilts, Devizes): Having regard to the fact that the Board of Agriculture Bill cannot be passed until towards the end of the Session, the grant of £5,000 will this year be placed at the disposal of the Agricultural Department of the Privy Council, to which applications should be made.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC — SAMOA — THE CONVENTION WITH GERMANY.

Mr. W. A. M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he will give the date on which the English Government agreed to sanction the abandonment by Germany of the Convention respecting Samoa?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): No formal agreement has been entered into for the abrogation of the Convention of 1879 respecting the Municipal Board of Apia; but as the continuance of that Board had become impracticable, orders were, on the 24th of February, sent to the Acting British Consul to consider the Convention as suspended. The district has accordingly passed under the control of the *de facto* Samoan Government, as provided by Article 10 of the Convention in case of its termination.

In reply to further Questions from Mr. W. A. M'Arthur,

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said: In the reply which I gave on May 3, the date which I mentioned refers to the present year. I then stated accurately that the German Government had informed Her Majesty's Government that it was their intention to demand reparation from Malietoa, which, of course, might involve further proceedings. The telegram informing the British Consul was delayed, because no vessel was immediately available to forward it from New Zealand; and the Consul, in the absence of instructions, acted on his own responsibility.

Mr. W. A. M'ARTHUR: Are we to understand that the German Government gave such short notice that there was no time for inquiry?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: We are now coming to an entirely different matter, and I ought to have Notice of the Question.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Will the right hon. Gentleman lay a Return upon the Table showing the grounds upon which Consuls can act without instructions from their superiors?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: There can be no possible reason why Notice of a Question of that kind should not be given.

NEW SOUTH WALES—CHINESE IMMIGRANTS.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any telegrams have been received from the Governor of New South Wales on the question of landing Chinese passengers per the *Afghan* in that Colony, and the consequent indignation existing throughout Australia; what steps the Home Government have taken in the matter; and, at what port in China did the *Afghan* embark her passengers?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham) (who replied) said: A telegram was received on Tuesday last from the Lieutenant Governor of New South Wales, stating that the Ministers have decided to prevent any more Chinese immigrants landing in Sydney, and that those in the two ships now in harbour will be sent back to China. At the instance of the owners of the *Afghan*, Her Majesty's Government have requested the Government of New South Wales to give assistance to the commander of the vessel in the event of the Chinese on board resisting the order to return or attempting to force a landing. Her Majesty's Government have been informed of the strong feeling in Australia that the immigration of Chinese labourers should be restricted; and the whole subject of the relations between China and the Colonies is receiving careful consideration. The *Afghan* sailed from Hong Kong.

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—THE DISTURBANCES AT MACROOM.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Irwin, R.M., who acted as presiding magistrate, on giving the decision of the Bench in the case of "O'Shea *v.* Reardon" for an assault alleged to have been committed in Macroom on the 8th of April last, is correctly reported to have stated, with respect to the meeting held on the occasion at issue, that he was not there to justify the magistrates who suppressed the meeting, but he even thought the meeting legal; whether it was clearly proved that O'Shea first struck Creedon; whether Mr. Irwin said that Creedon had no right to resist; whether it was on account of Creedon's superior strength he received the sentence of four months' imprisonment; whether it was proved that Creedon after knocking O'Shea down was attacked by nine or ten policemen; whether it is correct that for several minutes they made no attempt to arrest him, but beat him with batons and fists; and, whether, under the circumstances, an inquiry will be made into the case, and the suppression of the meeting in question.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Resident Magistrate who decided in the case of "O'Shea *v.* Reardon" at Macroom states that the observations attributed to him are not correctly reported. It was not clearly proved that Sergeant O'Shea first struck Creedon. On the contrary, there was not a scintilla of proof that he even touched Creedon before the latter felled him with a blow of a heavy club. It was not on account of the superior strength of Creedon he received the sentence of four months' imprisonment; but for a cowardly and brutal assault on a police officer in the execution of his duty. It was not proved that Creedon, after knocking the sergeant down, was attacked by nine or ten policemen. The sergeant was separated from his comrades when he was knocked down, and his dangerous position was not at first observed. Creedon was in the act of beating him on the ground when he was arrested by one policeman. He violently resisted arrest, but he was ultimately secured.

Dr. TANNER: May I ask the Chief Secretary, on what grounds he bases his answer that Creedon first struck Sergeant O'Shea; and also upon what grounds he founds his answer that the policeman did not beat Creedon after he was held by three or four policemen; and, also, whether it is not a fact that O'Shea, while Creedon was held by four policemen, came up and deliberately struck Creedon with his baton three or four times? I saw the affair myself, and no matter what the Chief Secretary's information ——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I have given the best information I have.

Dr. TANNER: I was looking out of a window at the whole affair.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Might I ask a Question in connection with the same incident—and that is, whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware or not that there was no evidence whatever brought forward at the trial of this man Creedon as to whether the meeting was a legal or an illegal one; whether the Crown counsel brought forward any evidence whatever to show that the meeting was illegal?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I may remind the hon. Member that even if the meeting was a legal one, it is not lawful to beat a policeman with a club. Therefore, the question of the legality of the meeting was not the question at issue at all.

Mr. FLYNN: That is not an answer to the Question that I asked. The Question I asked the right hon. Gentleman is, if in connection with this trial of the man Creedon he is aware——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Dr. TANNER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I desire to ask——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Question which the hon. Gentleman has asked does not properly arise out of this Question.

Mr. FLYNN: I shall put a Question on the paper.

Dr. TANNER: Arising out of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, might I ask him if it is lawful after a policeman strikes a man for that man to strike him back; and I would also ask him if, under the circumstances that have been quoted, it was satisfactorily proved at the trial that the meeting was an illegal one; and whether, that not being the case, Creedon was not doubly entitled to return the attack of the cruel and cowardly policeman who struck him first?

[No reply.]

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL, SEC. 12—AMERICAN RAILWAY SHARES—STAMP ON CERTIFICATES.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, under Section 12, Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, in cases where British owners of American railway shares, for the protection of their interests, deposit such shares with a Committee or Central Body in London to be registered in trust for the owner, and receive a certificate issued by such Committee or Central Body, such certificate is liable to Stamp Duty, seeing that it does not represent a change of ownership, and in view of the fact that such certificate, if subsequently sold and delivered, would be stamped on delivery, exactly alike with American railway shares?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): A certificate issued by a Committee in the circumstances referred to would be liable to the new duty upon its first delivery by the person to whom it was issued; but it would not be incumbent upon the Committee to stamp it upon its original issue.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—SENTENCE ON S. P. KINGSTON AND WIFE, AT SKIBBEREEN, FOR FORCIBLE POSSESSION.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has seen the report in the London *Daily Telegraph* of the 3rd instant, of proceedings under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," at Skibbereen, on the 2nd instant, stating that a man named Samuel Paul Kingston, who is 80 years of age, and his wife, were brought before Messrs. Warburton and Major Caddell, Resident Magistrates, charged with taking forcible possession; that from the evidence it appeared that the defendants were evicted from their farm on the 20th of February last, and that they went back into one of the outhouses, and when asked to leave said they had no place to go but the roadside; that, notwithstanding the request of Dr. Lewis, J.P., the landlord, that the defendants might be dealt with leniently, and the entreaties of Mrs. Kingston to the magistrates not to send the old man to gaol for the first time in his life as he was very delicate, the Bench sentenced the old man to one month and his wife to a fortnight in Cork Gaol; and, whether, taking the circumstances into account, he will consider the propriety of advising the Lord Lieutenant to exercise his Prerogative in this case, and remit the sentence on this old man and his wife?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I understand that the man Kingston, sentenced to a fortnight's imprisonment for taking forcible possession, is about 75 years of age; that the proceedings were at the suit of the landlord; and that these persons were only prosecuted after repeated warnings. But, taking all the circumstances into account, I shall be glad at once to lay the matter before the Lord Lieutenant, if the prisoners will enter into an engagement not to offend again.

Mr. FLYNN: The right hon. Gentleman is going to make inquiries. Might I remind him that the forcible possession complained of in this case was the mere occupation of an outhouse?

LICENSING LAW—BREWERS' PUBLIC-HOUSES.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Government could obtain and give the House a Return of the number of public-houses owned by brewers in half a-dozen typical towns in England and Wales?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, he was making inquiries as to the possibility of giving such a Return, as to which he could not say he hoped to do so. Perhaps the hon. Member would repeat his Question.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM said, he would do so.

SEA FISHERIES BILL—LEGISLATION.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he can see his way to introduce the Sea Fisheries Bill before the Whitsuntide Recess, so that hon. Members may have the opportunity of consulting the fishermen as to its provisions?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.), in reply, said, the Bill would not be produced before the Whitsuntide Recess.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS — THE DUTY ON BOTTLED WINE.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has yet matured a plan for levying a less rate of duty on bottled wine of low value; and, when the proposal will be brought before the House?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that I am as anxious as he is to bring this matter to a termination; but he must be aware that it is necessary to make very considerable inquiry as to the value of various kinds of wines, and the proper line to be taken in regard to the mode of fixing the duty, and it would be unwise to come to a decision without having the fullest information on the point. I hope, however to introduce the Bill before Whitsuntide.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL FUNDS—SEAMEN PENSIONERS' RESERVE.

Captain PRICE (Devonport) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Correspondence which has passed between the Treasury and the Admiralty relative to the remuneration of the Seamen Pensioners' Reserve out of the Funds of Greenwich Hospital; and, whether there is any precedent for using the funds of a "Charitable Institution" for the payment of the Forces of the Crown?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): If the correspondence is really desired, there is no objection on the part of the Treasury to its presentation. It is a little misleading to speak of the Funds of Greenwich Hospital as though they were those of a Charitable Institution, founded for the sole purpose of relieving some particular form of distress. Parliament has enacted that Her Majesty in Council may grant from the Hospital Funds—

> "Such pensions as seem fit to officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Royal Navy,"

> "In addition to any half-pay, pension, or other allowance coming to them otherwise,"

and may

> "Prescribe the conditions on which such pensions are to be held."

In the exercise of this statutory power, Her Majesty in Council has prescribed that—

> "In the case of Pensioners who join the Seamen Pensioners' Reserve Force, an age pension of *5d.* a-day may be awarded at the age of 50 under certain conditions."

The existence of the Statute makes it unnecessary to cite precedents. But there is no novelty in a Pensioner being called upon to render service in the Auxiliary Forces of the Crown.

THE CURRENCY COMMISSION — THE REPORT.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can inform the House when the Currency Commission is likely to make its Report; and, whether it has held more than one meeting during the last three months?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I cannot say when the Currency Commission is likely to make its Report. It is now engaged in considering it. It has not held more than one meeting during the last three months; but a good deal of communication has taken place between the Members of the Commission in writing.

LAW OF LIMITED LIABILITY—AMENDMENT.

MR. HOYLE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he could now state when the Bill promised by the Government for the Amendment of the Law of Limited Liability will be introduced in the House of Lords?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I am unable to say when the Bill will be introduced, but it is in a forward state.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he desired to put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury which was of much interest to a large number of Members—namely, Whether he still intended to take the Bill referring to the Wheel Tax next Thursday?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I am afraid it will not be possible to take the Wheel Tax on Thursday next; but we should propose, if we make the necessary progress, to take the Employers' Liability Bill on that day.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): Are we to understand that the Wheel Tax will not be taken before Whitsuntide?

MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes; unless it is the wish of the House to postpone the Whitsuntide Holidays.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) asked whether the Horse Tax would be taken before Whitsuntide?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have already stated that the Bill dealing with these taxes will not be taken before Whitsuntide unless the Holidays are postponed.

In reply to a further Question,

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was not in a position to say when the Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill would be taken. He hoped on Monday.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) inquired, what Irish Business would be taken on Monday?

MR. W. H. SMITH: The Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill. That will be the first Order, and the Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill the next.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—KING JA JA.

MR. A. E. PEASE (York) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the statement which appeared in that day's papers, that Ja Ja had been removed from Africa on May 8, was true; and, if so, where he had been taken?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): I have told the House on previous occasions that I believed Ja Ja had gone. I was not aware that his departure had been delayed so long. He is going to one of the Windward Islands—Grenada, I believe.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

———o———

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) ELECTORS BILL.

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

[BILL 253.] CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Clause *agreed to,* and *added* to the Bill after Clause 8:—

(Perpetuation with amendments of 49 and 50 Vic. c. 42, and repeal of 6 and 7 Vic. c. 18, s. 59.)

"(1.) Section four of the 'Revising Barristers Act, 1886,' is hereby repealed, and that Act, as amended by this Act, shall be perpetual.

(2.) So long as a separate commission of assize is issued for the county of Surrey, that county shall be deemed to be a circuit within the meaning of section two, as well as of section one, of 'The Revising Barristers Act 1886.'

(3.) An application to appoint an additional barrister under the said Act may be made at any time after the first day of September.

(4.) Section fifty-nine of 'The Parliamentary Voters' Registration Act, 1843,' is hereby repealed."

On the Motion of Mr. RITCHIE, the following Clause *agreed to* and *added* to the Bill:—

(Making out of lists and registers in metropolis.)

"After the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, in every part of the metropolis, and in every part of a parliamentary borough, the whole or greater part of which is situate in the metropolis, the lists and registers of parliamentary voters and of county electors, shall, unless the local authority otherwise direct, be arranged in the same order in which the qualifying premises appear in the rate book for the parish in which those premises are situate, or as nearly thereto as will cause those lists and registers to record the qualifying premises in successive order in the street or other place in which they are situate.

For the purpose of this section 'metropolis' means the city of London and the parishes and places mentioned in Schedules (A), (B), and (C) of 'The Metropolis Management Act, 1885.'"

Amendment proposed,

In Clause 3, page 3, line 37, at end, add—"(3) Notwithstanding anything in this Act contained, where a municipal borough or an urban district is co-extensive with any electoral division or divisions of a Parliamentary county, the lists of voters may, if so directed by the local authority, be made out according to the order in which the qualifying premises appear in the rate book, and section twenty-one of 'The Parliamentary and Municipal Registration Act, 1878,' shall apply to such borough or urban district, and where lists of voters are so made out nothing in this Act shall require such part of the county register as consists of these lists to be arranged alphabetically.

For the purposes of this section the local authority shall be, in the case of a municipal borough, the town council, and, in the case of an urban district, the district council established under an Act of the present Session of Parliament."—(*Mr. Mowbray.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, he proposed to accept the Amendment subject to the following alterations:—In lines 5 and 6, instead of "the list of voters may, if so directed by the local authority, be made out," &c., he proposed to make the Amendment read, "the list of voters may be directed by the local authority to be made out," &c. He would also propose to omit the last clause of the Amendment.

Amendment, as amended, *agreed to.*

In answer to Mr. T. M. HEALY,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, the time for making out the list of voters was extended to the 31st of October.

Amendments made.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be re-committed,"—(*Mr. Attorney General,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER in the Chair.

Clause 8 (Contribution by County Authorities towards the remuneration of revising barristers).

Amendment proposed,

In page 6, line 29, at beginning of Clause, insert, "Every barrister appointed to revise any list of voters under 'The Parliamentary Voters Registration Act, 1843,' shall be paid the sum of two hundred and fifty guineas by way of remuneration to him, and in satisfaction of his travelling and other expenses, and every such barrister, after the termination of his last sitting, shall forward his appointment to the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, who shall make an order for the payment of the above sum to every such barrister.

"The maximum amount to be paid to an additional barrister in pursuance of The Revising Barristers Act, 1886, shall not exceed the amount authorised by this section to be paid to a revising barrister.

"The sums so paid to a revising barrister or an assistant barrister shall be payable partly out of moneys provided by Parliament and partly by the County Authorities, as hereinafter mentioned."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, that in regard to this question of the revising barristers' expenses, he thought it was important that the hon. and learned Attorney General should give some information to the Committee as to the effect of the scheme. No doubt the work would be much more heavy on the occasion of the first revision than it would be subsequently. He presumed that a time would come when most matters would have been settled; and, therefore, it seemed to him desirable that some provision should be made to enable the Treasury to give its sanction to the payment of a less sum. So far as he could gather, there was no provision in the Bill which would enable the Treasury to pay any less sum than 250 guineas.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, he believed that the hon. and learned Gentleman was not in the House when he had given an explanation of this matter the other night. He would, therefore, repeat it. The amount hitherto paid to the revising barrister for revising the list was five guineas per day, and, as a matter of fact, the amount received by the several revising barristers was considerably over 250 guineas per annum. It was now arranged that each revising barrister was to receive 250 guineas, one-half of which would be paid by the Treasury and the other half by the County Authorities. So far as the Treasury was concerned, there would be a distinct saving of 75 guineas for each revising barrister. There would be no alteration at all in regard to the appointments, or in connection with the work; it was simply an arrangement in connection with the remuneration and expenses. It was simply turning what had been partly a payment by fees and partly a lump sum into a lump sum.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, that the maximum sum paid in England was about 2½ times as much as was paid in Ireland.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill *reported* with an Amendment; as amended, *considered*.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, he hoped the House would consent now to read the Bill the third time. It was of importance that it should pass both Houses of Parliament before Whitsuntide. The Amendments made in it were only such as had been arranged to be made, and it was necessary that the Bill should go to the other House as soon as possible. He hoped the House would, therefore, consent to the third reading, which he begged to move.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Ritchie*,)—put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read the third time, and *passed*.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL

[*Lords*].—[Bill 190.]

(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it will not be necessary to detain the House at any length with regard to the past history of the subject, or to adduce many arguments in defence of the principle of the Bill. The particular phase of the Railway Question proposed to be dealt with in the Bill has been for a good many years more or less before the public. Hon. Members will recollect that in 1854 an important Act of Parliament dealing with it became law. The object of that Act was to compel Railway Companies to give reasonable facilities to the public, to secure uniform treatment of their customers, and to oblige them to forward through traffic without delay. The administration of the Act was entrusted to the Court of Common Pleas; but that was found to be unsatisfactory, and in 1873, after an inquiry, the existing Court of Railway Commissioners was instituted for the purpose of dealing with these questions. In 1882 the Railway Rates Committee, presided over by Mr. Evelyn Ashley, recommended, among other matters, that the Railway Commission should be made permanent, and that a further extension of jurisdiction should be conferred upon them. Year after year since that time my Predecessors at the Board of Trade have brought forward measures dealing with those recommendations; but, unfortunately, hitherto those measures had not received the sanction of Parliament. In 1886 a Bill on this subject was brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella), then President of the Board of Trade. That Bill was identical in principle and very similar in details to the measure now before the House, and, after ample discussion, it was unanimously read a second time. Therefore, I do not think it necessary for me to waste the time of the House this evening by repeating arguments in defence of a measure the principle of which has been already affirmed. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) has given Notice of his intention to move a very formidable Amendment at this stage of the Bill. He asks the House to affirm—

> "That no Bill dealing with the Railways will be sufficient and satisfactory which does not deal with the passenger traffic and the public convenience and safety, and especially which does not settle on broad lines the question whether Railways enjoying a monopoly of particular routes or districts have a claim to protection against competition, or whether there is to be free trade in Railways as in the United States of America."

I am afraid if we were to wait until a measure which, in the opinion of the hon. Gentleman, would be "sufficient and satisfactory" was brought forward, it would be tantamount to postponing railway legislation altogether. We do not pretend that this Bill contains in itself a complete settlement of railway legislation. But we think it preferable, instead of attempting to deal with the question as the hon. Gentleman proposes, to take up, in the first place, that part of it which has received most consideration during the last few years, and which we believe to be most pressing for solution. That seems to us a more practical way of dealing with the subject than the one which the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy asks the House to sanction. Our object in proposing this Bill is, shortly, to secure publicity and fairness in the conduct of our railway and canal traffic, to let the public know what they are charged, and why they are charged, and to give them better means than they at present enjoy of getting unfair charges remedied. To that end we propose, first, to reconstitute and make permanent the Railway Commission Court, rendering it more easily accessible and enlarging its power for the determination of disputes. In the second place, we propose to provide for the revision of the traffic charges of Railway and Canal Companies, and an amendment of the existing law relating to undue preference. Thirdly, we propose to bring canals under a control similar to that to which railways are subject, with a view to their being more efficiently worked and developed—among other things, prohibiting their acquisition by Railway Companies. I think these objects will recommend themselves to the consideration of the House. I will deal, in a few words, with the last of the three heads into which I have divided the main provisions of the Bill—namely, that which relates to the Canal Companies. I do not think it necessary at this stage to detain the House with a description in detail of the Canal Clauses which we propose to include in the Bill. But there is one point to which I would like to direct the attention of hon. Members. We propose, where a canal has been abandoned, to enable the Board of Trade to make a Provisional Order, vesting it in any person, or body of persons, or in a Local Authority. The hon. Member for Wednesbury (Mr. P. Stanhope) desires to enlarge very widely that suggestion of ours. He intends, as I understand by the Notice he has placed upon the Paper, to ask Parliament—

> "To encourage and authorize the constitution by local authorities of Public Trusts for the development of the existing system of Canals."

I should be very willing in Committee to consider any sugestion the hon. Member may make for the extension of my proposal to canals which are insufficiently utilized through the deliberate and wilful neglect or misconduct of those who control them—in fact, to consider a kind of penal clause for dealing with those cases in which canals have passed under the control of Railway Companies, and have been managed in a very unjust and unsatisfactory manner. That, I think, would be a very fair subject of inquiry by Parliament, or in Committee on this Bill. But, to any such proposal as the hon. Gentleman has placed on the Paper, I think very fair objection may be made. It does seem to me that it would be most dangerous, as far as the ratepayers are concerned, to give the Local Authorities free and unlimited power to enter into speculations and adventurous enterprizes of that kind with regard to the construction and management of canals. I think we may take useful warning from what has happened in another country in this matter. I do not know whether hon. Members are acquainted with a Blue Book which contains not only interesting information, but has also the merit of being very short—namely, the Report of the Inter-State Commission on the American Railways. Hon. Members are aware that corporations and public authorities in the United States have frequently taken a very active part in railway enterprize. The United States Inter-State Commission give their opinion upon the result of that action. They report as follows :—

> "So serious has been the evil of bringing worthless schemes into existence and making them the basis for an appropriation of public money, or for the issue of worthless evidences of debt, that a number of the States have so amended their constitutions as to take from the Legislature the power either to lend the credit of the State in aid of corporations proposing to construct railroads or to authorize municipal bodies to render aid, either in money or credit."

The Americans have suffered from the abuse of what if properly limited and guarded, may be a very valuable power in the hands of a public authority, and we should take care that in our desire to utilize this power, we profit by the example of what has happened in America. Now I turn to the other portions of the Bill to which it is necessary for me at this stage to direct the attention of the House. In place of the existing Railway Commission, we propose a Commission consisting of two permanent Members and one legal Member—who will be president—to be an English, Scotch, or Irish Judge, assigned to the position for five years in each of the three Kingdoms respectively. This proposal has been made, not merely on the ground of economy, though, having regard to the probable amount of work to be performed by the Railway Commision, and to the amount of time which we understand to be at the disposal of the Judges in Scotland and in Ireland. I think that very strong reasons might be urged in favour of it from that point of view. But we also believe that such an arrangement of the Court will increase its legal weight and authority, and minimize the amount of appeals. Further, we propose to give the public easier access to the Court than they have at present, through the clause authorizing Local Authorities and other bodies to appear before it without proof of their being aggrieved. We also hope that the expense to suitors will be less, owing to the sittings being held at the High Court of Justice, or at Edinburgh, or Dublin, as the case may be, instead of at Westminster. Then the jurisdiction of the Commission is to be increased, and will no longer be subject to interference by prohibition from the Superior Courts; while on questions of fact and *locus standi* there will be no appeal from their decisions, and only one appeal on points of law, except by leave of the Court. The new Court will take over all the jurisdiction of the present Commission, and all business which, at the commencement of the Act, is pending before them. In addition, we propose to enable them to enforce compliance with certain provisions of private Acts which are beneficial to traders and the public; to hear and decide complaints as to the legality of rates and tolls, and to enforce payment of so much as they consider legal, notwithstanding that such facilities may be in contravention of agreements; to award damages to aggrieved parties; to make orders on two or more Companies to execute works; to hear rating appeals when transferred to them, and to require public Bodies to contribute to works which they may order to be executed by the Railway Company. Then, Sir, there are two minor clauses to which I ought to allude, the first of which is intended to explain and amend the law with reference to group rates, while the second is what is known by the name of the "Conciliation Clause." We have thought, following out the views of the right hon. Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield, that there are probably a considerable number of people, both among traders and among Railway Directors, sensible enough to prefer settling their differences in some other and cheaper way than by going to law. We, therefore, propose to give them the option of a kind of voluntary arbitration in such cases under the auspices of the Board of Trade. That proposal, as I have said, we inherit from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Mundella). I know that when the proposal was first put forward it was received with some little ridicule, especially by members of the legal Profession; but I think that the right hon. Gentleman may take credit for it, since the plan has worked well in the United States. We have strong testimony to that effect from the Report of the Inter-State Commission, who say that—

> "This method of disposing of complaints is believed by the Commission to be more useful than any other, because its tendency is towards the establishment of desirable relations between the carriers and those who must be their customers."

And now, Sir, it remains for me to say something upon the two most important clauses of the Bill—the 24th and 25th. The 24th clause proposes that the Railway Companies shall submit a classification of goods and schedule of rates to the Board of Trade, who are to give due publicity to them, and consider any objection which may be made. If, in the end, the Board of Trade can agree with the Company, the classification and schedule will be confirmed by Provisional Order; if not, the Board of Trade will report their opinion to Parliament, and in the next Session shall, if requested by the Company, and in any case, may introduce a Bill embodying that opinion, which Bill is to be referred, if opposed, to a Select Committee or Joint Committee. I need not dwell on the advantages which will result both to the general trading public and to the Companies from the clause. On the one hand, it will be of immense advantage to the public to know—which they do not at present—what they have to pay, and why they have to pay it; and, further, there can be no doubt that publicity in these matters will tend to produce uniformity of charge. On the other hand, there will be an advantage to the Railway Companies. I believe they suffer very much from the doubt and suspicion which the secrecy in which these matters are now left engenders, and it can be no injury to them to get rid of classifications which, by the lapse of time, have become absurd, or of maximum rates which they never think of levying. It has been urged upon me by a deputation of traders, and in the course of discussion in this House, that under this 24th clause the Railway Companies will gain too much, because the clause legalizes terminals. But, as I understand the clause, it does nothing more than practically repeat, with a very considerable limitation as to station accommodation, what is now the law as declared by the latest and most authoritative decisions of the Courts, and it is in accordance with the Reports of all the Commissions and Committees which have investigated this particular matter. No doubt, the clause does propose to legalize terminals; but in doing so, it compels a reconsideration and remodelling of the whole scale of charges, with the certain result that, whereas now the public pay terminals without knowing what they are for, in future they will know precisely what the charges are and what are the services for which they pay. The 25th clause is one of great importance and difficulty. Its object is to prevent undue preference, without depriving the public of the advantage of competition. It throws upon the Railway Companies, whenever it is shown that they charge one trader or class of traders lower rates than others, the burden of proving that such lower charge does not amount to an undue preference. I think it is obvious that that will be of immense advantage to the trading public, for this reason; when it is felt and known that any preference will have to be justified, that fact will certainly tend to limit the number of cases in which preference will be given. The clause enacts that, in deciding this question, the—

> "Court having jurisdiction in the matter or Commissioners, as the case may be, may, so far as they think reasonable, in addition to any other considerations affecting the case, take into consideration whether such lower charge or difference of treatment is necessary for the purpose of securing, in the interests of the public, the traffic in respect of which it is made."

It also provides—

> "That the Court or Commissioners shall have power to direct that no higher charge shall be made to any person for services in respect of merchandize carried over a less distance than is made to another person for similar services in respect of the same description and quantity of merchandize carried over a greater distance on the same line of railway."

These clauses are governed by a further provision which, as hon. Members are aware, was inserted in the Bill in "another place," forbidding any difference to be made in the treatment of British merchandize as compared with foreign merchandize. That appears to me, and I am supported by high authority, nothing more than a statement of the existing law on the subject, if it means, as I understand it to mean, that no difference is to be made on account of the place of origin of the merchandize. There has been much controversy, and I have no doubt there will be a good deal more, upon the provisions of this 25th clause; but I think we may congratulate ourselves that the field of controversy is considerably narrowed as compared with what it was some years ago. I suppose that no one who has paid any attention to this subject will now contend, on the one hand, that equal mileage rates are possible; and, on the other, I imagine that the most ardent and zealous advocates of the Railway Companies will admit that they must take into consideration, in fixing their charges, something besides the maximum sum which they can legally impose consistently with securing a particular traffic. Our proposal is that equal rates should be charged for equal services; but it is perfectly obvious that difference of treatment is and must be justified by difference of circumstances. What I should venture earnestly to submit to the House is that, that in legislating on this matter, we should take care not unduly to narrow the effect of that proposition. Very much of the trade of this country has been created, and is continued, on the faith of special rates. I dare say that there are cases in which such special rates are objectionable; but, on the other hand, there are cases in which they are greatly to the advantage of the public. Is it not clear that, without special rates, London would be confined for her railway borne coal supply to the Midlands, and for fresh milk, fish, and vegetables to the counties bordering the Metropolis? Without special rates the manufacturers of Lancashire would be confined to the Lancashire coal fields, and industries situated at a distance from the sea board, such as the hardware trade of Sheffield and the Cleveland iron trade, would be placed at an immense disadvantage in the foreign markets. It seems to me that no one who has really looked into this question will think it is one that is simple and easy of solution. For my own part, I confess that I was never more struck with the difficulty of it than in reading that part of the Report of the American Inter-State Commission, which describes the immense difficulties they had met with, and the numerous exceptions they were compelled to make in carrying into effect the law against undue preference passed by the Congress of the United States. Sir, I think that the rule of equal treatment of all customers embodied in our existing legislation should, by all means, be maintained; but I feel that that just principle, like every principle, must not be pushed beyond its legitimate limits, and that we should act most foolishly and most dangerously to the industries of great towns and whole districts in this country, if we excluded from consideration altogether the element of competition. I do not wish at all to put forward these views in any unreasonable spirit. I trust that no hon. Member will suppose that I am influenced by any feeling of obstinate adherence to the precise methods which Her Majesty's Government have proposed for dealing with this important question. I am much too sensible of the extreme difficulty and delicacy of defining the law of this matter not to be ready to welcome, aye, and to invite co-operation and criticism from any quarter of the House. I am glad to think that it is generally recognized that this is not a question merely between Railway shareholders on the one side, and the rest of the public on the other. Railways have given us conveniences and facilities which have become indispensable to us, and, in the interest both of Railway shareholders and of the public at large, we ought to try so to regulate them as to develop to the utmost extent the aid which they can give in the production of wealth in this country. There is no business so interwoven with so many of our great interests as the Railway business. There is none on which mistaken legislation might so injuriously affect our great industries or the welfare of our mercantile and manufacturing communities, or so interfere with the intellectual and social intercourse of the people, or even with the comfort of everybody in our everyday life. I am glad to think that on this matter, there has disappeared what I believe was a feeling of very unreasonable alarm, which two years ago pervaded much of the Railway interest. We have had evidence to show that in place of that feeling we now have a willingness and a desire to co-operate with everyone else in arriving at a solution of this great and important question. I hope that we may be successful in dealing with it this year. It will probably be universally felt that the settlement of it has been already too long delayed, and, in conclusion, I would only say that as far as I am personally concerned, I feel that if such a settlement can be satisfactorily carried out it will be due much less to any action of my own than to the fact that I have inherited the advantage of the labours of my Predecessors. But I do feel most strongly that all of us must be thankful to have any part, however small, in the satisfactory work of bringing to a wise and just solution, a controversy which is so full of the deepest interest to the industrial welfare of our country. I beg to move the second reading of this Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*)

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I rise at once to acknowledge the very handsome manner in which the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade has referred to the share I have personally had in promoting legislation on this question, and I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the fact that he has to deal with circumstances so different from those which fell to my own lot two years ago. The calm and peaceful atmosphere which seems to prevail on the question now is altogether pleasing in contrast to the experience which I had when I first introduced the measure to the House. The Bill is practically the same measure as that which was presented in 1886. It has come, it is true, from "another place," and I cannot say that it has not suffered somewhat in its passage through that "other place;" and I cannot say that it has gained as much as the public generally think it has from the alteration in the preferential clause. I very much doubt whether the Amendments which have been made really add anything to the force of that clause, or have made it any stronger. Two years ago I had to encounter an agitation which affected every Railway shareholder in the Kingdom, and which was directed at the various *employés* and railway servants of the Companies in England, and which seriously depreciated railway property on the Stock Exchange. Quiet has now returned, and they are ready now to come to an arrangement with their adversaries. They have learned a lesson, and are now of opinion that it is not necessary that a settlement of the question should be longer delayed. With respect to any changes which have been introduced into the measure there are some, I hope, which will be rectified in Grand Committee, because this measure, being so complex, so technical, and so important in its details is one that it is almost impossible to deal with in a discussion in this House, and is essentially one for consideration in Grand Committee. The first thing that strikes me on examining the Bill is the fact that the clause relating to Railway statistics has been taken out altogether. In the Bill as I presented it to the House in 1886 and as it was introduced into the other House last year, there was a clause requiring the Railway Companies to furnish from time to time such statistics as might be required by the Board of Trade. That is a very important provision, because in this country we have no such thing as Railway statistics at all, and a total absence of information to enable the Board of Trade to arrive at any conclusion as to the cost of the traffic, the mode in which it is conducted, or whether any portion of it entails a loss to the Companies, and had to be made up by higher rates upon other portions. In a Report prepared upon this subject the writer extols the scientific manner in which the Indian Railways are dealt with in this respect, and recognizes the extreme skill and ability with which everything is done. He complains, however, that no opportunity is afforded of comparing the cost of the Railways there with that of the railways of other countries, in order to ascertain if the same results could be arrived at at a less expenditure. I have only mentioned this matter in the hope that the right hon. Gentleman will support me when the Bill goes before the Grand Committee in getting the clause restored, as that is, in my opinion, essential if we are to settle the matter properly. I am sure that this will be found to be necessary if the present legislation is to be successful. With respect to the Commission, I am in favour of persons being assigned specially to this work, and I should prefer to see a Judge appointed expressly for the work rather than a Commissioner having jurisdiction in the whole of the United Kingdom. I think it would be better that we should have one Judge exclusively employed in dealing with these matters than that we should have different Judges assigned from time to time, one in England, one in Scotland, and one in Ireland. I now come to the Classification Clause, the 24th, to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred. I am bound to say that I think that that clause has suffered severely in its passage through "another place." The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the present classification as being absurd, and it really is so. The classification is absolutely absurd, and the rates are such as no Railway Company would ever dream of charging. Therefore, to retain them is simply to frustrate the object this Bill is intended to promote. In the Bill, as it was brought in, one of the sub-sections provided that the Board of Trade should consider the classification and schedule, and any objections thereto, which might be lodged with them on or before the prescribed time, and should communicate with the Railway Company, and the persons who had lodged objections for the purpose of arranging the differences which might have arisen and of setting the principle of classification in such manner as will appear to the Board of Trade to be reasonable. The clause, as it now came down, contained an Amendment of a very insidious character. It ran as follows:—

"The Board of Trade shall determine the classification of traffic, which, in the opinion of the Board of Trade, ought to be adopted by the Railway Company, and the schedule of maximum rates and charges applicable to such classification, which it would, in the opinion of the Board of Trade, be just and reasonable to substitute for the existing maximum rates and charges of the Railway Company as upon the whole equivalent to such existing maximum rates and charges."

The words are "as upon the whole," and they are words to which I entirely object. The Board of Trade are to substitute for the existing rates—

"Charges that upon the whole are equivalent to the existing maximum rates and charges."

Those words, I maintain, absolutely put an obligation upon the Board of Trade to see that the new classification shall not be on the whole in any respect lower than the old and obsolete maximum classification which would, I maintain, operate adversely to the interests of trade. Having said so much upon the question of classification, I will now proceed to say a few words on the question of the preferential clauses. I know that there is a strong feeling in respect of this question of preferential rates, and that it is a most difficult subject with which we have to deal. I do not think that the Amendments which have been made have practically improved the Bill, and I confess that I prefer the Preferential Clause, as it appears in the Bill proposed by the hon. Baronet the Member for the Banbury Division of Oxfordshire (Sir Bernhard Samuelson), to either that in my own Bill or that in the present measure of the Government. It is very hard to convince a trader or dealer or an agriculturist, when he has to deal with such anomalies as this. He goes to the Newcastle market, and there he buys on the wharf two or three trucks of English cattle. He then goes to the wharf, and there he buys two or three trucks of foreign cattle. Then the trucks of both are attached to the same train and sent to the same destination—Leeds, Sheffield, Chesterfield, or any other place; and the foreign cattle are carried for 30, 40, or it may be 50 per cent less charge than the English cattle. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] I did not say that to catch a cheer from the agricultural Members; but I feel that it would be altogether impossible to convince any ordinary person that that is a fair and reasonable mode of dealing with the traffic, or that it is an undue preference given to one class of traffic over another. I do not think that the attempt on the part of the Railway Companies to get rid of the competition of sea communication is one that we ought to foster. My belief is that the Railway Companies have no more right to deprive steam vessels of their legitimate traffic than they have to give a preference to any particular industry. If this Preferential Clause would have that effect, I think it is only right that it should be altered. I cannot see why the Railway Companies should so lower their rates as to extinguish sea competitions, in order that they may afterwards raise their rates, for that is what it practically comes to. If they can carry foreign traffic at extremely low rates, they must do it either at a profit or a loss. If they did it at a profit, they can do it certainly for the short distances at the same rates. If they do it at a loss, they have no right to do so at the expense of the shorter distance internal traffic. It seems to be unreasonable that the foreign trade should be so fostered that the internal traffic is made to pay for the traffic from the outports, in order that the latter kind of traffic may be carried at an unreasonably low rate. I thank the right hon. Gentleman for what he said about the Conciliation Clause. He will be surprised to hear me say that I think that is the most important clause of the Bill. I do not take credit for being the author of the clause, although the right hon. Gentleman says that he borrowed it from me. I myself must admit that I borrowed it from America, where it has worked most admirably. Mr. Adams, a most able American statesman, who was one of the first to devise the system in Massachusetts, after it had been in work in that State for 10 years, said that the Commission was established in 1874 as a medium, or species of lens, by which the otherwise scattered and powerless rays of public opinion could be concentrated into a focus and brought to bear upon any Corporation. The system in America has been attended with such great success that the effect has been to secure its adoption by every State in the Union, and now they have an Inter-

State Commission, from the Report of which the right hon. Gentleman quoted, which has worked admirably, the result being a saving of 100,000,000 dollars on the traffic within recent years, as compared with what the state of things was 10 years before. It is to this clause, I think, we must look for our future remedial measures. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that individual traders, or even bodies of traders, would hardly dare to go into Court against a powerful Railway Company. I should like to see agriculturists, or even iron-masters, take the London and North-Western, or the Great Western, or any of the other great Railway Companies into Court. There would be a tremendous array of the gentlemen of the Long Robe; the expenses would augment enormously day after day. The Company would take the case, if the decision went against them, from Court to Court up to the House of Lords, and the total costs that would be accumulated upon the poor trader would be enough to deter him from ever again entering into such litigation. I believe this clause will throw an entirely new light on the whole Railway Question. We want more experience; we are not in possession of sufficient facts to enable us to lay down a hard and fast rule; but we want some Court to which the trader, however humble he may be, may come and make his statement, have his case thoroughly investigated, and the report of it made public. That would throw more light upon the matter, and would bring public opinion to bear on the action of the Railway Companies more than anything else. I see the hon. Member for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck), who takes so much interest in the Fisheries Question, in his place. Now, there exists among our fishermen a deep, and probably well founded, belief that they suffer from the extravagant charges of the Railway Companies. I have had a number of sale notes sent to me by dealers and consignees of fish, showing that the Railway Companies absorb nine-tenths of the whole proceeds. It is very difficult to arrive at a conclusion whether the Railway Companies are levying an unjustifiable charge, whether they can do it, or whether it is the fault of the market. But, under this clause, the trade, if they wish to make a representation, can go to the Board of Trade, state their case, have it thoroughly investigated and reported upon. In that case the Railway Company complained of would be brought face to face with the fishing industry, and a reasonable decision would be come to without any unreasonable expense being incurred. I spoke the other night on the question which was raised by the hon. Baronet as to a Fishery Board. I alluded to the cost of transit on the Continent. Nothing is more striking than to find within 400 or 500 miles of this country what the price of transit is. I have not been able to obtain precisely the figures I want, but I find that the cost of transport, including packages and ice, per 100 kilos, or 2¼ cwt., from Ostend to Coire, 400 miles, is 16*s.* 6*d.* I find that the price of fish in the summer in the Engadine was—turbot, 2 francs 50 cents per kilo, or 2⅕ lbs. to 3 francs 50 cents; salmon, 3 francs 50 cents; pollock, 2 francs to 2 francs 20 cents; haddocks, 1 franc to 2 francs 50 cents; soles, 2 francs 50 cents to 3 francs; and whiting from 1 franc to 1 franc 50 cents. Comparing that price with the prices paid in my own house during the summer, I find that there was scarcely any difference between the price of fish at Ostend and in London, although, in the carriage to London, ice and packages were included. I come now to the very important question of the Canals. I certainly expected to have heard something rather stronger from the right hon. Gentleman to-night with respect to the Canals than we have heard, because last Friday night there was a somewhat academic discussion on the State purchase of the Railways. The right hon. Gentleman entirely discouraged the idea of a State purchase of Railways; but I heard with great pleasure what the right hon. Gentleman said on the question of the State dealing with canals. According to *The Times* of Saturday last the right hon. Gentleman said that hon. Members who introduced the question

> "Would do much more good towards attaining the objects they have in view if they were to devote their attention to the possibility of the State acquiring the Canals of the country. To work the Canals would not require a great deal of stock or a large staff. The carriage upon the Canals would always be carried on by private carriers, and they might be purchased at a reasonable cost. Parliament has tried, but

hitherto vainly, to prevent Canals passing into the hands of Railway Companies, and I believe that there is a strong desire among the authorities of our great towns that some further step should be taken to preserve the competition of our artificial water-ways."

Now, such a statement, coming from the President of the Board of Trade, and from an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, is very significant, and, in my opinion, a statement of the highest importance. I am bound to say that I should be glad to see the Government screw up their courage to deal with that question. I believe there never was a time when they could deal with the Canal Question with so much advantage to the country as now, and if it is to dealt with at all it is to be dealt with now. I know it is said that Canals cannot compete with Railway Companies. If that be so, I should like to know how it comes about that out of 3,760 miles of Canals the Railways obtained possession of one-half and the control practically of three-fourths? If they could compete with them, why should they have bought them up and keep hold of them and consent to pay enormously out of their own revenues in order to provide dividends for the Canal shareholders? An old friend of mine, who then had more experience of Canals than any other man in England, told me a short time ago of a particular Canal connected with, or under the control of, one of the great Railway Companies, with, of course, a Board comprised of a certain number of Railway Directors, and, whenever any movement was made in the direction of additional enterprize on the part of the Canal Company, down came the Chairman of the Railway Company and said —"Why do you wish to do this? You have got your dividend, what more do you want? We cannot allow this thing to be done." The consequence is that, year after year, the Railway Company takes from its revenues a considerable sum and pays it over to the Canal proprietors, in order to keep the Canal in a moribund condition. Then, again, it may be said that the Canals cannot compete with the Railway Companies. Let me mention the case of the Aire and Calder Canal, which has been competing most successfully with the Railway Companies, is doing excellent work, and carrying considerable traffic from South to West Yorkshire and elsewhere. They are carrying it at rates far below that which any Railway Company would ever quote for the same distances. These Canal Companies have improved and deepened their Canals, they have put on steam tugs to draw the barges, and they have a new kind of vessel by which the coal is put into the barges. The boats run down to the barges, and then the whole of the ship's bottom is raised by hydraulic power, and the coal is put on board unbroken and carried with the greatest possible advantage. On the Shropshire Union Canal the North Western Company contemplate the building of several light locomotives by means of which they propose to get rid of the horse work, and to run a train, so to speak, of barges by these light locomotives, which will be placed on rails laid on the canal side. The fact is that the Railway Companies have entirely deadened all enterprize on our water ways, with the result that the heavy traffic of our inland towns has been especially handicapped. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will have the courage to deal with this question when the Bill gets in into Committee. It has been foreshadowed as within the range of possibility that the Government may purchase the canals, and I should like to see the Minister who would have the courage to do it. I believe it will redound greatly to his honour and credit, and be of advantage to the country. The purchase could be effected now at a very low cost, and I think that a provision ought to be inserted in the present Bill enabling him to do so if he likes. There would be no necessity for giving the Railway Companies any compensation for taking the canals out of their hands. There could be no injustice, because the Railway Companies have acquired them in opposition to the spirit and intention of the Legislature, and not with a view of facilitating enterprize. On the contrary, they have put a stop to enterprize in opposition to the spirit of our legislation, and altogether in opposition to public policy. I therefore think the time has come when we may look forward to a considerable development of canal enterprize if we once get them free from the control of the Railway Companies. What is wanted is some uniformity of management, the spending of a little money upon them, and a little enterprize; and then the water ways of

England will be just as useful to the heavy industries of the country as are those of France and Germany. I only propose now to refer for a moment to the remarkable results of cheap transport in this country. Perhaps I can give no better illustration of this than that which I gave two years ago—namely, that of the Parcels Post. Two years ago the Parcels Post carried 300,000 packages a-year. I believe that this year the number has been increased to 800,000, and 55 per cent of this traffic goes to the Railway Companies. Instead of the railway parcel traffic having fallen off, I am told that it has actually increased. That is an illustration of the sort of bargain the Railway Companies succeeded in making with the late Mr. Fawcett when he was at the head of the Post Office. As I have said, the Railway Companies get 55 per cent of the traffic, and they do not collect, invoice, book, or deliver the parcels, but have simply to carry them. They have nothing to do but to receive them *en masse*, and carry them to their destination. The Railway Companies will probably receive this year for their service from £400,000 to £420,000 from the Post Office. But will the House believe it? the Post Office have already found out that the bargain they made with the railways is so bad that they can carry the parcels cheaper by means of the old stage coach than they can by railway. Every night there may be seen leaving St. Martin's-le-Grand an old stage coach with a driver on the box, and a guard with pistols in his holsters, the roof laden with parcels, on its way to Brighton, a freshly laden coach coming back the next morning. Yet the whole of this traffic could go down in a van with very little trouble. I am told by the Postmaster General that the Post Office are saving £1,500 a-year by means of that one coach, and that they contemplate adding more coaches to run between Manchester and Liverpool, Leeds and Manchester, and other large towns. I think I could not give a better illustration than this of the employment of the old stage coach in preference to the railway in order to show what sort of a bargain the Post Office made with the Railway Companies. There is another Bill down on the Paper to-night for second reading in reference to this question. This is altogether a matter for Committee, and as the right hon. Gentleman has said the question is not a Party question, I believe it is not even a railway question, and although the railway shareholders will in my opinion be benefited in every possible way by regulation and control, it is a question of the rights and convenience of the public. I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to allow the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for the Banbury Division of Oxfordshire (Sir Bernhard Samuelson) to be read a second time and sent to the Committee together with this Bill. My hon. Friend has given more thought and pains to this matter, perhaps, than any hon. Member of the House, and I confess that I myself am very much indebted to him for information with regard to it. There are some clauses in his Bill which, I think, are even better than those of this Bill, and they might, I believe, with advantage, be placed side by side with them, in order to allow the best provision and enactment to be subtracted from the two. For instance, the Bill of the Government does not provide for through rates, but the Bill of my hon. Friend does that. The Government Bill does not provide for undue preference being decided as a question of fact. Now, I think the absence of that provision is likely to lead to many appeals which, after all, is what is dreaded by the trader. I am of opinion that undue preference should be dealt with as a question of fact, and not as a question of law, which would have to be sent from Court to Court for decision. Then the present Bill would give a double appeal, while that of my hon. Friend would allow only one appeal to the House of Lords, and I think that a single appeal ought to be sufficient. My hon. Friend's Bill provides that wherever a higher charge is made to some traders than others, the proof that the charge is not prejudicial shall be laid on the Railway Company. I think that a just clause, because it has been ruled by the Commissioners that a trader cannot proceed unless he can prove damage sustained from the fact that another person's goods are being carried at a lower rate than his own. No one can hold, I think, that a man who pays the higher carriage is not at a disadvantage, although he may not be able to prove that he has suffered loss thereby. I trust, therefore, these considerations will receive attention at the hands of the right hon. Gentleman, whom I can assure that we on this side of the House will use our best efforts to further the passage of his measure, in the hope that we may pass this Session an Act just and satisfactory to the traders, the Railway Companies, and the people of this country.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) said, that everyone must be glad at the prospect of the proposed legislation on this important subject being carried through Parliament in the course of the present Session. He thought from an agricultural point of view the present system of railway rates had operated most hardly and unfairly upon the farmers of the country. Under the present system a farmer might see foreign goods taken by the Railway Companies at extremely low rates, hurried past his farm, and yet find that when he sent his own produce to market he had to pay double the rate charged to his foreign rivals. When he saw the way in which the British trader was thus boycotted, he regarded the action of the Railway Companies as nothing short of a scandal. He was glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) was going to give the Government every assistance in passing the Bill into law. He hoped that the House would stand firm with regard to the question of preferential rates, because he believed that there were few trades in the country which had not been affected by the present system. A most remarkable letter had reached him from an estate agent, who said that, desiring to send some English timber to London, he had to pay 24*s.* 2*d.* a ton, whereas if he brought American timber from London to the same railway station he would only have to pay 8*s.* 6*d.* a ton; the letter also went on to say that, if he wanted foreign timber, it would be brought at 8*s.* or 9*s.*, and that if he wanted English timber the Companies would charge him the full rates. He was quite sure that his hon. Friend the Member for the St. Ives Division of Cornwall (Mr. Bolitho) knew full well what had taken place in the past with regard to foreign potatoes sent to London as compared with potatoes and other vegetables grown in Cornwall. If any one could have any doubts at all about the Bill he had certainly his doubts with regard to the officials of the Board of Trade, who he believed would be awe-struck by the officials of the Railway Companies. The railway interest he feared would be all-powerful with the Department, and this might result in the traders not getting justice. His right hon. Friend had said a few words with regard to the fish rates. He (Sir Edward Birkbeck) was sure that all would agree that it was a matter of great importance that good and wholesome food should be distributed in the large towns in the United Kingdom at such prices as would allow the poor to buy, and at such rates of carriage as would allow those engaged in the fishing industry to increase the supply. There had been no opportunity of discussing the provisions of the Bill which he had introduced, to deal with the question of fish rates, but he pointed out that those Members who opposed the making of fair and cheap rates for fish conveyance were making a great mistake, and further that the Railway Companies would find it very much to their advantage to carry fish on those terms. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Mundella) had alluded to the question of the Bill going to the Committee on Trade. No doubt it would be sent to that Committee, and he trusted that some of the clauses of the Bill which he had himself introduced for the regulation of fish rates would be included in the measure. He believed it would be of great advantage, and personally could see no reason why that course should not be adopted. A case had come to his knowledge of the sale last year of 523 packages of fish, where the gross sum produced was £194 3*s.* 6*d.*, and the amount of railway charge £143 3*s.* 9*d.*, or 74 per cent. This was not an uncommon case, and he could give numbers of instances of the same nature where the fishermen got little or no return for the fish sent to market, owing to the charges of the Railway Companies, and not only that, but they frequently made a loss upon the sales. Within the last 10 days 100 tons of fresh herrings had been sold as manure at Lowestoft instead of being sent to the various towns where they would have been of great use to the poor. Again, in July, 1886, 1,000 tons of herrings were thrown overboard in consequence of the railway rates. A gentleman had written to him from Penzance to say that during two days of last year 39,000 mackerel were thrown into the sea from 10 boats in consequence of the railway rates, which prevented their being sent to the London or any other market, that 40,000 mackerel were sold for manure, and that at St. Ives, and another town, 45,000 mackerel were destroyed on the same night. He had received a letter from the Island of Harris, on the West Coast of Scotland, to say that some fishermen had been out for two or three days, and having sent a consignment to Manchester the produce of the sale amounted to 8*d*., while another poor man only received a 1*d*. stamp as the result of his catch. There was one Railway Company against which he did not wish to say one word, and for which he had the highest regard, the Great Eastern Railway, because, he believed, they were doing their utmost for the district through which the Railway passed; but the House would be aware that they supplied salt water to the inhabitants of London in three gallon barrels; the water was obtained at Lowestoft and brought a distance of 117 miles, delivered in casks weighing 40 lbs. to various parts, the casks being afterwards collected, and the whole charge was 6*d*. Yet, when it became a question of sending up the cheaper kinds of fish for the poor in the large towns, they charged such oppressive rates that it was impossible that the fish could be sent. In many instances foreign fish were conveyed at very low rates, while the poor English fisherman was crowded out of the market. A statement was made the other night by the hon. Member (Mr. Mundella) speaking on the subject of foreign importations, that they were not of any importance, but, as a matter of fact, in the first three months of this year there had been a considerable increase in the importation of foreign fish.

Mr. MUNDELLA: What was the amount of fish exported from England?

Sir EDWARD BIRKBECK said, he was confining his observations to fish brought from abroad, the importation of which was increasing very largely, and he would say that unless our Railway Companies consented to meet the fishing industry in an amicable way by granting reduced rates, he feared that the foreigner would take the greater part of our fishing trade. He was sure that the masses in our large towns required a reform as regards the question of railway rates, and no one knew that better than the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade, for he had been told so yesterday by those who distributed fish in London amongst the masses—namely, the costermongers, who said that the poor in the large towns felt a very deep interest in this question, and pressed the right hon. Gentleman very strongly to do his utmost in regard to cheap traffic by trying to persuade the Railway Companies to do justice to the fishermen as well as the poor of the United Kingdom. He (Sir Edward Birkbeck) hoped that this Bill might be the means of causing the rates for the carriage of fish to be reduced, although he had grave doubts as to whether it would have that effect. He believed that as regards the fisheries of the United Kingdom nothing short of the Bill introduced by himself would meet the question, and it would be a very serious thing to those hon. Members who refused to vote for cheap rates for carriage of fish, because they would find out at the next General Election that the fishermen as well as the "masses" in London and other large towns would plainly speak out their mind upon the subject.

Mr. J. C. BOLTON (Stirling) said, they had heard to-night with great pleasure the speech of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade, and he thought, if the same spirit which actuated that speech continued to influence him during the course of the Bill through the House, there would be no difficulty raised on the part of the Railway Companies. Of course they did not entirely agree with everything that the right hon. Gentleman had said that evening. For instance, the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the maximum rate being perfectly useless. Generally speaking, it was useless for long distances, but maximum rates for short distances could not be so described. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to attach considerable importance to the clause known as the Conciliation Clause, of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) was the author. He was sure it would be very satisfactory if that Conciliation Clause should work as it was hoped, and expected it would work. He had had in foreign countries some experience of similiar legislation, and he was satisfied that the results of that clause would be to add further expense to the settlement of disputes which might be raised. In the United States of America it had not been found to act, or give such uniform satisfaction as had been looked for. He remembered that not long ago in the Report of a Committee in one State it was alleged that they found their duties perfectly useless, and that they did not see how they could be of any use to the public unless they were furnished with compulsory powers. However, if the Conciliation Clause did act as it was hoped, he was sure that no one would be more gratified than those connected with railways. He had heard with great satisfaction the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman on the subject of preferential rates. He thought that no man could say that the mere fact of an article being foreign should entitle it to any preference over another article; and he was thoroughly convinced that it was in the interest of railways as well as the public that where goods were carried on the same conditions and under the same circumstances they ought over the same line of railway to be carried at the same rate. He thought there could be no doubt that when this Bill came before the Standing Committee it would be shown to demonstration that the idea of doing away altogether with special rates would mean ruin to many cities and towns in the Kingdom. He would not go into the details of the matter, which he thought would best be placed before the Committee. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella) was very much enamoured of railway statistics. [Mr. Mundella: No, no!] Well, then, he was desirous of obtaining railway statistics, and he thought by means of them he would be the more able to lay down hard and fast rules. The right hon. Gentleman had expressed his general approval of the Bill on the ground that it was a *fac simile* of a Bill which he himself introduced; but as he went on he showed that the two Bills were very dissimilar indeed, and he found many things very different, and which he did not like as well as the provisions of his own Bill. One thing, however, he was clear about, and that was the advantage of conferring greater powers on the Board of Trade. He (Mr. J. C. Bolton) had always found the officers of the Board of Trade remarkably courteous, and desirous of doing everything they could in the interest of railways and o the public; but he had never yet discovered that they were awe-struck at the sight of railway officials as, he thought, the hon. Baronet opposite alleged; he had found them possessed of considerable knowledge of the matter with which they had to deal, and, generally speaking, very desirous of applying that knowledge in the interest both of the public and the railways. But his right hon. Friend went on to support his argument in favour of giving increased powers to the Government Department by a reference to the result of bargains made between the Post Office and Railway Companies, by which he said the Post Office were losing an enormous amount of money. His tale about the stage coach was perfectly new to him. He was in no doubt that it was quite correct notwithstanding, and he assumed that it was due to some quarrel between the Post Office and the Railway Company. But he had this to say, that it was a very poor support of the argument for handing over the management of Railway Companies when the Post Office made such a bad bargain as that. His right hon. Friend had given the rates charged in this country for fish; he had given the charge from Ostend to Coire, and he stated that the rate for 100 kilos, or 2¼ cwt., was 16*s.* 6*d.*—consequently the charge per ton was about £8, and the distance about 350 or 450 miles.

Mr. MUNDELLA: The charge includes the price of packages, ice, and transport.

Mr. J. C. BOLTON said, it made no difference to his argument. The very highest rate charged by the Railway Companies from Wick to London, a distance of 756 miles, was £3 15*s.* a-ton for small quantities, as compared with £8 a-ton, including ice and packages, from Ostend to Coire. An enormous deal had been said about this fish traffic. The right hon. Gentleman told them he was overwhelmed with complaints from the North of Scotland as to the oppressive charges on the carriage of fish, many of which were well founded. What were the well-founded charges? The charge which met with the approval of the right hon. Gentleman was £8 a-ton for 450 miles; and the charge of which he disapproved was £3 15*s.* a-ton for nearly double the distance. The charge for fish was 75*s.* per ton, and that he had told the House was the highest charge made from Scotland and for small quantities. The charge from Wick to London for three-ton lots was 60*s.* a-ton, and it would be found that this amounted to 0·32*d.* per lb. He had taken the trouble to obtain the price of fish for three years in the North of Scotland and in London. First of all, he would take the case of herrings. These were sent to London in barrels weighing 222 lbs., and usually contained 666 herrings; that was three herrings to the lb. He found that the average price for the three years, 1884, 1885, 1886, in Wick, was 18*s.* 6*d.* per barrel, and the carriage during those three years did not vary, although it was a little less now; he found that the carriage was 7*s.* a barrel, and that the market charges in London amounted to 1*s.* 9*d.*, making a total cost of 27*s.* 3*d.*; that was equivalent to 1½*d.* per lb., or ½*d.* a fish. He also had the opportunity of ascertaining the price paid in London by the large consumers of fish. He found, on the average of three years, that the large Railway Hotel Companies in London paid for their herrings at the rate of 4·83*d.* per lb., or a little more than 1½*d.* per fish. He must leave hon. Gentlemen to imagine what became of the difference between what the fish cost when it left the market and what was added to it before it arrived on the consumer's table. He had also some particulars with respect to cod. He found that at Wick, during these three years, the average price of a cod of 14 lbs. was 1*s.* 7½*d.*, or a fraction over 1*d.* per lb., and the carriage of the cod during those three years was 5·6*d*; that the market charges were 1·83*d.*, and that the total cost of a 14 lb. cod when it left the market was 2*s.* 2·43*d.* From the same sources he found that the average price paid for cod at the great railway hotels in London during this time was 5*s.* 3⅝*d.*—that was to say, there was a difference between the cost of the fish when it left the market and the price paid for it at the hotel of 3*s.* 1*d.* That sum disappeared somewhere between the market and the railway hotel. Hon. Gentlemen might suppose that these prices, being some years old, were not the price of to-day. He had taken the trouble to ascertain the prices at fish shops in London. He had gone, not to the biggest shops in Bond Street and elsewhere, but to the outskirts; and, about a month or six weeks ago, one fishmonger sent him the long list which he held in his hand, and the price asked for cod fish was 1*s.*, 1*s.* 3*d.*, and 1*s.* 6*d.* per lb. Then he went to another fishmonger, who said he would supply it at 1*s.* 3*d.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* a-lb.; and he went to a third, who told him his price was 8*d.*, 10*d.*, and 1*s.* a-lb., and he also said that his price for herrings was 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a-dozen, or nearly 2*d.* each. Another fishmonger told him that his price for herrings was 1*s.* 6*d.* and 2*s.* a-dozen, and a third one named 2*s.* a-dozen, and no abatement. Would hon. Gentlemen compare the prices charged by Railway Companies for fish from the extreme North of Scotland, keeping in mind the difference between the cost when it left the market, and its price when it reached the consumer's house? The highest charge, as he had already pointed out, was 0·4*d.* per lb., but that was for small quantities by fast trains; for larger quantities, but not by slower trains, the charge was 0·32*d.* per lb. Supposing the contention of the hon. Baronet the Member for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck) carried into effect, or that he had availed himself of the opportunity he had about a fortnight or three weeks ago of getting his Bill read a second time—supposing that Bill had been before the House, it would have been seen that the rate which the hon. Baronet proposed as the actual charge for the fish for the distance of 756 miles would be ¼*d.* per lb., or, strictly speaking, 0·24*d.*, whereas the charge of the Railway Companies was 0·32*d.* If that Bill had been carried, by the time a man had consumed 12 lbs. of fish he would have been richer by 1*d.* But, taking the shorter distances, the hon. Baronet's Bill provided for a distance of 50 miles, to be charged for at the rate of 4*d.* per cwt., which was equivalent to 6*s.* 8*d.* a-ton. He did not think he could bring a stronger case against the Railway Companies than that. For a short distance, say 50 miles, the maximum rate would be charged, in all probability, say, 4*d.* per ton per mile, or 16*s.* 8*d.*; and, if so, under the Bill of the hon. Baronet, the shipper of fish would get it carried for 50 miles for 10*s.* a-ton less than he now paid, and the consumers would get their fish at 1/20*d.* per lb. cheaper. The hon. Baronet said that foreign fish was sent over to London at low rates, and that the poor old fishermen were crowded out of the market. But was foreign fish sent here by railway? He imagined that it came by ship, and, if so, that the bulk of it would be brought by British steamers; but, whether English or foreign, he imagined that the Scotch ports were open to English as well as foreign vessels. It was not so far from the North of Scotland to London as it was from Norway to London; and he remembered a speech, not long ago, attributed to the hon. Baronet, in which he said that foreigners were getting advantages in railway rates for fish. All he could say was that, if such was the case, it was entirely unknown to him, and he was quite certain that there was no preferential rate for foreign over British fish from any place in Scotland. He noticed very recently that a complaint was sent up to the Board of Trade from Wick, which was signed by a gentleman holding some official position there. The complaint of that gentleman was that they were undersold in the English market by fish brought from Norway and Sweden. Could there be anything more absurd or more perfectly ridiculous than that? Why, the vessel which took the fish from Norway and Sweden could as easily take it from the North of Scotland, and thus undersell the Railway Company. What had led him into this long explanation of the fish trade was the persistent demands made to have relief from oppressive rates charged for fish from Scotland. He thought he had shown that the very highest charge was 0·4*d.*; that the difference between the rate proposed by the friends of the fisherman was, at the utmost, $\frac{1}{6}$*d.* less; and that for large quantities from the North of Scotland the difference would only be $\frac{1}{8}$*d.* less; and, therefore, the oppression under which they were alleged to rest would not be removed by the Bill of the hon. Baronet.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.) said, he thought that no Bill of greater importance to the agricultural interest than that which the Government was now asking to be read a second time had ever been introduced into that House. He was delighted to hear the statement of the hon. Member for Stirling (Mr. Bolton) that he agreed that there should be no preferential rates as between English and foreign goods. The hon. Gentleman stated that distinctly, and he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) wished to emphasize it because, coming from a man of his high authority on all railway questions, he thought they might be encouraged to believe that, at any rate, they would be able to embody in the Bill such a provision as would prevent in future any undue preference being given to foreign goods. The three questions to which agriculturists attached most importance were, no doubt, in the first place, preferential charges; in the second place, terminal charges, which they hoped would be modified and regulated by the Bill; and, thirdly, the question of overcharge for the carriage of goods from one small station to another, which ought to be got rid of. They were not asking for equal mileage rates; but when they found how they were handicapped, and obliged to use their own carts simply because the railway rates were prohibitive, he thought the agriculturists were entitled to know that the Bill would help them in this matter. The hon. Member for Stirling had produced a statement with regard to the cost of fish, and he had shown the enormous profits which the middlemen were making in the trade. The same thing occurred with agricultural produce, and if they looked at meat, bread, butter and milk, and compared the price at which they were sold with that which was obtained by the producers, it would be seen that some people were making a large profit while the farmer was working at a loss. He was, therefore, glad that the hon. Gentleman had thought it right to introduce that question into the discussion. It was one which at the present time certainly required very serious consideration, because the prices obtained by those who sold to the consumers were out of all proportion to those paid to the farmers. It was, indeed, manifestly unfair that agriculturists should be handicapped to the extent of having to pay for the carriage of all their goods in this country half as much again as the rate charged upon foreign goods. This was a system which ought, and, as he hoped, would be put an end to. With regard to the tribunal before which railway cases were to be brought, he ventured to hope that it would be found effective, and one to which the public might appeal in cases of necessity without the extravagant expense to which they had hitherto been put. He also hoped that the tribunal would be able to deal efficiently with railways which ran into the same town, and, perhaps, into the same station, whose trains started two or three minutes before the trains on the other lines arrived ; and also with cases where one had to walk a distance of half-a-mile or so because two Railway Companies could not agree, and move his goods from one station to another at serious cost. With regard to the question of Canals, he pointed out that in his part of the country they suffered great inconvenience for all the Canal Companies were becoming bankrupt. There was a water communication from the sea at Littlehampton to the Thames. It was most useful to the district through which it passed, which was not touched by Railway Companies; but it did not pay, and was offered for a moderate sum of money. He now understood that there was a probability of the Government taking up this question and acquiring certain Canals. All he would say on this point was that he thought their action would come a little too late, as many of the Canals had stopped, and this was to be regretted, because a great water way to the Thames was a thing of the greatest use and importance. He thought that in this matter they ought to have followed the example of Germany and Austria, where the Canals had been kept up in the interest of the State. He was glad that it had fallen to the lot of his right hon. Friend to introduce this Bill. Of course, the Committee stage would afford an opportunity of going more closely into the details of the measure, where it would be the duty of every Member who knew the wants and requirements of the agricultural interest to see that the rights of the farmers of the country were honestly dealt with and properly maintained.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury) said, he had no intention of continuing the desultory discussion which had arisen, except to say that he had in his hand the result of an inquiry made two or three years ago with regard to the conveyance of fish from Edinburgh to London. What had been charged for that? He found the figures were for conveying herrings by railway from Edinburgh to London 60*s.* to 68*s.* per ton, according to the quantity taken. The cost of conveying herrings on the German railways for the same distance would be from 23*s.* 8*d.* to 26*s.* He could quote similar examples with regard to other articles of consumption—the difference being equally striking. It would not be profitable to pursue that argument, for no one in the House would take upon himself to insist upon legislation involving a reduction of rates below those which the Railway Companies were actually charging, and were empowered now to charge, provided they were *bonâ fide* rates, and not preferential rates. He said nothing of the policy of charging high rates. He thought the Railway Companies would find it to their advantage to lower their charges for goods as they had reduced them for passengers. Before going to the provisions of the Bill, he should like to say something on the question of statistics and the question of the purchase of the Canals. He wished they had the statistics as regards the Canals and Railways. He had a conviction that the purchase of the Canals by the Government would not redound to the advantage of the Revenue ; but it was difficult to justify that impression, because he was unable to find any statistics in regard to late years. The last Return moved was before 1870 ; and they found whilst there was, if anything, an increase of the tonnage carried on the canals, there was a very large diminution of their income from the time that Railways were established and became general. It seemed to be the greatest possible difficulty for the Canals to compete with the Railways. Mention had been made of the Aire and Calder Canal ; but the circumstances were peculiar. They must not draw any conclusion from the profitable working of that Canal, which was rather in the nature of an improved navigation than a Canal properly so called. On the other hand, in the upper reaches of the Thames, and even a short distance above London, there was scarcely any traffic, because it was impossible for the navigation to compete with the Railways. He thought it would be very dangerous, without careful inquiry, for the Government to purchase the Canals ; and it would be deluding the nation to suggest that any great result was likely to accrue. The cost of the purchase of the Canals would be the smallest item. When they had purchased the Canals they would have to increase their depth and width, so that they would be able to accommodate vessels of large size if they wanted them to compete with Railways, and that would be equal to the reconstruction of Canals. In this country they were in a peculiar position. They had ranges of mountains of considerable altitude, running North and South and from East to West, and in order that these Canals might be carried through these ranges works of great extent were necessary. It would not do to compare the Canals here with the Canals in Holland, Belgium, and North Germany, where there was a dead flat extending almost from Holland to the frontier of Russia. That warning he thought it right to give, especially as there was an idea throughout the country that much might be done by purchasing Canals. His opinion was entirely opposed to it. He thought they must rely upon Railways. Upon the whole, he thought that the Bill would work advantageously. There were, however, some portions of it with which he was not altogether satisfied. He believed that those traders who had come into contact with the Railway Commissioners would say that, speaking generally, the decisions of the Commissioners had been just, and he saw no reason why so great a change should be made in the tribunal as was contemplated by the Bill. But, however that might be, of this he was certain—that it would not do to appoint one Judge for England, another for Scotland, and another for Ireland. It would not do to have the possibility of three different decisions being given under similar circumstances. Traders of the three countries had to compete with each other, and the law ought to be the same throughout—at any rate, so far as railway traffic was concerned. He thought that there should be power on the part of the traders to require through rates, and the Commissioners ought to be able to grant through rates on the application of the traders as well as on the application of the Railway Companies. The claim of the traders for damages might, under the Bill, extend back for a period of two years. That he considered altogether insufficient. He cited instances of Railway Companies delaying to redress the claims of traders for long periods, and giving way at last, and he saw no reason why the statutory limitation of six years should be so greatly curtailed. With regard to appeals, everybody knew how apt the Railway Companies were to drag traders with comparatively small means into Court after Court. In his opinion there should be but one appeal, and the question of undue preference should be considered a question of fact, of which the Commissioners should take cognizance as a jury. As to the question of grouping, he had occasion to inquire into that matter, and from his own personal experience he was able to say that the Railway Companies were not always just. They grouped in many cases the articles that were manufactured, and they did not group the raw material from which the manufactures were produced. With regard to the clauses dealing with classification, he agreed that the Companies had a right to demand reasonable rates; but to enact that the maximum rates should be equivalent on the whole to the present rates would simply be to delay the settlement of the question. That was, however, a question for discussion in Committee. He did not think that those who insisted on station terminals being entirely forbidden were acting in the interests of the traders. In his opinion, it should be the aim of those who were charged with the new classification to split up as much as possible the charge for service on the railway, always taking care, of course, that the total charge was a reasonable one. After giving some instances of undue preferential rates in South Wales, and between Gloucester and Birmingham, he concluded by urging that the Bill ought to be read a second time, and, if it were improved in Committee and passed this Session, the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade might be congratulated upon having accomplished a good work. He would say nothing about the provisions of his own Bill, the differences between which and that of the Government had been so fully explained by his right hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella), and would only appeal to the Government to offer no opposition to its second reading, in order that it might be referred, along with the Government Bill, to the Grand Committee on Trade.

MR. GROTRIAN (Hull, E.) said, he wished to deal with this question from the point of view of the public as against the great railway interest. In doing so, he recognized the disadvantage of his position, having regard to the fact that the latter was so well and ably represented in the House, while the Lobbies were invaded by a great array of talent in the persons of gentlemen whom he had met in the Committee Rooms of the House when railway questions were the subject of inquiry. The hon. Baronet the Member for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck) had expressed the hope that the Government would be firm on the question of preferential rates; he ventured to go further, and hoped that they would stand firm with regard to the 25th clause of the Bill, and also in regard to other matters in which it was desirable that the public interest should be protected. Clause 25 provided that whenever it was shown that a Railway Company charged traders in any district lower rates for the same or similar services than they charged to traders in another district, the burden of proof that such lower charge did not amount to undue preference should lie with the Railway Company. He wished to call attention to the words "any district," because it was of importance where a district was on the line of a great Railway Company, and where that Company had an absolute monopoly, that the traders in it should be protected against undue preference. In one place where undue preference was given against an individual trader it might be called retail preference, but wholesale preference where it was given against all the traders in a district. Unless the Railway Commissioners had power to deal with this matter, it would be in the power of a great Railway Company to set up one district and suppress another, because they could so arrange their rates that one district would obtain an absolute preference. The district of Hull which he had the honour to represent was an illustration of this system, and it was situated on the North-Eastern Railway. The rate from Hull to Leeds, a distance of 51 miles, was 7*s.* 11*d.*; from Hartlepool to Leeds, a distance of 72 miles, it was 7*s.* 11*d.*, and from Newcastle-on-Tyne, a distance of 93 miles, it was 7*s.* 11*d.* also. There might be a difference of a penny or two, but the rate was substantially the same from the three places. The North-Eastern Railway Company owned the Tyne Dock, and the Docks at Hartlepool, and, of course, they had a large pecuniary interest in fostering the trade at these places as against Hull, because they had invested millions sterling in the Docks mentioned; but he argued that, from the point of view of the people, it was necessary that they should be protected against this system. Again, from Pontefract to Hull, a distance of 42 miles, the rate was 7*s.* 6*d.* a-ton; whereas, from West Hartlepool and Newcastle respectively, distant 81 and 101 miles, the rate was 8*s.* 4*d.* a-ton. Now, there was a difference there in distance of 59 miles; it was 59 miles longer to Pontefract from Newcastle than from Hull, while the only addition to the rate was 10*d.* Take Brancepeth, which was 106 miles from Hull, and the charge was 14*s.* 7*d.*; it was 5*s.* 10*d.* for 30 miles from West Hartlepool, and 5*s.* for 21 miles from Newcastle—now, there was a difference there of 76 miles as against Hull. When they wanted to go North, and the distance there was against them, there was an addition of 8*s.* 9*d.* for 76 miles; but when the Northern ports—Newcastle, for example —wanted to come South they carried 59 miles further for 10*d.* extra. A table which had not been disputed had been laid before the Select Committee on Railway Rates and Fares of 1881, which showed that the charges one way averaged 1·323*d.* per ton, per mile, and that, in the other direction, they were from Hartlepool, ·947*d.*, and from Newcastle-on-Tyne, ·867*d.* per ton per mile. So that it would be seen that Hull was deprived of the advantage of its geographical position by the system which now prevailed, and the trading ground which naturally belonged to the town of Hull was reserved to the North-Eastern Railway Company and its Docks. It was alleged that the tribunal of the Railway Commissioners was always open; but he said that the public had no chance against combining Railway Companies with their experts and wealth. As well might a starving man be told that a grand hotel was open to him; and it was, therefore, incumbent on the Government to protect the public by giving them easy access to this tribunal, and investing the Commissioners with such powers as would enable them to give redress in such cases as he had described. The Railway Companies could hardly be expected to do other than protect their own interest to the best of their ability, whether it was to the advantage of the public or not, and therefore it was that the latter looked to the Government for protection. He pointed out that in recent years the Railway Companies had in many cases acquired Canals, or sections of them, over which they exercised control. They had not, however, used them for the purposes of traffic, but had allowed them to silt up, and thus deprived the public of the advantages which those works had afforded in previous years. He ventured to say on this point that if this acquisition were not restricted or controlled, the Canals ought, at any rate, not to be allowed to become useless by silting up. There were, no doubt, two sides to the question of fish traffic, and it had been very ably dealt with by the hon. Member for Stirling (Mr. Bolton), although he thought the illustrations of the hon. Member were not absolutely conclusive when he compared the market prices with those paid at the hotels belonging to the great Railway Companies, for it only showed that the hotels were extravagant in paying so high a price for fish. He again urged in the interest of the public, and especially in the interest of the Division which he had the honour to represent, and which had suffered so long under the present system, that the Government would take care that the 25th section of the Bill, with its subsections, was carried without any modification in the interest of the Railway Companies. It was stated by a deputation which waited on the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade on Friday last from the Northern parts that they wished to be protected from the competition of Hull, and it was alleged that the Railway Company came under a Parliamentary obligation to continue the rates which prevailed in 1854. But he distinctly challenged that statement, because he had not been able to find any clause of an Act of Parliament which justified it. If, however, there was such a clause, it was, in his opinion, time that the injustice involved should be removed.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he gladly acknowledged the spirit in which the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade had approached this question; and if he (Mr. Hunter) made some severe strictures on certain clauses of the Bill, the right hon. Gentleman would understand that his objection was not to the purpose he had in view, but to the manner in which it had been carried out. He admitted, with regard to a number of secondary and subordinate matters, that there were some excellent clauses in the Bill; but with respect to the all-important matters that affected the trader in connection with the railways, the Bill, so far from being an improvement of the existing law, impaired, weakened, and went far to destroy the safeguards which the law had thrown around the traders, and it also seriously impaired the efficiency of the tribunal which had been appointed to deal with questions arising between the traders and the Railway Companies. The three vital points in the Bill were the constitution of the Railway Commission, the question of maximum rates, and the question of undue preference. The proposed change in the Railway Commission was one for which the right hon. Gentleman had produced no authority at all. He had followed in the footsteps of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella); but that right hon. Gentleman had no authority for the change, for which there was no reason whatever, while there was every reason against it. Up to 1872 the Court of Common Pleas—a most powerful tribunal from a legal point of view—had discharged the duties now performed by the Railway Commission; but in consequence of the public dissatisfaction which had been expressed a Commission was appointed to inquire into the working of that system. That Commission proposed that the jurisdiction of the Court of Common Pleas should be transferred to a tribunal in which the lay element should preponderate. That was the peculiar merit and advantage of the Railway Commission. No one who had any experience of the working of the Railway Commission could entertain any doubt of the enormous value of the change that was made in the law by the substitution of the Railway Commission for the Court of Common Pleas. The public were at a great disadvantage in their contests with the Railway Companies in regard to the long purse, and even, to a great extent, in respect of their inferiority of knowledge; the Railway Companies possessed an enormous advantage from their possession of highly skilled expert witnesses. In these contests the Railway Commission was invaluable. They were not without some authority as to the constitution of the Railway Commission. In 1881 a Select Committee containing a large number of Railway Managers was appointed to inquire into its working. The Committee sat two years, and took an enormous quantity of evidence, and the conclusion that all except the Railway Managers arrived at was that the present constitution of the Commission should be maintained. In these circumstances he was at a loss to understand on what ground the Government, entirely disregarding the recommendation of the Committee, proposed that a new constitution should be adopted. It was proposed to substitute for the existing Commission a single Judge and two persons representing the lay element. He expressed his conviction that the inevitable result of that constitution would be that the lay element would gradually degenerate and become less important, and that by and by the Government would come to the House, and say the assessors were unnecessary, and they would once more go back to the original tribunal. The Railway Companies were in favour of this change. They would have been extremely ignorant of their own interest if they had opposed it. He did not charge the Railway Managers with being hostile to the traders. Their doctrine was that all interference with them was mischievous and pernicious; and, as was laid down in an excellent book by Mr. Grierson on the subject, they ought to be allowed to charge whatever they liked on any class of goods—and that Companies "should charge what the traffic would bear." Not only did they adopt that as the sole principle of their charges, but they made the Railway Manager the sole judge of what the traffic would bear. Railway Managers opposed the Commission, not because it did not carry out the law, but because it did carry out the law. What they desired was that there should be no law at all, or if there was, that it should be a dead letter, and if it was one or the other, it would be equally satisfactory to them. This Bill, in so far as it altered the constitution of the Railway Commission, was what Railway Managers in their hearts desired, for they knew that the effect of that alteration would be to drive applicants away, and to secure for them that independence of control they desired. There was another powerful influence at work in regard to this matter, and that was the influence of the Board of Trade. He had found from experience that the officials of the Board of Trade were hostile to the views of the traders. When the Committee was appointed in 1881, the Board of Trade used its influence to prevent the hon. Member, who caused that Committee to be appointed, from being Chairman; and the result was that by a narrow majority the Secretary of the Board of Trade was elected to the position. All through that inquiry the whole energies and efforts of the officials of the Board of Trade were directed to one aim and end, and that was to forward the views of the Railway Companies, and to defeat the views of the traders. Sir Thomas Farrer, though an exceedingly able and conscientious public servant, gave evidence which was the echo of the Railway Managers' views. He even supported preferential rates in favour of foreign produce. While he said this, he recognized the honesty, the capacity, and the intelligence of those officials. It was only natural that they should hold the same views as the railway officials, with whom they were brought constantly in contact, while they seldom had an opportunity of hearing the traders' side of the case. There was another influence at work, and that was the attitude of the Legal Profession. From the first moment it was proposed to establish a lay Commission the Legal Profession exhibited great hostility to the proposal. No doubt there was a prejudice on the part of the Legal Profession against any tribunal which did not give predominant power to the legal element. The last Government might have settled this question. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) might have settled it in

1884, if he had been content with a moderate and sufficient Bill, if he had not attempted ambitious flights; because all that was wanted was to perpetuate the Commission in its present form, and to extend the jurisdiction on two points. The Commission had, no doubt, been a great advantage to traders; but, on the whole, it had failed, and for this reason, that if a trader complained to the Railway Commission of rates being excessive, the Commission might determine that the terminals were excessive, but they could not touch the question of mileage. The consequence was that, after going to the Railway Commission to ascertain the terminals, the trader must begin an action in the ordinary Courts in respect of the whole charge, of which the terminals were only a part. That was only one illustration of the difficulties and inconveniences with which the present system was fraught. There was one very unfortunate mistake in the Act of 1854. He thought it was Section 6 that provided that there was no remedy except by injunction. The effect of that clause was that no damages could be recovered in a case of undue preference. The Commissioners were limited to an injunction. A trader obtaining such an injunction might confer upon the district in which he resided a certain amount of benefit, for an injunction was extended on the principle of equality to all in the same trade; but the cost of obtaining it would be more than any single trader would care to risk. So far as the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade dealt with the question, it had the heartiest support of those traders. With regard to the second of his three points—he referred to the maximum rates—he was afraid that his opinions differed from the opinions of many traders. The idea of classification of rates had something seductive about it, and it had caught the imagination and fancy of traders; but there was nothing of solid advantage to them in it. In the first place, the time had not come when any classification of rates could be fairly attempted as between the trader and the Railway Company. The only point of importance in the old Act was that maximum rates were rates fixed by contract between the traders and Railway Companies, and the traders were entitled to say to the Companies—"You, having agreed to those charges, should not charge more, whether reasonable or not." But it was a totally different matter at the present moment, when they did not know whether the maximum rates included payments for station services or if they did not. A case had been alluded to by the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade on this subject, but the decision come to in that case was merely the judgment of a Divisional Court, and was not accepted by traders as one which was general in its application. One of the most unsatisfactory points in the present law was that the appeal was to a Divisional Court and not to the Court of Appeal. Under the Act of 1854 the appeal lay to the Court of Queen's Bench or Common Pleas *in banc*, which generally consisted of four Judges, and was a very different sort of tribunal from a Divisional Court. He would have been more satisfied if the Government had been content with extending the jurisdiction of the Railway Commissioners, and giving an appeal to the Court of Appeal, which virtually now corresponded to the old Court *in banc;* and had they negotiated for a new basis of maximum rates they would have done better. But as they stood now, they were at best a delusion as a protection to the public—he meant the rates established now for the first time by the Board of Trade or other public authority, because they necessarily were fixed at a sum which would compensate the Companies even in the worst of times, and were, therefore, obviously too high for ordinary times. He must also express his entire concurrence with the hon. Baronet the Member for North Oxfordshire (Sir Bernhard Samuelson) as to the insertion in "another place" of a provision that the new maximum rate should be equal to the old. He regarded as a great defect in the present Bill the absence of any provision for a truck rate. The maximum rates were all on the basis of so much per ton per mile, and 500 lb. was the smallest quantity taken at the truck rate. The great fault of the present system of railway management in England was that the Railway Companies were carrying their trucks almost empty at an enormous loss to themselves. The House would hardly be prepared for the astonishing facts that could be established as showing the small quantities of goods carried per truck, and the great loss entailed for the dead weight the engines had to draw. It had been ascertained upon the Brighton Line that the average load per truck under the present system in Great Britain was one ton per truck, each truck being capable of carrying eight or ten tons. Mr. Findlay, on the London and North Western, had had a night's work taken out at Euston, and found that the average truck load was only 1 ton 13 cwt. It was impossible that a system of that sort could be either for the benefit of the Railway Company or the trader. If a truck rate was established, as it had been in America, the result would be that goods could be carried more cheaply to the public, and with more profit to the Railway Companies. In carrying coal from the North to London the Railway Companies were satisfied with receipts of 4·4*d.* per truck per mile, including the back haulage. That was the rate from the nearest coalfield; but from Durham the rate was only 3·10*d.* The meaning of that really was that the Companies could grant a truck rate of 6*d.* a truck a mile at the outside for comparatively short distances; or, in other words, that goods could be carried at 1*d.* per ton per mile. On the great Philadelphia and Reading Railway he found that the average receipts for all classes of goods, including the most expensive, to be under ½*d.* a ton a mile. His surprise at that discovery was removed when he found that the average load was from 11 to 13 tons. As regards the question of undue preference, he desired to say a few words. It had been very unsatisfactorily dealt with in the Bill, for there was a clause in it somewhat ambiguous in its terms, but which substantially came to this—that although a rate might be unequal and injurious to the person complaining of it as a preferential rate, it should be authorized for the purpose of securing traffic in the interests of the public. If any effect were given to that, it must destroy the meaning of undue preference, for this reason—that no Railway Company would give a rate of the sort out of malice, or for the purpose of injuring any particular individual, but for the purpose of securing traffic, and therefore he did not think the addition of the words "in the interests of the public" made the slightest difference. He thought it would have been wiser if the Government had not touched the subject of undue preference at all. The law as enacted in 1854 was somewhat vague, but it had been explained by the Court of Common Pleas; and, on the whole, the decisions given under the existing statute had been satisfactory enough. He therefore regretted that the Government should have introduced into this measure a clause, one effect of which would be to destroy the law as to undue preference as it now existed. He believed preferential rates were based on an entirely mistaken policy. He was obliged to the House for having listened to him so long. He made these remarks in no hostility to the Government who introduced the Bill, or to the Bill itself. He trusted, however, that when it reached the Committee upstairs, to which it was to be sent, the Government would approach that Committee in a fair spirit and without any foregone conclusion. If they did approach it in that spirit the suggestions which had been made that evening from both sides of the House would receive due consideration, and he believed that when the Bill passed the Government would be able to congratulate themselves on passing a measure which would mark an important epoch in the history of railway legislation.

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) said, that with regard to the preference rates there were really two sides to the question. It was a matter of vast importance that produce which came into the country through our Southern ports, for instance, should be sent up to London in a fresh state. The preferential rates in some instances were very important, and therefore, as representing a Metropolitan constituency, he must say that though he was an advocate of the farmer's interests he saw the necessity of looking to the effect on the supply of the people in this great Metropolis. He would venture to point out to the House that the interests in this matter were mutual. He should like to have heard in what way it was proposed to make up the constitution of the new Railway Commission, as everything depended upon the interpretation which would be put on the words "undue preference." Speaking of Southampton, with which he was connected, produce from the Channel Islands was arriving every night, and had to be sent up forthwith to London, and it was necessary if this trade was to continue that it should be treated on special lines. He was very much surprised when an Amendment was moved in "another place" to alter Clause 25, because it had appeared to him that the broad lines on which the clause was originally drawn were fair alike to the Railway Companies, to those who dealt in agricultural produce, and to the great population of the Metropolis. Now, a great deal would depend in the future on the way in which this produce was rated. No doubt there would be certain arrangements for through rates, and the Companies might be able to evade the spirit of the Act. He thought, therefore, that they should hear from the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) in what way the question of undue preference was to be determined. No doubt there would be considerable difficulty in adapting the law to all cases; but his contention was that there were two sides to every question. The Southern ports to which he had referred, and all other ports of the country, of course, were desirous of increased facilities for transmitting goods to London and to the great markets; the shipping interest was also very largely interested in the question of railway rates. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) had given an instance of the hardship it must be to a dealer who might be purchasing cattle at Newcastle or Hull to find that the Railway Companies charged a lower rate for the carriage of foreign cattle than they charged him, the local dealer. This, no doubt, was a great hardship; but he was of opinion that rates might be fixed which would be fair to all parties. As he had said, a great deal would depend upon the constitution of the Commission.

Mr. SHIRESS WILL (Montrose, &c.) said, there was one clause in this Bill which he thought would be welcomed, at all events, by that class of traders whom they might describe as the smaller class. There were large traders and there were small traders; large traders had many Representatives in that House, but the small traders were not so favourably situated. They were scattered all over the country, and they might be found in such constituencies as that he had the honour to represent—a group of five industrial boroughs. He was glad to see that the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade had seen his way to introduce into the Bill the provision, commonly called the "Conciliation Clause," which his Predecessor had inserted in his Bill of 1886. The hon. Member who had addressed the House some time ago, the Member for East Hull (Mr. Grotrian), had drawn a sad picture of that tribunal, the Railway Commission, as it now existed. The hon. Member had described how costly it was; but perhaps his picture was a little overdrawn. Be that as it might, there was, at any rate, some truth in his allegation. It was not every trader who could afford to run the risk of paying £150 or £300 costs in order to redress any grievance he might consider he had. Therefore, it was extremely desirable, now that they were revising the Commission or the Court which was to deal with these matters, that some means should be provided which would enable the small traders to bring up for investigation in some cheap form any grievance which they might consider they had. Now, it seemed to him (Mr. Shiress Will) that that purpose could not be effected by listening to suggestions which he had heard made outside to the effect that jurisdiction should be given to inferior tribunals in this matter in order that small grievances might be considered. That seemed to him to be outside the range of what was reasonable in so important a matter as this, and therefore it was that he thought that a middle line was extremely welcome in the provision which enabled the trader, be he a small trader or a large trader, when he thought he had a grievance, to make his complaint to the Board of Trade. Now, by the clause referred to, the Board of Trade was not set up as, nor was it intended to be, a judicial tribunal. It was not intended that costs should be incurred either by the Railway Company or by the person complaining. It was not intended that solicitors should be heard or that counsel should be heard; but it was intended that, in an amicable manner, as the clause phrased it, the matter should be looked into by the Board of Trade. If the Board of Trade thought that the complaint was unreasonable—and probably many complaints would be made of an unreasonable kind and unworthy of investigation—the Board of Trade would take no further steps in the matter; but if, on the other hand, they should think that there was something in it which called for an answer, then the Commission would be empowered to require an answer from the Railway Company, and to endeavour to arrange the matter amicably between the parties. But then it was said by his hon. Friend the Member for Stirling (Mr. Bolton), in the course of his most able and pointed speech, that a clause of that kind was likely to be of no good unless they made it compulsory. He said the experience of America was that such a provision did not prove to be of much good, because it was not compulsory. Well, but the hon. Gentleman, whose experience was entitled to great weight, was at variance in his conclusion with the American Commission which had been referred to by the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade. The Americans thought the provision was satisfactory and of use; but what he (Mr. Shiress Will) wished to point out was that though there was not, in terms, in it anything that could be called compulsion there was something in it which went very near to that, because it laid down that if the Railway Companies, having been applied to by the Board of Trade for an answer, should fail to make a reasonable answer and to enable an amicable settlement to be arrived at, and should conduct themselves in an unreasonable manner, regard being had to the circumstances and nature of the complaint and to the possible remedy, the Board of Trade were to be at liberty to report the matter to the House; and no one could believe that any one of the great Companies in the country would be willing, even if they were disposed to be unreasonable, at their own risk to have reports made to the House of that kind on matters which they might with perfect ease themselves have redressed. Therefore, he thought that, in the interests of the small traders, this clause would be of the greatest advantage. But there was another respect in which it would also be of the greatest advantage. He had been going to say he knew, but, at all events, he might say he believed, that a large number of complaints that small traders were in the habit of making were complaints that were ill-founded; but then it must be remembered that they had the greatest possible distrust of the Railway Companies. They knew that which had been described by the hon. Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) in the course of his able speech—they knew the long purses of the Railway Companies, and knew their power to employ the best evidence and the best lawyers, and to have their cases tried in the best way; and, therefore, the small traders were not unnaturally disposed to distrust the Railway Companies, and to believe that they would be treated in a high-and-mighty fashion, and that the best would not be done for them. But the moment Parliament put before these people some means by which they could take their grievances and carry them before an impartial Department like the Board of Trade, and have a weighty and authoritative opinion given upon them, then they possessed the means of settling any difficulty, and of satisfying everyone who might be otherwise hard to please. There was another matter upon which he should like to say one word, and that was the new Court to be constituted under the present Bill. The change, they knew, had long been impending; but he was sure that no one who had practised before the present Railway Commission would have anything but words of respect and esteem for the present Chief Commissioner of that Court, whose patience, whose ability, and whose good temper had been exhibited from first to last during the existence of that tribunal. And, if they were to have a change, he desired to make this remark. He thought it required further consideration whether it was wise to have not one but three Judges connected with the Commission—that they should have one Judge trying a case here to-day, and if, next week, the Commission had to go to Edinburgh, they should have another Judge, and if, the following week, it had to go to Dublin, they should have a third Judge there. How were these Judges to reconcile their judgments? They had no means of discussing in concert the principles of railway law which they would have to administer. Were they to bound each by the earlier decision of the other? Were they to be at liberty each to reverse the decision of the other? It did seem to him that in order, as it were, to give fair play to the Three Kingdoms, this three-cornered tribunal had been created; whereas a much better plan, and a plan more calculated to produce unity of decision and uniformity of practice, would be to have one Judge going with his jury, so to speak—that was, the two Commissioners—to Scotland, if need be, and to Ireland, if need be, and so carrying on one continuous Court, which he (Mr. Shiress Will) believed would be a more consistent as well as a more enlightened course of practice. He was very glad that one bugbear had been eliminated, so to speak, from the discussion, and that was the fear that used to be expressed on the subject of classification. It used to be said—two years ago especially—how unfair it was that railways, who had raised millions upon millions of capital upon the strength of Acts of Parliament which had fixed their maximum rates and tolls, should be obliged to submit themselves to the Board of Trade or to any other tribunal in order to have these rates and tolls reduced or revised, and their classification re-arranged. Well, at first sight, there seemed to be a great deal in that, but on examination they found that the difficulty was not so great. In the first place, what was the maximum of the great Companies? There were, for instance, the great Railway Companies that came into London, and they had together there some five or six, and in some cases even nine, different Acts of Parliament fixing the rates and tolls chargeable, and in each of them they found different maxima and different classification. The great Companies themselves, some six years ago, brought into Parliament each of them a separate Bill, and asked Parliament to re-classify all their several rates and re-fix all their maximum rates. When it was remembered that the Board of Trade, as a Public Department, was well qualified to hold the balance very fairly between the different Railway Companies and their shareholders and the public, and when it was considered that they had no purpose to serve, except to make the Railway Companies prosper, while, at the same time, being fair to the public, he felt quite sure that no one could pretend to foresee that any unfairness would be done, either to the Companies and their shareholders on the one hand, or to the public on the other. The interests the Board of Trade would have to safeguard would not be the interests of one class, whether that class were the Railway Companies or the public, but it would be the interests of the whole country. Our national life depended on it. It depended on fairness to the Companies, as well as to the public, and the moment the Board of Trade, or any other Department, or this House, did anything unjust or unfair to a great industry commanding £800,000,000 of capital, that moment would commit a mistake which would prove very difficult to be remedied. And now just one word as to the question of undue preference, which his hon. Friend the Member for North Aberdeen had referred to at considerable length. The hon. Gentleman appeared to distrust the clause as it stood in the Bill, but he (Mr. Shiress Will) had better hopes of the clause. He trusted that it might not be open to those suspicions that the hon. Gentleman had very properly called attention to, because, if there were points that were open to suspicion, it was only right that they should be pointed out now, so that when they went into Committee on the Bill, if there was anything wrong, it might be set right. But he was not able to follow his hon. Friend, especially when he gave the go-by to these words—

> "When a lower charge is found to exist, the Court may, so far as they think reasonable, take into consideration whether such lower charge is necessary in the interests of the public."

His hon. Friend gave the go-by to the words "in the interests of the public." It seemed to him (Mr. Shiress Will) that those words were everything in the clause. They never could have now-a-days equal mileage rates all through the country. That idea had long since been exploded, and now nobody, not even the most active opponent of the Railway Companies, would stand up and argue for equal mileage rates all over the country. The Act of Parliament spoke very properly of undue preference, and, therefore, these clauses were intended not to protect the Railway Companies in making a preference in their own interest, or in the interest of some trader, or in the interest of some class of traders, or in the interest of one town against another town, or in the interest of one district of the country against another district—no; what was there pointed at could only be justified on the ground that it was in the interest of the public at large. Of course, the words of the Act in this connection would receive further consideration, but it seemed to him that in those words they would have an ample safeguard that the interests of the public would be protected, while, on the other hand, the interests of the traders would not be neglected, whether as individuals or classes. But this clause was also to be commended for another thing—namely, that it put upon the Railway Companies the burden of proof wherever there was a difference of charge—the burden of justifying the preference. For these reasons he ventured, speaking on behalf of a community which took considerable interest in the Bill, to welcome the measure, and he trusted that with its passage through the Grand Committee before which it would have to go it would be much improved, and would ultimately become a lasting benefit to the country.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) said, he desired to say only one or two words at this stage of the Bill with reference to what had fallen from the hon. Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter), and from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Montrose (Mr. Shiress Will), who had addressed the House on the subject of preferential rates. He ventured to think that very few would agree with the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Aberdeen in wishing that Her Majesty's Government had omitted altogether to deal with this question of preferential rates. The House had listened with evident interest, and he thought with great sympathy, to the eloquent speech which had been delivered by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), and especially to those portions of his speech in which the hon. and gallant Baronet dwelt on the great injury which had been wrought by these undue preferential rates on the agricultural industry of our home counties. On that point he ventured to say that the opinion of the country was, on the whole, fairly made up; and for his (Sir Roper Lethbridge's) own part—and he was sure he spoke for a large number throughout the country—they would hail with the greatest pleasure this measure, if it only succeeded in dealing with this question of undue preferential rates. But, as a Metropolitan Member, he felt bound also to add that there might be, and probably would be, some danger when they came to the Committee stage of the Bill, lest in their sympathy with this industry, and in their desire to put an end to these undue preferential rates, they fell into an error in the other extreme. There was, indeed, a danger lest they should desire to make this Bill something of a protective Bill. We had hitherto, by these preferential rates, protected the foreigner. It should be no part of our duty to protect either the foreigner or any portion of our home industries—let us now go in for Free Trade entirely. The vast population of this great Metropolis required and demanded to have its supplies of food, of fodder, and other things of that sort produced at the cheapest rates, and carried at the cheapest rates that could ultimately be brought about; and it was the duty especially of Metropolitan Members to take care that this Bill, while it put an end to all protection of the foreigner of which just complaint had been made, did not fall into the other error of protecting other industries, and thereby increasing the cost of supplies to the population of the Metropolis.

Mr. BOLITHO (Cornwall, St. Ives) said, he supposed that a very large number of hon. Members of the House were more or less interested in the prosperity of the Railway Companies; and, therefore, it was very satisfactory to find that from all sides of the House much sympathy with the Bill had been expressed. He hoped that that sympathy betokened that there was much sagacity on the part of hon. Members who were owners of railway shares. At any rate, he tried to think that that was the case. His object, however, in rising was simply to say a word or two with reference to the remarks which fell from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling (Mr. Bolton), who seemed to think that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) had found a mare's nest upon the question of the carriage of fish from Ostend. He should leave his hon. Friends to fight the battle out between themselves; they were both well skilled in such warfare, and he had no doubt that each of them would tell a very good tale; but if the hon. Member for Stirling were present he should claim him as an ally and as a brother in arms. The hon. Member showed to the House that from Wick to London fish was carried at the rate of 60*s*. per ton. The distance from Wick to London was something like 750 miles. Now, he (Mr. Bolitho) wished the House to understand that the fishermen in his district, the district of Mount's Bay, laboured under a greater disadvantage, although they were only distant from the Metropolis some 320 miles. For that comparatively short distance, as compared with the distance from Wick to London, the fishermen were charged no less than 70*s*. per ton for the carriage of their fish. The House would, therefore, see the very grave disadvantage which the fishermen of that district laboured under. It was quite true, as the hon. Baronet the Member for the Banbury Division of Oxfordshire (Sir Bernhard Samuelson) had shown, that the system which at present prevailed was full of anomalies. The anomaly of the case he had introduced did not end there; because, although from Mount's Bay to London, a distance of 320 miles, they were charged at the rate of 70*s*. a-ton, from Plymouth, which was 240 miles from London, or 80 miles less, the charge was 45*s*. a-ton; relatively the prices were 7*s*. 6*d*. a-ton from Plymouth, and 8*s*. 4*d*. a-ton from Penzance. He (Mr. Bolitho) thought he had shown conclusively that, in the first place, the fishermen of his locality were charged immeasurably more than the fishermen of the North were charged, and that they were handicapped in comparison with those who sent fish from Plymouth. That was a circumstance which the House ought to take into consideration. Bearing in mind the length of the debate, he would not further occupy the time of the House, except to state most emphatically that he entirely disagreed with the remarks which fell from the hon. Gentleman who said that the question of carriage was a most infinitesimal question compared with the price of fish. In the summer months, in a month from this time, they would have no doubt on the Coasts fish of most excellent quality, and a good deal of that fish, in all probability, would be thrown back into the sea simply because it could not be conveyed at a low price to the Midland towns to be consumed by the masses of the population. He was inclined to think that the House would see that justice was done in the matter, and that the masses of the population in the large towns were not deprived of their just means of acquiring cheap food, and, further, that the fishermen, a class of men whom they all esteemed, should get as much money as possible for their produce.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, there were one or two points upon which he had a few observations to make. In the first place, he wished to direct attention to the clause relating to damages. He did not quite understand what was in the mind of the draftsman when he framed the clause. Was it merely intended as a clause of procedure, or what was its purpose? The analogy to a clause of this kind which occurred to him was the provision by which the Court of Chancery was enabled to deal with the question of damages. In former times, as was well known to many hon. Members, if a suitor in Chancery required damages he had to go to a Court of Common Law. But when the Court of Chancery was empowered to give damages the jurisdiction was not limited. There was no limit as to the amount of the damages to be granted; the Damage Clause in this Bill, however, did not give the full relief in the way of damages to which a suitor ought to be entitled in case he made out his case. What he should have thought would have been the object of a clause of this kind was to give a suitor before the Railway Commissioners the same power of obtaining damages before them as he would have if he brought an action-at-law. Again, he was anxious to know how it was proposed that the damages should be ascertained. The Railway Commissioners did not sit with a jury. Was it intended they should pursue the course of the Chancery Division; and, if so, was it intended to provide them with the means of making inquiries as to damages? The Grouping Clause had been already alluded to. He entirely approved of the system of grouping, because if they had a general system of dealing with railway rates grouping was a necessity. The clause as it at present stood, however, would require consideration, because he was very much afraid it might be held to prevent the continuance of certain systems of grouping which were already in existence. But in reference to the point some Amendments would be proposed in Committee, and, therefore, he need not trouble the House any further upon it. He now came to the Canal Clearing House Clause. In considering the clause, they must remember that half the Canals of the country belonged to Railway Companies, or were under the domination of Railway Companies. He presumed that the object of the clause was to enable traders on canals to have something like a system of through rates, but he observed that the clause was entirely permissive—the Canal Companies might establish a Canal Clearing House. Assuming that the Canal Companies did establish a Clearing House, what would be the position of affairs? The Clearing House established under this clause would be subject to the Board of Trade, and would have to act under the regulations framed by that Department. But the Railway Companies would have a clearing-house, to which all the Companies would have access, and where all the rates would be dealt with. That establishment would be entirely under the Companies' control. He did not think that was an arrangement which would prove of benefit to the traders. He had long entertained the opinion that the present Railway Clearing House was too large and too powerful a Body to be left exactly on its present footing. It was a Body by which the Railway Companies were, to a certain extent, for certain purposes fused together in one great monopoly, and he held that a great Body of that kind ought not to be above the control of the public. He had on previous Bills endeavoured to frame provisions which would enable them to bring the committee of the Railway Clearing House under control. The suggestion he had to make was that there should be some public officer—either an officer of the Board or Trade or someone connected with the Railway Commissioners—whose duty it should be to attend the meetings of the Railway Clearing Committee. This officer should know what the rules were by which the traffic was dealt with in the office, and should see that such of those rules as were of public importance should be published, so that the public should know on what rules their traffic was dealt with, and should be able when necessary to plead against the Railway Companies the existence of the rules. The public had every right to know how the traffic was dealt with. He knew that some hon. Members who represented the Railway Companies were sometimes disposed to ridicule the view he had suggested; they said that the clearing house was so complicated an institution that no member of the public was competent to deal with it. He thought that that was all the more reason why some such system as he suggested should be adopted. The complexity of the subject did not alter the fact that the public were interested in having the railway traffic fairly dealt with. There was only one other question he desired to refer to, and that was really the kernel of the Bill, the question of undue preference. He believed he expressed the unanimous opinion of the traders of the country when he said they would not be satisfied if the provision allowing Railway Companies to charge preference rates remained in the Bill. They would not be satisfied unless the Companies were absolutely prohibited from creating an undue preference, and they were not unreasonable in asking for such a prohibition. He entirely agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) that the present law did prohibit any undue preference, and that the clause as it now stood, so far from putting the trade upon a better footing, rather relaxed the law. These were the points upon which it occurred to him necessary that he should address the House. Of course, there were several minor points deserving of notice, and no doubt Amendments would be framed to several of them. If he and others did not deal with those points now it must not be supposed that they considered them unimportant to the traders. Personally, he could not help expressing some degree of regret that it was thought necessary to carry this very important Bill to a Grand Committee, because it dealt with interests of various kinds, and it was quite impossible that the Grand Committee on Trade to which the Bill was to be referred could combine all the elements it was desirable should be represented upon the Committee to which the consideration of such a measure was referred.

MR. J. C. STEVENSON (South Shields) said, he desired to approach the subject from the point of view of the seaports. These had a common interest with the inland towns, and as a maritime country, dependent on our supplies from foreign countries, every restriction of the free competition between seaports and between the connecting railways must mean dearer food for the people of the inland districts. There seemed to be a feeling that their needful supplies reached those inland districts too cheaply, and that they should be deprived of their advantage of competitive access to the ports on opposite sides of the island and to ports competing with each other on the same parts of the coast. The effect of abolishing the so-called preferences could only be to restrict the traffic of the railways, and to make them charge more for what was left. It would not benefit the Northumbrian farmer if the competition rates between Hull and Manchester and the Tyne and Manchester were prohibited. He would still pay what he paid now for sending his cattle to Manchester. There was a flavour of Protection in the arguments used on the other side; and he was glad to notice that the hon. Member for North Kensington (Sir Roper Lethbridge), as representing a Metropolitan constituency, seemed to perceive the danger of increased cost of food. It was not because it was foreign produce that it was differently treated, but because it came over sea, and the same consideration would apply if it came over sea from Ireland. They must not destroy the system of through rates, combining the land and the sea transit. There was no monopoly of the sea, and there should be free competition among the seaports. The coasting trade was the best check on the railways. The Metropolis got the benefit of the very low freights by sea from the North-Eastern coal ports to London. The hon. Member for East Hull (Mr. Grotrian) had complained of the equal rates from Hull and Newcastle to the inland towns. That was the condition of the formation of the North-Eastern system in order to secure the competitive rates which prevailed before the amalgamation. Three separate lines competing with each other were then thrown into one system, and for 30 years the competitive rates had been adhered to. And the Tyne was not to be deprived of the advantage it had enjoyed for 30 years. On that had been built up a large trade, and great improvements had been undertaken by the Harbour Commissioners. The Corporation of Newcastle had spent large sums in providing for the Danish cattle trade, all which was in the interest of the inland towns. The contrary policy, if carried out, would give every seaport a monopoly of its own district. Parliament, on the contrary, should encourage the freest competition in ports and railways for the benefit of the whole community, and he warned them of the mischief which might arise from a contrary policy. He would quote the views of the American Inter-State Railway Commission, whose Report had been already referred to in the debate. Speaking of exceptional rates, the American Commission said—

> "They were given in many cases as a means of building up a long-haul traffic that could not possibly bear the local rates, and which consequently would not exist at all, if rates were established on a mileage basis or on any basis which as between the long and short haul traffic undertook to preserve anything like relative equality."

They also said—

> "This method of making rates represents the best judgment of experts who have spent many years in solving problems of railroad transportation, and its sudden termination without allowing opportunity for business to adapt itself to the change would, to some extent, check the prosperity of many important places, render unprofitable many thriving enterprizes, and probably put an end to some long-haul traffic now usefully carried on between distant parts of the country."

He was glad to gather from the speech of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade that he was not insensible to these considerations, and he trusted that nothing would be done to disturb the course of the great trades of the country, or to alter a system under which trade had been greatly extended, and on which the prosperity of many districts must continue to depend.

MR. NORTON (Kent, Tunbridge) said, that he represented a Division of the County of Kent which was probably more interested in this subject than any other part of the country. Hitherto his constituents had been very prejudicially affected by the existence of preferential rates for the carriage of hops, and they hoped from what they had heard to-night that they might probably get the matter remedied when the Bill reached the Grand Committee. There was, however, one point in which they were more deeply interested, and that was the conveyance of fruit. It was obviously to the advantage and interest of all the large towns of England that they should be supplied with fruit at a cheap rate. About every other year probably thousands of tons of fruit were wasted, because the producers were unable to get it to the large towns in the Northern and Midland counties; and what they hoped the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) would be able to do for them, was to afford facilities for a much cheaper transit of produce from Kent to the various large centres of population. The difficulty up to the present had been that of getting through London. A large proportion of the fruit was sent to Covent Garden; it was there unpacked and repacked and sent off again to the North of England. Hon. Members would easily understand that, in hot weather especially, fruit was damaged to the extent of 40 or 50 per cent during such a process. His constituents argued that they had a very large supply of fruit, valuable for consumption in the large towns, and they thought it not unreasonable to ask Parliament to afford them facilities for the transit of the fruit to districts where it was most required. He had not been nominated a Member of the Grand Committee which would have this Bill under its consideration. If he had been, he thought he should have been able to produce abundant evidence upon this point. He trusted, however, that the right hon. Baronet would take the question into his serious consideration, and see that on the one hand justice was done to the public generally, and that on the other hand justice was done to the producer. Fruit was a most costly crop to produce. The people were told by the late Prime Minister—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone)—that the making of jam was a profitable employment. Unfortunately, owing to the difficulties he (Mr. Norton) had enumerated, the Kentish growers had not been able either to supply fruit to the manufacturers in London nor had they been able to supply to the more important parts of the country. The other day a deputation waited upon Lord Salisbury, and he (Mr. Norton) hoped that the deputation would take the opportunity which presented itself in the consideration of this Bill to bring this matter before the consideration of the House of Commons. He trusted that the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade would turn his attention to this matter, and do his utmost to ensure that proper facilities of transit should be afforded to the people of Kent.

MR. HARRIS (Galway, E.) said, that the people of Ireland suffered greatly from the arrangements existing between the Railway Companies. The Great Southern Railway and the North-Western Railway ran as far as Athlone, and the arrangements they made with one another and with English Companies resulted in this, that goods were carried from Manchester to the town in which he resided at a lower rate than goods could be brought there from the City of Dublin. The two great Companies tried to get a connection with the English Companies, and were in the habit of underbidding one another in order to get an advantage. There was another very serious matter connected with the practice in his part of the country, and that was the connection between the Grand Canal and the Midland and Great Western Railway Companies. In former times goods were carried at a much lower rate that at present. The arrangement between the Canal and the Railway Companies was such that both of them charged an equal tariff. That did very well as far as light goods were concerned; it did very well for the Railway Company; but in the case of heavier goods, where there was no great pressure of time, the trading interest unquestionably suffered. In his locality there were also valuable limestone quarries, and other natural resources, in respect to which cheap carriage would be of immense advantage. As Railway Companies were monoplies, he maintained that in this Bill, as in other Bills, there should be a direct and general rule laid down by which merchants could get goods carried *pro rata* according to distance, and without being subjected to the influence he spoke of. There was another matter he desired to bring to the attention of the House, and that was the combination between the Great Western Railway Company and the Limerick and Waterford Company. Owing to this combination, the passenger traffic on the Shannon had been destroyed. Formerly, a very large passenger traffic was carried on from Athlone to Killaloe and the result of the combination between the two Companies was that the Company which was created for the purpose of meeting the convenience of a very important town on the Shannon, the Portumna Company had to become bankrupt because the traffic by which it hoped to live was destroyed. This circumstance might not be generally known to the Members of the Government; he could hardly expect that it should be, as the seat of Government was so far away from the district. But it was very necessary to draw the attention of the Government to these matters to show how much they in Ireland suffered from the want of supervision, or the want of some rigid and strict rule, or from some form of officialism which would protect the public at large in their interests as regards canal, river, and railway traffic.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford) said, he asked the House to allow him to say a few words in reference to one question only, and that was the constitution of the Court to be created under the Bill. It was a singular fact that, though the question had been mentioned by three or four speakers who had taken part in to-night's debate, he had not heard from any of them any commendation of the mode in which the Court was to be constituted. The subject was alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella), by the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), and by others; but they alluded in terms of no commendation to the Court which would be thus formed. The matter was of the most vital importance, because, whatever might be said with regard to what questions should, or should not, come before the Court, whatever might be said as to the mode in which those questions should be left with the Court, it was of the most vital importance that the Court before which these questions were to be raised should be most competent to deal with the questions, and to command the attention of those who were clients or suitors before the Court. The Amendment made by the Act of 1887 in the constitution of the Court of Railway Commissioners was practically such as to almost create a new body of Railway Commissioners. The Railway Commissioners created under the Act were called the appointed Judges, and there was added to them in England, Scotland, and in Ireland three Judges of the Supreme Court, who were to sit as *ex officio* Judges. That constitution was altered in "another place," and the Bill now came down to the House containing the proposal that the Court should be constituted of two lay Commissioners, two men experienced in railway matters, and of a third Commissioner, who should sit with them, and who should be one of the Judges of the Superior Courts, and who, when an English case was under consideration, should be a Judge of the Superior Courts of England, of Ireland in the case of an Irish case, and of Scotland in the case of a Scotch case. Thus they would have two permanent Judges, and the third member of the Court would vary according to the country in which the case arose. The Judge of the Superior Court would be President of the tribunal; so that, while they would have the two junior members of the tribunal fixed members, they would have the higher member of the Court a shifting Commissioner. The effect would be that there would be no continuity of judgment, there would be no distinct course of proceeding laid down in the Court, that which might be held to be the proper course of proceeding in England might not be held to be the proper course of proceeding in Scotland or in Ireland; so that they would have no continuity of judgment at all. He ventured to say that a more absurd idea was never brought forward than that the head of a Court should be shifting, and that the two junior members should be fixed members. Such a course must lead to evils such as he had anticipated. He might be asked what he should suggest as the proper constitution of the Court. If so, he should say that, if they wished to have, as was stated by the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter), a judgment pronounced by a Court of competent jurisdiction, they must have as the Chief Judge a man of judicial training, not of judicial prejudices, if he might use the phrase, but experienced in railway matters, who would be a man free from the trammels of judicial decisions, ready to give decisions in accordance with law, and having a thorough knowledge of the principles of law—ready to give a free opinion upon all the great questions relating to rates and other matters which would be brought before the Court, and whose decisions would command the attention of suitors, not only because they were judicial decisions, but because they were decisions in absolute accordance with all fairness as between trader and Railway Company. One of the great questions which would be brought before the Court would be the question of how far they could increase canal navigation and canal carrying powers without doing any injustice to the money which had been laid out in railway enterprize. He believed that they might increase with benefit to traders canal navigation, and do that also without in any way damaging railway interests. These matters must be settled by a Court having full knowledge of them. He should suggest that they should have as the supreme Judge of the Court of Commissioners a man such as he had described. They must have, as the other two Judges, two practical men, and he thought this was a fitting opportunity for adopting the mode of appointing the Judges, which had long had many advocates in the City of London and other mercantile centres. It might be very well indeed that the Board of Trade should select two gentlemen well conversant with railway matters, and give them a retaining fee —say, in England of 500 guineas per annum, and in Scotland and Ireland of 200 or 250 guineas per annum. These gentlemen might be well known engineers, or persons acquainted with trading matters, and they might always be available to assist the tribunal whenever they were wanted, just as assessors now sat in the Court of Admiralty. Thus they would have persons appointed by the Board of Trade who would sit when called upon at a fee of so much a day in addition to their retaining fee. He thought that, by this means, they would have a tribunal in which people would have very great confidence—a tribunal which would command the attention of persons interested in the decisions. Certainly, he believed that it would be difficult to suggest a more unsatisfactory tribunal than that which was proposed by the Bill.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON (Wick, &c.) said, he represented a constituency deeply interested in this Bill, and they were disappointed that no clause had been introduced which would be likely to improve the facilities of the fishermen in the North of Scotland for getting their fish to the Southern markets at a cheap rate. He had hoped, looking to the condition of things in the North and West of Scotland, and to the dimensions which the agrarian agitation had assumed in that part of the country, that the Government would have considered it their duty to do everything they possibly could to encourage and stimulate the fishing industry. He hoped when the Bill went into Committee that the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade would consider the advisability of introducing clauses which would have this object. At the present moment the fishing industry in the North of Scotland was in a very depressed condition—in a more depressed condition than it had been for a great number of years. There was a clause of this character in the Bill of the hon. Baronet the Member for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck). No doubt fish could be sent, as had been stated during the debate, from Wick to London for 75*s.* a-ton by passenger trains and 50*s.* a-ton by goods or slow trains. But in consequence of arrangements which, in conjunction with his constituents, he had made for the carriage of fish by steamer, the rate had been brought down to 40*s.* These rates, however, were hampered by so many restrictions as to make them much less satisfactory than they seemed to be. He was convinced that by better arrangements four times the quantity of fish might be brought than now reached the London markets. A railway waggon generally weighed five, six, or seven tons, and would carry seven or eight tons. Now, in America, the railway system of which he had personally investigated, a waggon weighed about 9½ tons, and would carry 30 or even on occasions as much as 40 tons. It was obvious, therefore, that for the purpose of the conveyance of goods our railways were by no means so economically managed as they might be. He had received a letter from one of his constituents who was intimately acquainted with the fishing industry, stating that a rate of 30*s.* per ton for fish would pay the Railway Companies, would enable dealers to send four times the quantity of fish to market, and would practically help the fishermen employed all the year round. The writer added that nearly everyone connected with the fishing trade in the North was either bankrupt or on the verge of bankruptcy; and under these circumstances he appealed to the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade to introduce some clause into the Bill which would have the effect of helping the fishing industry; because on the prosperity of that industry depended at the present moment the maintenance of law and order in the Highlands of Scotland.

Sir WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.) said, he desired to express his approval of the Bill now before the House, and the approval of the large community which he represented. He also had authority for saying that he expressed the views of a large association of towns round about Manchester, which had very carefully considered this Bill and watched its fortunes during the past three years. They were now in the main satisfied with the measure; but, at the same time, there was no doubt that there were very important Amendments which it would be necessary to deal with, especially in the 24th and 25th clauses, with regard to the constitution of the Commission; but he confessed he did not feel the objections which had been raised by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen, opposite (Mr. Hunter), nor the criticisms of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Staveley Hill) who sat below him. If he understood the suggestion of his hon. and learned Friend aright, he thought it was a suggestion which would not receive the approval of the trading and industrial community. It was that a gentleman learned in railway business, and to some extent representative of the railway interest, should be the President of the Railway Commission.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL: I said a gentleman experienced in railway matters.

Sir WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH: Well, he must confess that they, in the industrial communities, were rather suspicious of having men on the Commission who were "acquainted with railway matters." He did not think they were selfish enough to wish that they should all be partizans of the trading community, although they wished to be represented. But they wished the Commission to be a fair Commission, and he thought that, considering that they would have as President of the Commission a Judge learned in the law, and, as he understood from the Bill, that they were to have one Commissioner who was acquainted with railway matters, and, he presumed, another Commissioner who had some knowledge of the interests and sympathy with the feelings and wishes of the traders, he thought that the Commission as proposed by the Bill would be a very fair Commission. He was not quite sure that he should not be disposed to suggest, unless there were some difficulty in carrying it out, that instead of three there should be five Commissioners. He was not quite sure that three would be a sufficiently strong body to deal with the very important questions which, in the earlier stages of the Commission, would come before that Body. But the important matter which he thought would have to be dealt with in Committee was the question of terminal charges. It was, he believed, the only serious and difficult question which was left to be thoroughly threshed out. He did not think it was dealt with in the Bill in a manner which would commend itself to the opinion of the industrial and trading community. There were very sound reasons for considering the position of terminal charges. No doubt, there was a claim which might be fairly made by the Companies on the trading community who used the railway for the accommodation which was given in the station or terminus; but it seemed to him that the Railway Companies had brought upon themselves an amount of criticism by their action with regard to these terminals, and they were responsible for having created in the public mind a very grave suspicion as to the fairness with which they had dealt with the public in regard to these terminals. He had with him a very long list of terminal charges with which he would not trouble the House, but the figures were extremely remarkable. To take a few of them—in the case of the Great Eastern Railway, where the maximum rate was 7*d.*, they had a terminal charge of 1*s.* 2*d.* On the London and North-Western Railway, where there was a maximum rate of 15*s.* 6*d.*, the total rate was 31*s.* 8*d.*, the difference being the terminal charge. On the North-Eastern Railway the total rate was 38*s.* 4*d.*, the legal rate being 19*s.* 7½*d.*, and the terminal charge being nearly as much—that was to say 18*s.* 8*d.* So that the House would see that the maximum rate—the rate which was entered on the list that the trader saw—was a rate which was wholly and entirely misleading, which gave the trader no information whatever as to the amount he would ultimately be charged. There was a very strong feeling that whatever the Commission might think it right to do in including terminal charges in the maximum rate, that those charges ought to be included in the one rate, and should not be allowed to be a separate charge. On that point they should inquire what was the opinion of those who had considered the subject very carefully. He believed he was in opposition to a great authority in that House on the subject—the hon. Baronet the Member for the Banbury Division of Oxfordshire (Sir Bernhard Samuelson), who, he believed, thought it would be advisable to keep the terminal rates separate from the maximum rates. But that was not the opinion of the great mass of the traders of the country. What they wished to know was, when they sent their goods from one station to another, in one sum the amount they had to pay for haulage and the station accommodation they received. The great advantage of that would be that, when they brought their grievances before the Commission, the Commission would be able to compare one charge with another in a very much simpler and more satisfactory manner than they would be if these charges were kept separate. He thought that the Bill could be amended in Committee; but, at the same time, he wished to express the opinion that the points which would have to be fought in Clauses 24 and 25 would be very important ones. They were not at all satisfied with the position in which undue preference stood in Clause 25. They thought that they were entitled to be perfectly safeguarded against anything like undue preference; and he trusted that when the Bill went upstairs, careful consideration would be given to these two clauses. He was sure that, if the measure were amended in the direction he had indicated, it would not only be of very great service to the industrial community, but would save an amount of friction and ill-feeling which existed at the present moment between the Railway Companies and the traders in this country, whose interests were, after all, united and one, and he believed would enable the Companies and the traders to live on better terms with each other than they had hitherto done.

MR. MAC INNES (Northumberland, Hexham) said, that no one could rise on that (the Opposition) side of the House without recognizing the generous tone in which the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had introduced the second reading of this Bill. Almost in his opening words the right hon. Baronet had acknowledged that he inherited the measure from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella), and by that acknowledgment he at once removed this discussion from the sphere of Party politics. This was another of the many measures which had come before them that Session of a non-Party character. Considering the extremely complicated nature of the subject, whatever their opinions might be, they must, at all events, be glad that they were able to discuss this question fairly, frankly, and dispassionately, and without the slightest reference to Party feeling on either side. There was no doubt, he presumed, that they would agree to the second reading of the measure, and, therefore, that the Bill would pass from their cognizance here to the Grand Committee upstairs. That Grand Committee itself was an experiment in which they were very much interested. They, or most of them, looked forward with much interest to the working of that Committee, and, at the same time, they felt that the Bill was now passing away from them. The majority of them here in the House would have very little further opportunity of dealing with the details of the Bill, and by the time it came back again to the House from the Grand Committee, other questions of great importance would be before the country and the House. It was very possible, therefore, that that would be the only opportunity on which those of them who were not Members of the Grand Committee would be able to say a few words on this subject. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade, in his opening remarks, said, and said most truly, that there was a great difference of opinion on this subject. They noticed the remarkable calm that prevailed, not only in the country, but in the House that night. Well, both the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield and the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade commented upon this calm as a happy augury for the prospects of the Bill in Committee. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade had said that the Railway Companies were a good deal wiser now than they had been in the past, and he (Mr. Mac Innes) thought the Companies, and those who had to do with them, would be equally ready to acknowledge that statement. As men grew older, they did not always grow wiser; but it seemed to him that in this matter the collective wisdom of Parliament had grown greater since the subject was first discussed, so that if the Railway Companies were wiser, he thought public opinion outside was also wiser than it had been. That had been remarkably illustrated by the discussion they had had that night. In years gone by they could scarcely have sat here for hours discussing the question of railway rates without constant reference to that old exploded theory, as they had now happily come to regard it, of equal mileage rates. But it was well to remember that the theory of equal mileage rates was not exploded in a day. It had taken 20 years for the general community to become impressed with the fact that a system of equal mileage rates was impossible. It was over 20 years since the Commission, which sat under the Duke of Devonshire to consider the question, came to that conclusion, and since that time Members of Governments and every President of the Board of Trade, and all experts, and everyone who had any knowledge of railway matters, had come to the conclusion that whatever equal mileage rates might be in theory, in practice they were an absolute impossibility. The moment they acknowledged, as it had been acknowledged that night by everyone, that the system of equal mileage rates was an impossibility, they had made a great step forward. By that acknowledgment they surely acknowledged the principle that special rates were not objectionable in themselves. What the House did say—and here he took it there was no difference on either side—was that these special rates might be so adjusted that there would be no undue preference. No one on either side of the House desired that there should be any undue preference. Three parties were interested in this question—the consumer, the producer, and the carrier, and neither of those wanted to see undue preference. All either party wanted was the adoption of some system which would be just and equitable; and he was happy to think that not only had they got so far as to acknowledge the equity of the principle of special rates, but that on both sides of the House there had been an acknowledgment that these special rates had not been brought about through greediness or caprice on the part of the Companies, but through the necessity of the situation. They had been reminded by the hon. Member for South Shields (Mr. Stevenson) that this country was an island. Really, in these discussions, some people were apt to forget how at every turn the railways were met with sea competition. That was not a time, at the second reading of the Bill, to enter into details upon these points; but it certainly was very tempting to take up one point after another and meet the question of varying rates dependent upon sea competition, but that clearly was a matter for the Committee. What he did hope was that the Grand Committee to which this Bill was about to be referred, would take note of two expressions which had fallen from the two Front Benches. He trusted the Committee would take note of the words of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade, in which he said that any settlement must be just and fair and reasonable, and, further, that any settlement must be public. Publicity was of the very essence of any settlement. Everything like an idea or a suspicion of secret rates was most disadvantageous, and absolutely to be avoided. He hoped, further, that the Grand Committee would take note of the words which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield, and recognize how "complex" this question was. He thought those who had followed this debate, and had listened to the passage of arms between the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield on the one hand, and the hon. Member for Stirling (Mr. J. C. Bolton) on the other, with referance to the charges for fish, would feel how puzzling and perplexing the question was; and he (Mr. Mac Innes) hoped that the Grand Committee would recognize what the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade on the one hand, and the Chairman of a great Scotch Railway Company on the other, had put before them—namely, the great and complex character of the fish traffic, and that the subject was not one to be dealt with on the first blush. He trusted also they would remember the other question as to the fish traffic, which had arisen between the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Edward Birkbeck) and the hon. Member for Stirling. The hon. Baronet opposite had used stronger language than had fallen from anybody on that (the Opposition) side of the House; and, were it not so desirable to avoid Party politics, one would have been entitled to notice how, at any rate, the allusion to Boycotting farmers had not come from the Opposition side of the House. A pamphlet had been circulated among Members which had been the subject of much controversy in the newspapers, and which he (Mr. Mac Innes) ventured to think had been very little understood by the editors of those newspapers that had commented upon it. In that pamphlet, which bore the signature of an important firm which was ably represented by an hon. Gentleman who had long had a seat in that House, the Boycotting practices of Railway Companies and the bounties given to foreigners was spoken of. That discussion, however, had demonstrated the fact that the Railway Companies gave no special favour to foreigners, and had no special antipathy to English farmers. There was one point alluded to by the ex-President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella), and he was the only Member who had spoken of it to-night, although it was possible that they would hear a great deal of it in future, and that question was one which the country would ask when it came to read this debate—what was to be the outcome of all this? He (Mr. Mac Innes), believed that the general expectation was that there would be a levelling up on the one hand, and a levelling down on the other. The right hon. Gentleman the ex-President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) had alluded forcibly to that which was a very common argument. He had repeated the argument that either the special through traffic was carried on at a profit or at a loss. Obviously, there could be no possible case for carrying it at a loss. If it were carried at a loss, there would be a loss on the working expenses which would have to be paid out of the higher rate charged to the local trader. That dealt with the question of loss; but the question of profit was by no means so clear, and he wished the House to take notice of that point, because again and again they were told that it was the higher rate charged to the local trader which enabled Railway Companies to carry through traffic at a low rate, and the continual cry was for levelling down and levelling up. But, however well that might sound in theory or practice, it would be impossible, in many instances, to level down these through rates. Here they were not speaking merely theoretically. They were not putting a case hypothetically, because the thing had been tried again and again. An instance was brought before his notice quite recently, where, at one of these competitive posts, low railway rates had been arranged so as to compete with the sea traffic. After a time, owing to a change of policy or owing to representations from important interests in the locality, that competitive rate was dropped, and what was the result? Why, that the whole of the traffic passed away. The Railway Company lost the slight profits that accrued from that through traffic, and the tendency, of course, was to increase the burden upon the local traffic. That was an argument which was well worth the consideration of the Grand

Committee. Now, to-night, they had heard a great deal about the interests of the producer, and they had heard a great deal about the interests of the carrier; but it struck him that, with few exceptions, the House had not heard much about the interests of the consumer, and, after all, his interest was the largest interest of all. The railway shareholders were a large body and the traders were a large body; but they were not to be compared with the consumers, whose interests had been very little alluded to that night. The consumer had a claim upon the House which they must not neglect, and the working men of this country had a claim upon the House which hon. Members must not overlook. He should like now to allude to the particular point of transit rates, which had again been the cause of much animadversion in the country. It was contended that low rates for transit services were necessary; but how did they work? There was a vast traffic between North German ports and America. The direct route would obviously run, if there were a canal, right through Great Britain. Well, they knew that to-day, whatever the future might bring forth, there was no such canal; but English shipowners trading from Hull on the one hand, and from Liverpool on the other, came to the Managers of the Railway Companies and said—Why should not English ships carry this through traffic through our country to the benefit of the English trading community and of our railway traffic? That foreign produce we could carry through England, to the benefit of our English shipping industry and of our numerous armies of dock labourers on either side of the Island. That, again, was a point worthy at least of the consideration of the House; and in all the discussions which had sprung up with reference to this question, it seemed to him that they were sometimes losing sight of the fact that all competition within moderation was to the benefit of the consumer. In the pamphlet he had alluded to, the writer spoke of the action of the railways in closing markets. That was a new idea, that the action of the Railway Companies closed markets. The Railway Companies had rather been inclined to believe that the result of their action was to open markets, and to extend the area for which markets could be supplied, to the enormous benefit of the population of our large towns. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade had spoken of the great calm which had prevailed over the House that night. Well, he hoped it would continue to prevail. He trusted they were on the eve of settling the question, which, undoubtedly, was ripe for settlement. One thing, at all events, he did trust, and that was, when the Grand Committee met upstairs it would discuss this matter in all its bearings, and that the Bill would return to the House in such a shape as to leave no manner of doubt about the interpretation to be placed upon any clause, and, in particular, that there would be no doubt whatever about the interpretation to be put upon the 24th and 25th clauses. If the House would allow him he would call particular attention to this point, for he had taken down the words used by the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade, and they seemed to him rather striking coming from the author of the Bill and a Member of the Cabinet. The right hon. Baronet had used the words "and if it means as I understand it to mean." Now, the House earnestly hoped that when the Bill came back from the Committee there would be no doubt as to the interpretation to be placed upon the clauses. The clauses should be so worded that they might have no manner of doubt as to what the Committee did mean as to this vexed question of undue preference. They further trusted that the Grand Committee would go to this question with an open mind. The hon. Baronet the Member for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck) had said that they would hear a great deal about this question at the next Election if it were not soon settled. They all of them knew that, and he himself (Mr. Mac Innes) had frequently had to deal with the subject as a Railway Director before his constituents. He knew that, if he was thinking only of the next General Election, he would not say much about this Undue Preference Clause; but he did trust that every Member who was going to serve on the Grand Committee would enter upon the work with an open mind, and would not consider that the question of special rates was as simple as it might appear on the first blush. He trusted that they would remember the epithet attached to it by the right hon. Gentleman the ex-President of the Board of Trade—namely, that this was, indeed, "a most complex question." The discussion to-night had been carried on by hon. Gentlemen who had studied the question, and who knew all its bearings. When it was taken up outside the House, however, hon. Members knew perfectly well that it was by no means so easily understood. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Wick (Mr. Macdonald Cameron) had alluded to the experience of railways outside this country. Well, he (Mr. Mac Innes) wished very much that hon. Members would study the working of the railways, not only on the Continent, but also in the States of America. The hon. Member had spoken very favourably of his experiences in America in regard to the working of their railways, and in regard to the traffic on those railways. Many of them had not had the advantage which the hon. Member had had of travelling in that country; but they knew something about travelling in their own country. He (Mr. Mac Innes) knew what it was to stand on the foot-plate of an express engine journeying upon one of our English lines; and he must say that, from what he heard and read of American railways, that he did not think any train in America would travel as smoothly as a train on one of our great lines leading from any of our termini in London. The hon. Member had also spoken about the cheaper rates at which produce was carried on American railways. When they talked of America, they thought of the Report of the American Commission on this matter, and while there was much instruction to be gained from its perusal, it was impossible to open the pages of that Report without at once seeing that there were many points on which we could not willingly accept the American system. We read there that America had 108 roads, comprising 11,066 miles of railway, in the hands of receivers. When we remembered that we had only 19,000 miles of railway altogether, we saw that something, at least, was to be said for our system of management on this side of the Atlantic. Then, in the Report of the Commission, they heard a good deal about systems prevalent there about which nothing whatever was known in this country. They saw a great deal about personal favouritism, and of that nothing was known in England; and also of very low rates being charged for the purpose of creating an apparent volume of traffic so as to bolster up the credit of a railway company or prepare the ground for arrangements with a rival, and certainly nothing of that was known in this country; and they read also of managers of Railway Companies thinking more of their personal interests than those of their undertakings, which was also unknown in this country. He would recommend hon. Members to read the Blue Book on American Railways, because there were many in the House who thought that the attitude of the Railway Companies with regard to special rates could not possibly be justified. If they would go through the Blue Book they would see the principles which had guided thoughtful men in dealing with these difficult questions. They would see the principles upon which the American Railway Commission had acted; and if the Grand Committee to which this Bill was about to be referred would only carry out the spirit of that Report in the Blue Book, which argues everywhere that questions affecting Railway interests should be administered in perfect equality and fairness, he, for one, had little doubt that at the end of the Session the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade would have the satisfaction of feeling that he had been the means of carrying a Bill which was of great benefit to the country.

MR. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, he was glad to find from the speeches they had listened to to-night that this most important subject was now ripe for legislation. They, in the country, had been complaining for a long time of the charges made by the railways for the carriage of their various agricultural products. They thought, and he believed they thought rightly, that it was very unfair to the agricultural interest that foreign produce should be carried past their very farms to the markets at a less rate than that charged for the carriage of the produce of these farms. Speaking generally, supposing a bullock were brought from Antwerp to London, no more was charged than was demanded for the carriage of a bullock from Colchester, or a station a little below it, to

London. That, he maintained, was handicapping the Eastern Counties' farmers. When railways had their present great powers given to them, rendering them practically monopolists, he was quite sure that the agricultural interest never dreamed that such a state of things as that would occur. They knew that foreign wheat was carried from one side of England to the other at a cheaper rate than that at which English wheat could be sent from point to point in England—perhaps a distance of only 50 miles, that was to say foreign wheat would travel at a less price 100 or 150 miles than English wheat could be carried 50 miles. This sort of thing was crushing the last spark of life out of the English farmer, and he was quite sure that no hon. Gentleman opposite, however desirous he might be that the British consumer should have agricultural produce at less than cost price, would be bold enough to stand up either in this House or any public platform in England, and say that it was fair that foreign goods should be charged by the railways far less than the goods of the home producer. The point which had been raised on more than one occasion that night—that with reference to Section 2 of Clause 25—was, perhaps, after all to the farmer the most important point in this Bill, and he sincerely hoped that in Committee that particular part of the measure would be most closely looked into. For his own part, he was afraid that there was a door open in that particular section to undo a great deal of the benefit which was found in other parts of the Bill. What he had always understood from agriculturists in connection with the subject of this Bill was that they asked for no favour, and that they were determined to have, if possible, just the same scale of charges for their produce that the foreigner got for his, and that, he thought, was a perfectly fair demand on the part of the agriculturists. Why the foreigner should be treated differently to the English farmer, he failed to understand. Another point which had been taken up was that of terminal charges. Well, of course it would not do to have the rating put right, and then to have terminal charges left to the tender mercies of the Railway Directors. He was afraid of Railway Directors. Railway Directors in the past had not shown very much generosity to such poor little people in the country as farmers, and he would rather tie the hands of Railway Directors so that they might not be able either by terminals or in any other way to act unfairly to the agricultural interest. He did not want to be unfair to the Railway Directors or shareholders; but all he asked was fair play between the two parties. The part of the Bill which referred to canals had been also alluded to to-night, and that was a part of the Bill of some interest. It was a great pity that canals in some parts of England had almost, if not entirely, gone out of use. Canals ought to be useful in conveying the produce of the land from the producers to the consumers. Many hon. Members on the other side of the House —the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) in particular—were anxious that a great deal of land which was now uncultivated should be cultivated. Now, one of the difficulties—there were others which he would not go into to-night—which stood in the way of uncultivated land being cultivated, was the difficulty of getting agricultural produce from the producers to the consumers. He had no doubt that in many parts of England canal transit would remove that difficulty very largely; but if they let the Railway Companies have the power of doing what they liked without canals, he was afraid they would never see the canals developed or put to their legitimate uses. He should like to see in many parts of England not only the existing canals used, but fresh canal enterprizes started. He believed there were many parts of England where canals might be extended. They knew that on the Continent the small proprietors used the canals for taking produce to market, and he thought that in many parts of England the same thing might be done. If English land was to be cultivated with any hope of profit, they would have to go in for some new system to meet the altered circumstances of the day, and he was rather inclined to think that that system would be, to a great extent, the cultivation of small portions of land; but then they would never make them answer until they get some means of conveying the produce of these small occupiers or proprietors to market. Nothing would be more suitable, where the geographical position of the country would allow of it, as a means of conveying the agricultural produce of the farms to the towns than water transit. The Railway Companies were afraid of a competing canal in the vicinity of their lines; for his part he thought Railway Companies should not have the power of shutting up canals; it was a great mistake to allow Railway Companies to become possessors of canals, for they had got quite enough power without that. If they allowed the Railway Companies such an entire monopoly as to drive out of existence all other means of conveying produce, they were entirely in the hands of those Companies. He hoped the House would do all it possibly could to prevent, at any rate, the agricultural interest of the country being entirely in the hands of railway monopolists. As he had said before, he wished to be perfectly fair with the Railway Companies, but they were much stronger, or they had been in the past much stronger, than the agriculturists, and when an agriculturist had had a grievance, and had asked himself whether it would be worth his while to go to a Court of Law with a railway question, that agriculturist, if he were wise, had decided that it would not be to his interest to go to law. He (Mr. Gray) trusted that there would be some tribunal set up which would be within the reach of the smallest agriculturist, or, if they liked, peasant proprietor. He did not believe that any Railway Company ought to escape from the consequences of its action merely because it was rich, merely because it was able to have the best legal advice at its fingers ends, while little traders would probably be ruined by going to law with such a great antagonist. There must be some tribunal which would be open to the smallest trader of the country, and they must try and stop any further power being obtained by Railway Companies, so that the English agriculturists should not be handicapped by being charged one price, while the foreigners competing with them were charged another and a lower price.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he was convinced that this Bill, so far as it went, was a good Bill, but that altered in certain respects it would be a better Bill. At present the Bill seemed only to touch the fringe of the subject; the real question was whether the Railway Companies were to be monopolists or subject to competition. It seemed to him that in respect to railways, whenever there was competition the public was well served, but whenever there was no competition the public was badly served. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) alluded to the subject of competition in reference to preferential rates; he said they must bear in mind the question of competition. His impression was that the right hon. Gentleman used that argument rather in favour of preferential rates than against them. He understood the right hon. Gentleman's argument to be that Railway Companies must in certain cases, on account of competition, carry goods cheaply; but that, on the other hand, where there was no competition they should be allowed to carry goods dearly. His (Sir George Campbell's) argument was rather the other way; the Companies, he thought, ought to be obliged to carry goods as cheaply as they did when there was competition. He did not intend to move the Amendment he had put on the Paper, but he wished to urge the view expressed therein upon the House. The terms of his Motion were—

> "That no Bill dealing with the railways will be sufficient and satisfactory which does not deal with the passenger traffic and the public convenience and safety, and especially which does not settle on broad lines the question whether railways, enjoying a monopoly of particular routes or districts, have a claim to protection against competition, or whether there is to be free trade in railways as in the United States of America."

He was persuaded that, as the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade acknowledged, no settlement of the subject would be satisfactory which did not deal with the convenience of passengers as well as with trade rates. The subject of trade rates had been put in the forefront for the reason that trade rates were paid by the great commercial communities. Great commercial authorities pressed the subject on the attention of the Government and the public, whereas the passenger community were not united to the same extent as traders were; they were not able to push their case as traders were; but, at the same time, it seemed to him that passengers representing the public were at least deserving of consideration. Again, where there was competition, passengers or the public were well served, while where there was no competition, but absolute monopoly, there was a good deal of carelessness, a good deal of tyranny, and a good deal of greed on the part of Railway Companies. The public, as passengers, suffered inconvenience in consequence of irregularity of trains, and from other things in regard to which there was practically no remedy. Hon. Members would recollect the declaration in the Ascot case. It was decided in that case that the Railway Company was not bound to run ordinary passenger trains, but might run as many special trains with special fares as it liked. There was another instance in which passengers suffered inconvenience, namely, where Railway Companies did not run together for the benefit of the public, as on the line from Richmond to Windsor and Ascot. It was very necessary that they should decide whether Railway Companies were to be monopolies or subject to free competition, as they were now in the United States. He might give many examples of the benefit arising from free competition in railways. He spoke from practical experience, and asserted that when there was competition, as there was in regard to various lines to Scotland, the railway traffic was of the best. He had travelled by railway in many countries, but he did not think there was any railway accommodation which would equal that between London and Scotland —between London and Edinburgh and Glasgow. But when they came to the monopolies in the South of England they were badly and dearly served. In the North of Scotland, where the Highland Railway had a monopoly, the service was extremely bad. Indeed, wherever there was a monopoly they were badly served, but where there was free competition the public were well served. It seemed to him that, in regard to the regulation of railways, there were two systems, either of which might succeed. One was complete Government control, and the other was free competition. He complained that there was no efficient Government control, and that there was not free competition. In the United States of America there was absolute free trade in railways. In that country there was not only a great deal of strong legislation controlling railways for the benefit of the public, but the State encouraged the making of railways on every hand. Any man or set of men who desired to set up a railway were entitled to do so. He very frequently saw adverse criticisms of the management of railways in America, and there were many abuses, but he maintained that there was no country in the world in which, considering the great distances to be covered, the public were so well and cheaply served. That was the result of free competition. In this country it was not settled whether railways were monopolies or whether there was free trade in railways. What happened when a new Company desired to establish a competing line? They had to fight the matter before a Private Bill Committee. He did not desire to say a word against Private Bill Committees; he believed they were honest and, to a certain extent, efficient tribunals; but in regard to this matter of free trade in railways, there was no rule whatever by which they could be guided. A new line was met by opposition, not on the part of the public, but on the part of owners of existing lines, and the difficulties were so great of fighting already existing lines that it was often found to be practically impossible to withstand the opposition. A large portion of the existing lines were practically monopolies. Take the case of the line from London to Brighton; in a similar case in America there would be two or three competing lines. The influence of the Brighton Company was so great that it was impossible to establish a competing line, and the result was that the public were suffering, to a very great extent, from the monopoly of the Company. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade had alluded to the action of that Company with regard to the carriage of parcels, and had told them that, in consequence of the exactions of the Company, it paid the Post Office to run four-horse coaches between London and Brighton for Parcels Post purposes. The Brighton line was making there a monopoly. There was the same state of things in the North; the Highland Railway was a monopoly. The carriage of fish depended upon railways in the North, and the other day another line from Glasgow was proposed. He did not know the reason why that line was thrown out; there might be good reasons for it, but he knew that it was bitterly opposed by the existing Highland line; and that that opposition had considerable effect in bringing about the defeat of the proposed competing line which would have done so much for the fishermen of Scotland. It was high time the question was decided whether railways were to be monopolies or subject to most strict Government control. If not monopolies they ought to be exposed to real free trade, and it was only in this way that the public would be efficiently served. In Belgium and Germany the railways were owned by the Government, and they were run with economy and great advantage to the State. In France the railways were monopolies, and not under Government control, with the result that the railway service was the worst in the world. In America there was free competition, and in those parts of England and Scotland where there was free competition the best railways in the world were found. As he had said, he would not move the Motion of which he had given Notice; but desired to urge the view embodied in it upon the serious consideration of the Government, and of the House generally.

Mr. JARVIS (Lynn Regis) said, he had the honour to represent a constituency which might be very materially affected if any difference were made in the existing system. He represented a constituency which was dependant very much upon the prosperity of agriculture, and which was equally dependant upon the success of its shipping, its docks, and its export and import trade. He believed that this Bill was an honest endeavour to abolish the anomalies which might exist in the present system of railway rates, and it was also the desire of Her Majesty's Ministers to improve the condition of all those who lived by the cultivation of the soil. The agricultural interest was one which sorely needed relief in any form, and he thought that if hon. Members had studied the pamphlet which had been referred to in the course of the debate, they could not but be struck with the figures that were adduced by the publishers of that pamphlet. In the debate in the House of Lords one noble Lord (Lord Jersey), in supporting an Amendment, which was adopted in that place, quoted the pamphlet in question at great length, and he argued from it that, whereas English produce was carried at the rate of 22*s*. 4*d*. per ton, foreign produce was carried the same distance at the rate of 8*s*. 4*d*. per ton, and therefore he maintained that the carrying of foreign produce at a cheaper rate than English produce was an undue preference which should not be allowed in this country. The noble Lord (Lord Walsingham) who seconded the Amendment also maintained that it was absolutely useless for landlords to reduce their rents to the extent of 5*s*. and 10*s*. per acre when, as Railway Directors, they might be taxing their tenants with 14*s*. per acre in the case of wheat, or £4 18*s*. 0*d*. per acre in the case of potatoes. He (Mr. Jarvis) did not say that these figures were correct; but what the agriculturists said was that, if it was impossible to reduce their rates to the level of the foreigners, then the rates of the foreigners should be raised to the level of the rates which they were now called upon to pay. But the complaints upon this point were not only confined to agriculturists. He had had letters from some of his constituents upon the point, and with the permission of the House he would give the effect of a letter from a gentleman who dealt very largerly in pottery from the Staffordshire district. His informant showed that, whereas he had to pay 28*s*. 4*d*. per ton for carriage from Staffordshire to King's Lynn, the same goods were carried by railway to Hull, and then by sea to Amsterdam for 15*s*. a ton. The gentleman gave other statistics with which it was not necessary to trouble the House; this example perhaps would be sufficient. Let them consider for a few minutes how the traders could be benefited by the abolition of what were called preferential rates. The Railway Companies maintained that if they were not allowed to charge special or preferential rates the trade would be driven on to the sea. From an agricultural point of view, agriculturists might like trade to be driven on to the sea, for it would have the effect, possibly, of creating a rise in freights; and whatever might have a tendency to create a rise in freights, might also create a rise in the price of agricultural produce. The low price of agricultural produce now was the chief cause of the agricultural depression at the present time. But the trade being driven on to the sea would have this bad effect—that one would not be able to control the ports to which that trade would be driven. The trade would be driven to the nearest port, and, therefore, the smaller ports would necessarily suffer. The hon. Member for East Hull (Mr. Grotrian) gave some very interesting statistics upon the distance from Hull of some of the largest manufacturing towns, and if he (Mr. Jarvis) might be allowed to give one example, he would give an example of how trade might be driven away from the port in which he was deeply interested. The Midland Railway Company offered low rates for shipment of coals from the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire collieries to the port of King's Lynn. That rate was 2*s.* 9*d.* per ton. They offered the same rate to the port of Boston, which was nearer the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire coalfields by some 20 miles. Now, if these rates were abolished, and the Railway Companies were not allowed to make special or preferential rates for their export and shipment trade, the trade would be driven from the port of King's Lynn to the nearer port of Boston. In fact, he very much doubted whether it would not be driven from both ports, and whether Hull and Grimsby would not reap the benefit of all the trade. Under the present system, all the ports on the East coast were able to compete for the trade in Manchester manufactured goods. The same rates were quoted from Manchester to all the ports on the East coast—to Boston, to King's Lynn, to Harwich, to Hull, to Grimsby, and to Newcastle. If the Railway Companies were not allowed to grant the same facility to all these ports equally, the trade would be driven to the nearest port; and in this instance, in all probability, the whole of that trade would go to Liverpool. Therefore, hon. Members would see that he felt, in considering this question, that he had a very great responsibility, because, if the Railway Companies were not allowed to charge special rates, the constituency which he represented —although it might gain to a certain extent on the agricultural interest — would suffer from the loss of its trade as a seaport. There was another point in the Bill. There was the London trade to the sea coast ports, and there were special rates quoted between London and the ports on the East Coast. In the 25th clause, as he understood it, if there were regular rates quoted between seaports and, they would say, London, the Railway Companies would be obliged to quote the same rates for any places lying between London and those ports. The trade, therefore, would be driven to London, because it would not be worth while for the Railway Companies to lower their rates to any extent, and the trader who lived, say, half way between London and a given seaport, would not reap the advantage which he might expect, because the trade would be driven to London, and he would still have to pay the railway rate from London to the place in which he might be trading. Therefore, as he understood the matter, the seaport in that case would materially suffer, and the trader would not reap any corresponding benefit. From the opening remarks of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), he rather gathered that, under Clause 25, Railway Companies would not be called upon to entirely give up the system of granting special rates; and, therefore, possibly the fears, which he believed he shared in common with many hon. Members of the House upon the subject, might be dispelled. But he knew that it was impossible to legislate for one class at the expense of another, and, therefore, he asked for certain advice upon the subject; and he trusted that, before the Bill passed through Committee, he might receive information which would dispel the fears he had recently had upon this point. He was aware that the railway interest was very powerful, and he was aware that any legislation that might damage that interest without creating a corresponding benefit to any class, would actually be harmful to the whole community. He trusted, however, that the proposals which Her Majesty's Government had made in this Bill would be of lasting benefit and permanent good to that honest, hard-working class who lived by the cultivation of the soil, and, at the same time, would not be any disadvantage to any other branches of trade.

Mr. P. STANHOPE (Wednesbury) said, he had hoped to have been able to obtain an opportunity of raising, by a definite Resolution, the important question referred to in the Motion standing in his name; but having regard to the lengthy nature of the general debate, and the very advanced hour of the evening, and particularly to the great desire of the Government, in which he cordially shared, to advance as rapidly as possible the progress of the measure now before Parliament, he did not propose to move formally his Amendment. Furthermore, the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had in his speech, by anticipation, referred to the special proposals with which he (Mr. P. Stanhope) was identified, and in some particulars had made considerable concessions, while with respect to the whole question, he had expressed his willingness to see it thoroughly discussed in the Grand Committee. He would not enter at all into the arguments which had been advanced from one side or the other with respect to preferential rates upon Railways or terminal charges. Important, as it undoubtedly was, to arrive at a settlement of those questions, he personally feared that public expectation of great results—proceeding out of their solution, or a consequent substantial reduction of tariff—would be sadly disappointed, and he believed that if the Bill contained no other provisions but those which dealt with this branch of the question little would be done by it towards placing the trading and industrial classes in a more favourable and commanding position with respect to their power for effecting considerable reduction of freights. It was only the other day that he had occasion to hear the arguments of one of the leading Railway Managers of the Kingdom, in respect to the effect of the Bill as it stood on the point of the restriction of the power of charging preferential rates, and the argument of that gentleman was, that it offered to the Railway Company two alternatives, either to level down to the lower rate, or to level up to the higher one, and that, having regard to the interests of their shareholders, it was probable that the Railway Companies would adopt the latter alternative. Consequently, it would appear that if anything really drastic was to be accomplished in the direction of general reduction of rates, it was hardly to be found within the limits of the measure as it stood, or within the explanatory statements of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. No doubt the Bill, with certain slight modifications, would theoretically remove the objections of the agricultural community and trading class, who had to compete on their home market with foreign imports, for it would apparently put their competitors on the same level with themselves; but for the reason he had stated, it was more than doubtful whether the consumers might not eventually be rather sufferers than otherwise by the changes proposed, unless some serious competition or moderating influence were brought to bear upon the future policy of the Railway Companies. But there remained yet the very large and important question of great English manufacturers of the inland districts, who, in these days of active competition, had but a very narrow margin for competing abroad in neutral markets with the industrial products of other countries. To them it was a matter of vital importance at what rate their raw material could be deposited in their factories and their manufactures could be placed on board ship, and in these particulars, that they should be, generally speaking, in as favourable a position as their foreign competitors similarly situated at a distance from the sea-board. Upon that point the grievances were glaring, and of the greatest urgency. Their existence had been recognized by various Committees of Parliament; but the Bill in its present form would do nothing whatever to remedy them. In spite of the very complete exposure before the Select Committee of the House of Commons, in 1881 and 1882, of the decayed state of the Canal system in the country and of the extent to which it had been absorbed by the Railway Companies, the Bill only proposed in the Canal Clauses to arrest the course of the evil, but in no sense did it make any suggestion or include any provision to neutralize some of the very disastrous consequences which had already resulted. From the most recent Returns which it was possible to obtain, he found that out of a total of 2,970 miles of Canal and navigable waterways, in connection with the great estuaries of the Thames, Severn, Mersey, and Humber, which might be regarded as the natural water highways of the industrial districts of England, of which extent 838 miles were river navigation in the hands of public trusts, no less than 1,229 miles of the remainder were already in the hands of Railway Companies, and that, therefore, more than two-thirds of that part of the Canal system could not be said to have a real existence, and the remaining one-third had, generally speaking, been either rendered powerless by isolation, or had been reduced to the verge of extinction. He thought it would be generally admitted by the House that that condition of things was one respecting which it was not merely sufficient to say that the evil should not be allowed to go further, and that, therefore, the Canal Clauses in the Bill which dealt with the matter were practically of no value to the traders. If substantial relief was to be afforded in any way whatever to the heavy trades of the country, it must proceed upon the general principle of the gravitation of each kind of commerce towards its natural channel. Heavy manufactures of steel or iron and coal and mineral traffic in general were necessarily, by their very nature, an unremunerative traffic to Railways, and could only be rendered the reverse by the fact that Railway Companies were able, by the maintenance of their monopoly, to earn a profit by the imposition of an exaggerated tariff, and were naturally destined to proceed by Canal routes to or from their port of shipment. It had been abundantly proved by independent inquiries, not only in England, but on many parts of the Continent, that traffic of this character could be remuneratively conveyed by Canal for less than one-third of the cost at which it could be remuneratively conveyed by rail. In a very remarkable Report made by Mr. Conder in 1882 to the Wolverhampton Chamber of Commerce, he saw it was set forth that one-third of 1*d.* a-ton per mile would pay for transport, including a fair interest and sinking fund on capital, by Canal, and that the same traffic could not be conveyed by Railway for less than nine-tenths of 1*d.* Those conclusions were fully confirmed by the official Reports of Belgium and of France; but in Belgium and in France the establishment of these startling truths had been followed up by the immediate application of remedies. France possessed nearly 9,000 miles of Canals, of which about 2,000 miles had been constructed within the last 10 years by the State, and the whole cost of the Canals had not been much under £100,000,000 sterling. Belgium had made even greater progress in that direction; and from a recent official Statement of the Department of Public Works it was shown that there exists in that small country 1,200 miles of Canal, seven-eighths of which belonged to the State. Germany was also making most vigorous efforts with the same objects, and great works for the canalization of the Elbe, Weser, and the Rhine, in which both State and Municipality had participated, and the contemplated canalization of the Oder and the Spree, which would bring Silesian coal into competition with English coal in Eastern Germany, would show that while they were apparently entirely asleep as to the importance of that subject, their most formidable industrial rivals on the Continent of Europe were eminently awake. He had listened with very great interest to the suggestion of his right hon. Friend the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) for the purchase of the Canals by the State; and he was agreeably surprised at the degree of approval with which that proposal was in a recent debate referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. He (Mr. P. Stanhope) would not discuss, at the present moment, the obvious advantages or disadvantages of that suggestion; he could only say he believed that, certainly for the time, the necessities of the case might be successfully met by a less heroic and less centralizing measure, and by the insertion in the present Bill of clauses devolving upon Local Authorities the effective agency of the duties and responsibilities of the State with respect to Canal development; but, in any case, it was evident that their long continued neglect of that important question had already produced disastrous consequences to their inland industries. When it was seen that many great firms were unable to compete, by reason of their distance from the seaboard, in neutral markets with foreign competitors, and were transferring their operations to more convenient localities upon the coast, when great manufacturers like Messrs. Cammell, of Sheffield, Messrs. Nettlefold, of Birmingham, the Dowlais Company, and many others whom he could name, had already adopted or were contemplating that step, it was surely time to open the eyes of the public to the serious peril of the position in which the towns of the Midlands of England would be placed unless prompt action was taken. There were many competent authorities who believed that unless steps were immediately adopted there would be a great depopulation of those districts, involving enormous suffering upon the artizan class for the removal of their families, and great loss and depreciation in those house properties in which so much of their capital and economies had been directly or indirectly invested, and with results, perhaps, calamitous to the reduced and impoverished remnant of the ratepayers. The general propositions which he therefore desired to establish to the satisfaction of the House were—First, that it would not suffice to arrest the action of the Railway Companies in the direction of acquiring Canals, but that it would also be necessary to wrest from their grasp such portions of the Canal system already under their control as might be essential to its further development; secondly, that for that purpose it was not possible, nor was it desirable, in the public interest to leave the development of the Canal system to private enterprize, but that it should be devolved upon independent popular authorities or Public Trusts, fostered, as in the case of harbours, by advances from the State, and whose operations would be conducted not with a view to the promotion of a speculative interest, but solely to the advantage of industry and trade of the district of which the Trust would be representative. The Return made to Parliament in 1870, in illustration of his first proposition, showed to what a languid and expiring condition the Canal system of the country had been reduced. The construction of new Canals had practically ceased, and two-thirds of the existing ones had passed into the hands of Railway Companies, who had expended no less than £11,000,000 or £12,000,000 in the purchase of those Canals, a totally unremunerative investment, except in temporarily paralyzing a competing route. In fact, the policy of the Railway Companies seemed to have been to establish such a record of the results of the Canals under their administration as to discourage their use and the promotion of every kind of enterprize for their development. Thus, it was seen that in the case of the Oxford Canal, whose revenue as an independent Company was £89,000 a-year, was now in the hands of the Railway Company reduced to £24,000 a-year. The revenue of the Coventry Canal under similar conditions had fallen from £35,000 to £7,700; and the Birmingham Canal Navigation, which in 1845 paid 130 per cent on its capital, did not now pay the guaranteed interest while in the hands of the Railway Company; and many Canals under Railway control, from the fact that the inefficient supervision which, no doubt, theoretically was supposed to exist under Sections 11 and 16 of the Act of 1873, had either been discanalized or had been allowed to become entirely obsolete for the requirements of traffic. It would appear that the powers proposed in Clause 36 of the present Bill were not nearly sufficient for accomplishing the objects which the supporters of the Canal interest must naturally have in view. Nothing short of a power to compulsorily acquire, on equitable conditions, such portions of the Canal system at present in the hands of the Railway Companies for the purpose of re-establishing the independence of the Canal system would really be effective for the public objects in view. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had spoken hopefully upon the point, and such a suggestion had been made before; and he was in a position to quote an eminent Railway authority in his support, who had admitted the force of his contention and its reasonableness under certain conditions. The hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe (Sir Edward Watkin), the Chairman of several great Railway Companies, in his evidence before the Railway Companies Amalgamation Committee in 1872, used these words on page 452 of the printed evidence—

> "If it can be proved that the advantage of a navigation which Parliament has given to the public has been taken away, I think it will be quite reasonable for people to say—'You shall give up possession of this thing if it is not properly used.'"

All that he (Mr. P. Stanhope) would propose would be to give legislative effect to that frank admission of an eminent Representative of the Railway interest, and unless that was clearly done he did not think the Bill as it stood would be of any use whatever in connection with the re-establishment of the independent Canal system, of which he had shown two-thirds of the whole length were already in the hands of the Railway Companies, and the remaining third was impotent for either good or evil. Passing on now to his second proposition, he would remark that the promotion of independent Canals had, since the initiation of Railways, almost entirely ceased. Some few of the older and more opulent Canal Companies, like the Aire and Calder Navigation Companies, had, no doubt, under very special circumstances, increased the carrying capacity of their several enterprizes; but those cases were very few in number, and they bore a ridiculously insignificant proportion to the Canal system as a whole, and had no practical importance in view of the urgent requirement of a very large development of that system. The single instance in recent times, which might be referred to, of the successful initiation of a new scheme of Canal development in competition with Railway Companies was furnished by the Manchester Ship Canal, which, under almost insuperable difficulties, had been able to obtain an Act of Parliament and to find the necessary capital; but the experience of the Manchester Ship Canal was one which should teach Parliament a lesson. There was an enterprize warmly supported by the great towns of Manchester, Warrington, and Salford, and by the most important industries of the districts affected, which was promoted for the purpose of giving relief to a trade which could be reckoned by millions; and yet, in spite of the almost universal popular sympathy with the project, so powerful was the position of the Railway interest in Parliament and the financial world that it took more than two years of time to obtain the sanction of Parliament; over £100,000 in hard money, representing a much larger sum on paper, were expended in Parliamentary contests, and it required the combined exertions of the great houses of Baring and Rothschild to place, I believe not very successfully, the necessary capital. The result, so far as the Manchester Ship Canal project was concerned, was naturally to largely increase its capital. Promoters who took great risks expected to receive adequate remuneration. Great interests, both of landowners and others, had to be mollified by engagements of a substantial nature, and the speculative character of the undertaking involved a corresponding cost which would doubtless largely affect the contract price and the capital cost of the undertaking. The Railway Companies, no doubt, believed that the experience of the promoters of the Manchester Ship Canal would not encourage similar enterprize in other localities; and they reckoned with confidence that if they did not succeed in the case of the Manchester Ship Canal, they, in any event, had given a quietus to private enterprize following in its footsteps. Furthermore, besides the almost insuperable difficulty which private enterprize would have to overcome in the direction of Canal development, it would be, he contended, an unsatisfactory principle to allow the great Canal system of the country to be in the possession of uncontrolled private Companies. It was true that under the clauses of the Bill now before the House great restrictions were placed upon the direct acquirement of Canals by Railway Companies; but the experience of the Bridgwater Canal, and, more recently, of the Regent's Canal, was sufficient to show that there were indirect methods of accomplishing that object; and, even assuming that they were rendered by the Bill more circuitous and difficult, there were few who would dispute that the ingenuity of the Railway interests would scarcely be found insufficient to discover the means of accomplishing it. The same process which had for 40 years been pursued by the Railway Companies with regard to Canal Companies would inevitably continue if Canals were left in the hands of private Companies. They would either be starved into submission, or cajoled into surrender, and the effect would therefore be merely to confirm a monopoly which, in the interest of the trade of the country, should be restrained and rendered less prejudicial to general interests. His contention, therefore, was, that in order to give full development to the Canal system it was necessary to authorize and encourage, for that purpose, the action of Local Public Authorities in the direction of the great principle of co-operation, by the constitution of Public Canal Trusts. In the case of the Manchester Ship Canal, the Corporation of Salford actually voted a contribution to the capital of the Company, and he believed the town of Manchester was inclined in the same direction; but it was shown in the case of Salford that no power existed authorizing a Corporation to subscribe to the capital of a private Company, and that was a principle to which he thought he House would justly adhere; but as a result it rendered it impossible, under the existing law, for Municipalities or Local Authorities to take practical steps for the advancement of such an undertaking. They were not entitled at present to take part in the promotion of a Public Trust, and they possessed no defined power under statute to take the initiatory steps for Government sanction for such a purpose. The scope of his Amendment would cover all those purposes; but he limited himself to suggesting that, in the present Bill, clauses should be introduced solely laying down such general principles as would allow Municipalities, new County Authorities, or such other Local Bodies as might be desirous of joining together in a Public Trust for Canal purposes to be authorized to take the preliminary steps for that object, of course reserving their final scheme when elaborated, both with regard to the constitution of the proposed Public Trust, and with regard to the undertaking which it was formed to carry out, for the sanction of the Government. No doubt, his proposal to interfere with the Railway monopoly would excite indignation in the Railway world, and it was perfectly true that powers conferred by Parliament upon Railway Companies could not be revised by Parliament beyond a limited extent without a charge of confiscation. There existed, however, positively no engagement whatever on the part of Parliament not to prejudice the monopoly of the Railway Companies by an active encouragement of competing routes of Canal, and the effect of such a competition upon the policy of the Railway Companies had been absolutely startling. Previous to the Manchester Ship Canal, by an arrangement between the Canal Companies and Railway Companies to keep up prices of transport between Liverpool and Manchester, the charge was nearly 3*d*. per ton per mile as against one-third of 1*d*. a-ton per mile, at which, under normal conditions, it had been shown that Canal traffic could be profitably carried. After the sanction by Parliament of the Manchester Ship Canal enterprize the Railway Companies' charges came down with a run, and they were destined to fall still further, in proportion to the progress made with the works of that great enterprize. Even assuming that in many cases the popular demand for a Canal had not yet taken practical form, it was perfectly certain that the existence of a power on the part of the Municipalities and Local Bodies to promote such an enterprize to compete with the Railway Companies would exercise a moderating and salutary effect upon the Railway tariff; but on all sides they had proof that those Canal developments were urgently needed. Numerous Petitions had been sent up to that House, and many of the important inland towns of Lancashire, Yorkshire, Staffordshire, Worcestershire, &c., and, in fact, wherever Canal development was possible, had pronounced strongly in favour of this new departure. As a general policy the constitution of Public Trusts for works of that character had been eminently beneficial. The great navigations of the Mersey, the Clyde, the Tyne, and the Tees had in the hands of Public Trusts been extraordinarily developed. The shipping of Liverpool had, during the 20 years between 1861 and 1881, increased 59 per cent; of the Tyne, 85 per cent; and of the Clyde, 105 per cent. From the Acts passed by Parliament in the year 1861 for the construction and improvement of harbours, and especially the Harbour and Passing Tolls Act of that year, may be dated the enormous development which had taken place in the harbours of the country. Most of the private harbours had passed now into the hands of Public Trusts, money had been in a large number of cases advanced to such Trusts by the Public Works Loans Commissioners at low rates of interest, and a Treasury Minute of last year, while setting forth certain necessary restrictions as regarded the advances of such money, admitted that the Harbour and Passing Tolls Act of 1861 had largely stimulated harbour construction and, under proper securities, had been a most useful expenditure. As a matter of fact, the Manchester Ship Canal Company, in its latest Act of Parliament, had taken powers to transfer its undertaking to a Public Trust, and it would be very much in the public interest that such powers should be exercised. By the adoption of the principles which he had ventured to discuss at he feared somewhat an inordinate length, at that advanced hour, and by the incorporation in the Bill of the necessary clauses to establish them, he firmly believed that an enormous impetus would be given to Canal enterprize throughout the country. Already districts which were adjacent to the Manchester Ship Canal, both in Lancashire, Cheshire, and in North Staffordshire, had manifested their keen desire to be placed in communication with that great navigable waterway. The Canal system in connection with the Thames, the Humber, and the Severn was capable, at a comparatively moderate expenditure, of being rendered available for the higher purposes of commerce, and nearly all the towns of the Midland district whose volume of trade in heavy manufactures was of any importance had associated themselves with the general ideas which he had the honour to advocate. Taking Birmingham as the central point of a great industrial district, no less than three important projects for Canal communication with the sea had been carefully examined by the Corporate Authorities, and the artizan population, whose prosperity depended upon the maintenance of the commercial and industrial success of the great manufacturing centres, were becoming perfectly conscious of the way in which the results of their labour were at present prejudiced by exaggerated freights for the import of the raw material used in manufactures, and for the export of those manufactures to foreign countries to which they had to yield in consequence of the present intolerable monopoly of the Railway Companies. When they saw it was possible for the manufacturer of Liège, for example, to send his goods to Antwerp for 2*s.* a-ton, while a distance about equivalent from Birmingham to Liverpool was charged 10*s.* a-ton, it did not require a very elaborate mental effort to prove that our heavy manufacturers of the Midlands were subject to an impost of no less than 8*s.* a-ton before they arrived at the port of shipment, which, in these days of keen competition in foreign markets, was equivalent to a bounty of corresponding amount in favour of their foreign competitors, and was generally amply sufficient to exclude them from profitable rivalry. Although he might have spoken in this matter in a tone which might be regarded as hostile to the Railway interest, he frankly did not believe, from some acquaintance with Railways in this country and elsewhere, that the policy of independent Canals competing with Railways would act to the serious prejudice of Railway Companies. It was merely the division of bulky and non-perishable goods from Railways to their natural channel by Canal, and the Railway Companies as carriers would naturally largely avail themselves of these waterways, and their lines would be free from a traffic which could not but at present seriously encumber them and must add considerably to the wear and tear of permanent way and material. In any case, he would submit that it was not a question that admitted of any delay whatever. The opportunity offered by the Bill before the House might perhaps not be, as contended by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, the most favourable mode that could be offered for the purpose of dealing with it; but experience of legislation in that country would appear to convince most people that, unless every occasion, however inadequate, was seized for pressing forward those great public questions, their consideration might be defered for a period which, in the present case, could only be highly dangerous to their commercial supremacy. Foreign nations were far a-head of them in the matter; and in their case, no doubt, the State had generally accepted the responsibility and urgency of the development of Canals; but if private enterprize had proved to be, as he thought he had been able to substantiate, totally unable to keep pace with the advances of other countries in that direction, it was now surely the moment, when new local life was about to be infused into the country by the great expansion of popular Local Self-Government, when it should appear opportune to afford to our municipalities and local representative institutions the possibility of undertaking, in a form sanctioned by experience and through the operation of Public Trusts, which for so many useful purposes had been so eminently beneficial, and the power of accelerating the reconstitution and of advancing the development, under guarantees for their independence, of the great waterways of the country.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to the Standing Commitee on Trade and Agriculture.

CRIMINAL EVIDENCE BILL.—[Bill 132.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Solicitor General.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 7th May.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Sir John Gorst in the Chair.

Clause 1 (Person charged with offence and wife or husband to be competent as witnesses).

Amendment, as amended, in page 1, line 5, before the word "where," to insert the words "in England and Scotland."

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he must beg leave to move that Progress be reported. It could not really be expected that they should proceed with the Bill at such a time. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) need not be so nimble—he might contain himself for a moment, though it was only an unfortunate Irish Member speaking. On the last night of the discussion in Committee, for something like two hours Scotch Members had it all their own way, and no Irish Member had an opportunity of speaking on the Irish question; but the Irish question in relation to the Bill was really the vital point. The question before the Committee was raised on an Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow (Mr. Caldwell), an Unionist Member who supported the Coercion Bill of last year with great ability and fervour. It was now proposed, the earlier Bills having been disposed of, owing to concessions on the part of the House, somewhat earlier than was anticipated, that in a quarter-of-an-hour the arguments of Irish Members as to the application of this change in criminal evidence for Ireland should be disposed of. He would appeal to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Chairman, who, with his great experience below the Gangway, would be the first to recognize the undesirability of such a course. Was it reasonable to consume precious time in fruitless discussion, there having been no adequate opportunity for real discussion of that most important matter? What he would suggest to the Leader of the House, ever ready to rise for promoting "the dignity of the House" and the "Business of the country," of which he was so fond of talking, was that he should devote the spare quarter-of-an-hour to some Business that might be disposed of within that time. In that "British" Session the right hon. Gentleman had received from Irish Members every concession it was in their power to make; let him reciprocate in the same spirit, yield to the general desire and evident sense of the House, and consent to proceed with some other Business on the Paper. The very next Order was the Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill, a subject that he might very appropriately take up. It was to be hoped the Government would accept the suggestion, and agree to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight) said, he would leave the Committee to consider whether the request was reasonable. The first question, as to whether or not the Bill should be limited so as to exclude Ireland, was discussed for three or four hours on the second reading, and a direct Motion was made to exclude Ireland, that Motion being negatived. Again, the other night there was a debate of some hours, though it was true that, as a matter of form, the particular question was whether or not Scotland should be included, yet, as everybody knew, the arguments were as much or more addressed to the case of Ireland. [*Cries of* "No, no!"]

Mr. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire) said, he must protest against the language of the Attorney General, conveying his account of what took place on a previous occasion. He (Mr. Marjoribanks) believed he was in a very strong position for knowing what took place, for he was present and voted with the Government for the closure, and he wished to state most emphatically that, in his opinion, the whole of the debate the other evening turned upon the exclusion of Scotland. The Amendment was moved by the hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow (Mr. Caldwell), who dropped the whole question of Ireland entirely in his argument, and referred solely to Scotland. His (Mr. Marjoribanks') right hon. and learned Friend the late Lord Advocate the Member for Clackmannan (Mr. J. B. Balfour) treated the subject in exactly the same way, and Member after Member rose and took the Scotch view of the question. Subsequently the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries (Mr. R. T. Reid) moved the Amendment to add the words "and Scotland," which was carried after the closure had been voted. He (Mr. Marjoribanks) supported the Closure Motion because he believed the Scotch point had been thoroughly discussed, but he claimed that there was no possible justification for refusing discussion of the Irish question.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, it could not be pretended that, even if the question of Ireland had been incidentally alluded to in the discussion of the Bill as affecting Scotland, that that was a sufficient or an adequate discussion of the vital question at issue. Into that he would not now enter; but he did think that after the long discussion the House had had on an important subject, in which Irish Members had taken no part, except that one of his hon. Friends interposed for two or three minutes, it was a poor return from the Government Bench to closure Irish Members upon a subject in which they were deeply interested, without giving them a chance of expressing their views. He defied the Government to do it now——

The CHAIRMAN (Sir John Gorst) reminded the hon. Member that a Motion to report Progress was before the Committee.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON thought he appreciated that, and regretted if his unfortunate loquacity had carried him astray. He would venture to urge that it was not a decent thing to rush this question to an issue now. The only means by which the Government could do it was by means of the closure. He claimed, as an Irishman, that this was a vital point. Just as on the Bill of the previous day, they were not against the principle of the Bill; but, owing to the peculiar conditions in the administration of law and order in Ireland, it would be a disgrace to extend this Bill to Ireland. He claimed full time for discussion, though he knew in the end they would be beaten, to present their views to the country, and plead for the people with arguments that would secure a moral victory.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said, he would submit that the views expressed by his hon. Friends were simply just. Practically speaking, it was impossible that they could express their views at such a time, and the Government were afraid of the arguments against the extension of the Bill to Ireland being heard by the country. He was not going to speak against time; but he would say this much—that though the Government, by their clôture, or other means they might be possessed of, stifled discussion and carried their point, it would be conduct akin to that of a big bully punishing a small boy; but if the small boy were listened to, his cause might still be a just one.

The CHAIRMAN (Sir John Gorst) reminded the hon. Member of the Motion before the Committee.

Dr. TANNER said, he would only say, distinctly and emphatically, that if the Government forced a decision now, they would be guilty of cowardice of the most base and heinous character.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 95; Noes 193: Majority 98.—(Div. List, No. 102.)

It being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress.

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

RAILWAY AND CANAL COMPANIES CHARGES BILL.—[Bill 49.]

(*Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. A. H. Acland, Mr. Barran, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. Hunter, Mr. J. Maclean, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Winterbotham, Mr. Woodall.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury) said, he understood the Government would consent to this Bill being read a second time on condition that it should be referred to the Grand Committee to be considered in conjunction with the Government Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Bernhard Samuelson.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.) said, he did not know that his hon. Friend would gain anything by the course he proposed; because it would be open to him, and equally convenient, to move his proposals as Amendments to the Government Bill in Committee. But he recognized the great interest the hon. Member had always taken in the subject, and would not oppose his wish, upon the understanding that the Committee took the text of the Government Bill to work upon.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

ROADS AND BRIDGES (SCOTLAND) ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.

CONSIDERATION OF LORDS' AMENDMENTS.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Lords' Amendments be considered forthwith."—(*Mr. J. B. Balfour.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, on former occasions he had taken objection to Lords' Amendments being considered without Notice. It was, in his view, a most improper proceeding, and in Ireland they had suffered from allowing it. Of course, he had no knowledge of, or interest in, this particular Bill; but he objected to the principle.

MR. J. B. BALFOUR (Clackmannan, &c.) said, the Bill was brought in to make some very small amendments in the Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, upon points as to which it was understood that there was a general consensus of opinion in Scotland. As introduced and passed through this House, the Bill applied both to counties and burghs; but it afterwards appeared that the counties desired to be exempted from its provisions, and effect was given to this desire by the Lords' Amendments. There was no objection to the Lords' Amendments, and the Bill in its present form had the assent, he believed, of both County and Burgh Authorities.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he was under the impression that there was an understanding that Lords' Amendments should be put upon the Paper. In the Procedure Committee, presided over by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), it was agreed, at his instance, that Lords' Amendments should be considered in Committee; but here was the House considering such without Notice, or knowledge what they were.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If the hon. Member objects, this becomes an adjourned debate.

MR. T. M. HEALY: No; I do not do that.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Lords' Amendments *considered,* and *agreed to.*

OFFICIAL SECRETS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Attorney General, Bill to prevent the Disclosure of Documents and Information by means either of Spies or of Breaches of Official Trust, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Stanhope, and Lord George Hamilton.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 256.]

SCHOOL BOARDS (SCOTLAND) ELECTORS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. J. B. Balfour, Bill to amend the Law relative to the qualification of electors of School Boards in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Preston Bruce, and Mr. Donald Crawford.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 257.]

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

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When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

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(*The Lord Chancellor*)

l. Presented; read 1ª* *April* 27 (No. 78)

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l. Report * *April* 30 (Nos. 46-73)
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CHILDERS, Right Hon. H. C. E., *Edinburgh, S.*
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Church and Dissent—The Wesleyans at Harewood
Question, Mr. Handel Cossham; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 20, 21

Church Discipline Bill
(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*)
l. Committee; Report; after short debate, Bill re-committed *May* 1, 1016 (No. 27)

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(*Mr. Brunner, Mr. Tatton Egerton, Captain Cotton, Mr. Walter M'Laren*)
c. Read 2° * *April* 30 [Bill 185]

Coal Mines—Explosion at St. Helen's
Questions, Mr. Burt, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 20, 33

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The Rhondda Valley Collieries—Timbering Regulations, Question, Mr. W. Abraham (Glamorgan, Rhondda); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 1, 1046

COBB, Mr. H. P., *Warwick, S.E., Rugby*
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COCHRANE-BAILLIE, Hon. C. W. A. N., *St. Pancras, N.*
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COGHILL, Mr. D. H., *Newcastle-under-Lyme*
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COLERIDGE, Lord (Lord Chief Justice of England)
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Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances), Comm. *cl.* 3, 1430

COLERIDGE, Hon. B., *Sheffield, Attercliffe*
Criminal Evidence, Comm. 1577

Colliery Tenants' Relief Bill
(*Colonel Blundell, Mr. Frank Hardcastle*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 4 [Bill 239]

COLLINGS, Mr. J., *Birmingham, Bordesley*
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COLOMB, Captain J. C. R., *Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.*
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Companies Acts—The Provident Association of London (Limited)
Question, Mr. Caine; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 23, 149

Companies Clauses Consolidation Act (1845) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Arthur Acland, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir Frederick Mappin, Mr. Robert Reid*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 27 [Bill 230]

Consular Service, The
Consular Charges in England—Invoices for the United States, Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 30, 896
Postage on Official Correspondence, Question, Mr. A. Thomas; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 24, 325
The Hospitals at Constantinople and Smyrna—Fees, Question, Colonel Hill; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 26, 604

CONWAY, Mr. M., *Leitrim, N.*
Ireland—Post Office—Postmistress at Kinlough, Co. Leitrim, 1813, 1814

CONYBEARE, Mr. C. A. V., *Cornwall, Camborne*
  Admiralty—Devonport Dockyard—Fire Duty Men, 1024, 1025 ;—Residences of Officials, 1479
  Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act—Advances for Emigration, 1032, 1033
  Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 3, 703, 706 ; *cl.* 5, 714
  Customs and Inland Revenue—Sec. 12—American Railway Shares—Stamp on Certificates, 1823
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    Evictions—Arrears of Rent, 576 ;—Eviction of the Brennan Family at Coolnariska, Queen's Co. 1466
    Law and Justice—Kenagh Petty Sessions—Sentence on a Child Nine Years Old, 1604 ;—Sentences at Kilrush Petty Sessions, 1602, 1603
    Prisons—Conviction of 14 Men at Frankford, 1478, 1479 ;—Visiting Justices at Galway and Derry Gaols, 1478
    Riots, &c.—Disturbance at Castlerea, 1477, 1624, 1625
    Royal Irish Constabulary—Alleged Assault at Letterkenny, 1445
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    Increase of Sentences on Appeal, 897, 907
    Mr. John Roche, of Woodford, 1246, 1368
    Sentence on Patrick Ferriter, a Newsagent at Dingle, 593, 694, 887, 888
    Sentences on Father M'Fadden and Mr. Blane, 28
  Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Imprisonment of Mrs. Maria Davies for Contempt, 1231, 1232
  Law and Police—Sentence on Two Girls at Westminster Police Court, 1473
  Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1316 ; *cl.* 6, 1538, 1539
  Local Government (England and Wales)—Licensing Clauses—Compensation, 1043
  Metropolitan Police—Constable Davidson—Charge of Assault, 1810
  Post Office (England and Wales)—" Official Letters," 594
  Southern Pacific—Samoa—Convention with Germany, 1820
  Suffragans' Nomination, 2R. 1798

COOKE, Mr. C. W. R., *Newington, W.*
  Early Closing, 2R. 1117

Copyhold Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Hobhouse*)
l. Committee *April* 27, 732 (No. 6)
  Report * *May* 3 (No. 77)
  Read 3ª * *May* 4 (No. 89)

Copyright (Musical Compositions) Bill
(*The Earl of Onslow*)
l. Moved, " That the Bill be now read 2ª " *April* 24, 296
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Copyright (Musical Compositions) Bill—cont.
  Amendt. to leave out (" now,") add (" this day six months ") (*The Lord Bramwell*) ; on Question, Whether (" now,") &c. ? Resolved in the affirmative ; Bill read 2ª
  Committee *May* 4, 1327 (No. 61)

CORBET, Mr. W. J., *Wicklow, E.*
  Factories Act—Sweating System, 591
  Ireland—Law and Justice—Wicklow Assizes—Attendance of Catholic Jurors, 738, 739, 1022
  Lunatic Asylums—The Return, 1024

CORBETT, Mr. A. C., *Glasgow, Tradeston*
  Early Closing, 2R. 1158

Corporation of London (Malversation of Funds)
  Moved, " That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary, without delay, to place the expenditure of the Corporation of the City of London under similar statutory restrictions to those to which other corporations in the Kingdom are subject " (*Mr. Firth*) *May* 8, 1627 ; after debate, Question put ; A. 133, N. 156 ; M. 23 (D. L. 99)

Corrupt Literature
  Moved, " That this House deplores the rapid spread of demoralising Literature in this Country, and is of opinion that the Law against obscene publications and indecent pictures and prints should be vigorously enforced and, if necessary, strengthened " (*Mr. Samuel Smith*) *May* 8, 1707 ; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

CORRY, Sir J. P., *Armagh, Mid*
  County Government (Ireland), 2R. 458, 468

COSSHAM, Mr. H., *Bristol, E.*
  Church and Dissent—Wesleyans at Harewood, 21
  Inland Revenue—Payment to Collectors, 12
  Licensing Law — Brewers' Public-Houses, 1824, 1825
  Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. 1303
  Magistracy (England and Wales)—Refusal to Try a Case of Trespass after Hounds, 18

COTTESLOE, Lord
  Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances), Comm. Schedule 2, Amendt. 1434

COTTON, Capt. E. T. D., *Cheshire, Wirral*
  War Office—First and Second Army Corps—Horse and Field Artillery, 1351

County Government (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Carew, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Maurice Healy*)
c. Moved, " That the Bill be now read 2° " *April* 25, 441
[*cont.*

County Government (Ireland) Bill—cont.
Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "this House, while prepared at the proper time to take into consideration any well-matured scheme for the reform of Local Government in Ireland, is of opinion that at present it is not expedient to introduce large constitutional changes in that country" (*Mr. Smith Barry*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Mr. Parnell*); Question put accordingly, and agreed to; Question accordingly put, "That the words, &c.;" A. 195, N. 282; M. 87
Division List, Ayes and Noes, 514
Words added; Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to [Bill 6]

COURTNEY, Mr. L. H. (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Cornwall, Bodmin*
Criminal Evidence, Comm. *cl.* 1, 1565, 1568, 1574, 1590
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 2 636, 637; *cl.* 3, 707; Consid. *add. cl.* 1258, 1259, 1276
Horse Guards Avenue, 2R. 310
Imperial Defences—Royal Commission, 1371
Ireland—Riots, &c.—Disturbance at Macroom, 1822
Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment, Consid. 1324, 1325
Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 123
Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. 1305
Public Houses (Ireland) (Saturday Closing), 2R. 1745, 1747, 1779, 1784, 1789
Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act (1878) Amendment, Lords' Amendts. Consid. 1934
Waste Lands—Debate of Thursday, May 1, 1488

COWPER, Earl
House of Lords (Constitution), 2R. 554

CRAIG, Mr. J., *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Customs and Inland Revenue, Consid. *add. cl* Amendt. 1266, 1276

CRANBORNE, Viscount, *Lancashire, N.E., Darwen*
Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1515, 1516

CRANBROOK, Viscount (Lord President of the Council)
Duration of Speeches in Parliament, 2R. Amendt. 1017
Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, 146
Royal College of Surgeons, 148

CRAWFORD, Earl of
Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, 145
Lighthouses and Lightships — Telegraphic Communication with the Shore, 731

CRAWFORD, Mr. D., *Lanark, N.E.*
Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887—Sec. 12—Kirkintilloch Colliery, 166

CREMER, Mr. W. R., *Shoreditch, Haggerston*
Financial Resolutions—Horse, Cab, and Wheel Taxes, 176
Local Government (England and Wales)—Metropolitan Board of Works—Contracts, 599
Metropolitan Improvements—Charing Cross Road, 600

Criminal Evidence Bill
(*Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Solicitor General*)
c. Committee—R.P. *May* 7, 1564 [Bill 132]
Committee—R.P. *May* 10, 1929

CROSS, Viscount (Secretary of State for India)
Army (India)—Contagious Diseases Acts, 1015

CROSSMAN, Major General Sir W., *Portsmouth*
Admiralty—Greenwich Hospital Funds—Pensions to Naval Reserve Men, 1464
H.M.SS. "Anson," "Collingwood," "Camperdown," and "Howe" — Armament, 574
War Office—Army Quartermasters and Riding-masters, 1230

Currency, The
Issue of Bronze Coins, Question, Mr. L. Fry; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 3, 1610
The Currency Commission—The Report, Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 10, 1826

CURZON, Viscount, *Bucks, Wycombe*
Post Office—Questions
Central Telegraph Station—Promotion of Clerks, 899
General Post Office (Telegraph Department)—Salaries, 170
Money Order Department—Clerks, 30

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 23, 190
Amendt. to leave out from "That" add "in the opinion of this House, after Parliament shall have made the appropriations it may deem just in relief of local rates, the Duties accruing upon deaths should be so fixed as to equalise the charge upon real and personal property respectively" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Question put; A. 310, N. 217; M. 93
Division List, Ayes and Noes, 289

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Customs and Inland Revenue Bill—cont.
Main Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read 2°;" Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Picton*); after short debate, Motion withdrawn
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°
Committee—R.P. *April* 26, 609 [Bill 202]
Committee—R.P. *April* 27, 764
Committee; Report *April* 30, 949
Considered *May* 3, 1253
Read 3°, after short debate *May* 4, 1420
l. Read 1ª * (*M. of Salisbury*) *May* 7 (No. 95)
Read 2ª; Committee negatived, after short debate *May* 8, 1599

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill
Section 12—*American Railway Shares—Stamp on Certificates*, Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 10, 1823
Clause 21—*Building Societies*, Question, Mr. Seale-Hayne; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 1, 1041
Unstamped Bearer Securities, Question, Mr. Montagu; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 4, 1355

Customs, Isle of Man, Bill
(*The Marquess of Salisbury*)
l. Read 2ª *May* 1, (No. 60)
Committee *; Report *May* 3
Report * *May* 4

DARLING, Mr. C. J., *Deptford*
Criminal Evidence, Comm. 1578
Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Increase of Sentences on Appeal, 355, 356, 367

DAWNAY, Colonel Hon. L. P., *York, N.R., Thirsk*
Local Government (England and Wales)—Capitation Grants to Reformatory and Industrial Schools, 323

DE COBAIN, Mr. E. S. W., *Belfast, E.*
Ireland—Railways—Inspection of Carriages, 1481

DE LA WARR, Earl
Railways—Employés' Hours of Duty, 720, 725
Tithe Rentcharge Recovery and Variation, 2R. 300

DE LISLE, Mr. E. J. L. M. P., *Leicestershire, Mid*
Corrupt Literature, Res. 1717

DENMAN, Lord
Duration of Speeches in Parliament, 2R. 1016
House of Lords (Constitution), 2R. 540

Depression of Trade—The Gun Trade at Birmingham
Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 7, 1485

DE WORMS, Baron H. (Under Secretary of State for the Colonies), *Liverpool, East Toxteth*
Africa (South)—Bechuanaland, 167
Africa (South-West)—Walfisch Bay, 154
Ceylon—Death of Mr. Gunn, Public Works Department, 336
Liquor Traffic (British Dependencies), Res. 406
Malta—Charge against the Superintendent of Police, 569
Mauritius (Finance, &c.)—Education, 586;—Marriage and Legitimacy, 164, 573

DICKSON, Major A. G., *Dover*
Prisons (England and Wales)—Dover Prison, 8, 32

DILLWYN, Mr. L. L., *Swansea, Town*
Church of England in Wales, 909
Lunacy Acts Amendment, 2R. 715

DIMSDALE, Baron R., *Herts, Hitchin*
Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Hertford and St. Alban's Quarter Sessions, 591

DIXON-HARTLAND, Mr. F. D., *Middlesex, Uxbridge*
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 2, 630, 631; *cl.* 14, 795; *cl.* 16, 803, 805
Financial Resolutions—Benefits to the Taxpayers, 313
River Thames—New Hotel near Weybridge 14

Dock Loans Act, 1865—*Loans to Dock Companies*
Question, Mr. M'Ewan; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *April* 23, 156

DOUGLAS, Mr. A. AKERS- (Patronage Secretary to the Treasury), *Kent, St. Augustine's*
New Writ—The St. Stephen's Green Division of the City of Dublin, 1081

DUGDALE, Mr. J. S., *Warwickshire, Nuneaton*
Reformatory Schools Act (1866) Amendment, 2R. 131

DUNCAN, Colonel F., *Finsbury, Holborn*
Inland Revenue — Financial Resolutions—
Carriage, Cart, and Wheel Tax—Hackney Carriages, 1460
Hawkers' Licences, 1461
War Office—Bursting of a Wire Gun at Woolwich, 1036
Court Martial on Major Templer, 341

DUNRAVEN, Earl of
House of Lords (Constitution), 2R. 518, 562
Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland)—Inquiries before Select Committees—Protection for Witnesses, 1347

Duration of Speeches in Parliament Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Denman*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *April* 27 (No. 79)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª" *May* 1, 1016
Amendt. to leave out ("now,") add ("this day six months") (*The Lord President*); on Question, That ("now") &c.? resolved in the negative; and Bill to be read 2ª on this day six months.

DYKE, Right Hon. Sir W. H. (Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education), *Kent, Dartford*
Charity Commissioners — Christ's Hospital Scheme, 585
Education Department—Books used in Board Schools, 894
Medical Acts Amendment Act, 1886—Foreign Medical Practitioners, 1631
Science and Art Department, South Kensington—Circulation of Works of Art, 1417
Technical Education, Res. 827, 836, 838, 839, 846, 851, 856
Voluntary Schools — Parliamentary Grants, Res. 1728

Early Closing Bill
(*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. John Barry, Mr. Burt, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Whitley*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *May* 2, 1098
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Blundell Maple*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after long debate, Question put; A. 95, N. 278; M. 183
Division List, Ayes and Noes, 1172
Words added; Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; 2R. put off for six months [Bill 8]

East India Officers Bill
(*Sir John Gorst, Baron Henry de Worms*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 20 [Bill 226]

East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways) Bill
(*Viscount Cross*)
l. Royal Assent *April* 27 [51 *Vict.* c. 5]

EBRINGTON, Viscount, *Devon, Tavistock*
Financial Resolutions—Licence on Traction Engines, 1361

Education Department—Books Used in Board Schools
Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) *April* 30, 894

Education—Technical Education
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *April* 27, to leave out from "That," add "in the interests of technical, commercial, and agricultural instruction, as well as of general education, it is indispensable that the attention of the Government should be no longer limited to primary education and science and art teaching, but should be extended to the secondary education of the Country, which remains without organization or public supervision under a responsible Minister of Education, notwithstanding the repeated recommendations of Royal Commissions and Select Committees of this House on the subject" (*Mr. Arthur Acland*) *v.*, 813; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, it being One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House, without Question put
Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 30, 908

Education—Voluntary Schools—Parliamentary Grants
Moved, "That the principle of the Parliamentary Grant in aid of Voluntary Schools is unjust, and that the Grant should be allocated rather in proportion to the poverty of School Districts than their wealth" (*Mr. Kerans*) *May* 8, 1725; Motion withdrawn

EGERTON, Hon. A. de T., *Cheshire, Knutsford*
Commons (Metropolis)—Wandsworth Common—Patriotic Fund Commissioners, 1213
Local Government (England and Wales)—Metropolitan Board of Works—Contracts, 600
Metropolitan Board of Works—New Buildings at Albert Gate, 178, 587
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals—London Cab Horses, 1022
Metropolitan Drainage—Outfall Sewage at Crossness, 1613
Metropolitan Improvements—Charing Cross Road, 600
Thames (Blackwall) Tunnel, 1810
Thames Embankment Gardens—Statuary, &c. 1806

EGYPT (*Questions*)
Finance, &c.—The New Loan, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *May* 3, 1237
Light Dues in the Red Sea, Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 23, 159
Slave Dealers in the Soudan and Zanzibar, Question, Mr. Howorth; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *May* 1, 1042
Suez Canal—Returns of Shipping and Tonnage, Question, Captain Colomb; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *May* 4, 1350

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Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment Bill (*The Lord Thurlow*)
l. Committee *April* 23, 145 (No. 1)
Report * *April* 24 (No. 75)
Read 3ª * *April* 26
c. Read 1° * (*Mr. Mundella*) *May* 1 [Bill 233]
Read 2° * *May* 7

Elliot, Hon. A. R. D., *Roxburgh*
Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1504
Scotland—The Highlands and Islands—Breakdown of the Crofters' Act, 1066, 1067

Elliot, Hon. H. F. H., *Ayrshire, N.*
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Elliot, Mr. G. W., *York, N.R., Richmond*
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Ellis, Mr. J. E., *Nottingham, Rushcliffe*
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Local Government (England and Wales), Comm. *cl.* 2, 1516
Public Libraries Act, 1885—Marylebone Free Library—Distribution of Voting Papers by the Police, 1812

Ellis, Mr. T. E., *Merionethshire*
Charity Commissioners—Endowed Schools of Wales and Monmouthshire, 328
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Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), *May* 7, 1488

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Government Contributions for Use of Roads, Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 4, 1368
Steam Ploughs and Threshing Machines, Questions, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, Mr. Townsend, Mr. F. S. Stevenson; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 7, 1451
The Cart Tax—Traction Engines, Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 8, 1615

Factories and Workshops Act, 1878
The "Sweating System," Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 26, 591
The "Sweating Dens" at Manchester, Question, Sir Henry Roscoe; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) *April* 27, 756

Factors Acts Consolidation Bill
(*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Baring, Mr. William Beckett, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Robert Reid, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. Whitley*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 20 [Bill 223]

Factory Acts Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Burt, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Cunninghame Graham*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 4 [Bill 240]

Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment (Scotland) Bill
(*Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Baird*)
c. Considered * *April* 20, 132; further proceedings adjourned [Bill 154]
  Further proceedings resumed *April* 24, 437; read 3°
l. Read 1ª* (*V. Gordon, E. Aberdeen*) *April* 26 (No. 76)

Farquharson, Dr. R., *Aberdeenshire, W.*
  Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Pleuro-Pneumonia in Dublin, 568, 569
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Fenwick, Mr. C., *Northumberland, Wansbeck*
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  Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 2, 632
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  Waste and Vacant Lands, Res. 1086

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  Portugal—Treaty of 1884—Articles IX. and X.—East Africa—Transit Duties, 897
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  Bank Act, 1844—*Issue of Notes by Scotch Banks*, Questions, Mr. Caldwell; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 30, 883; *May* 3, 1235
  Scotch Contributions to the Exchequer, Questions, Sir George Campbell; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 23, 164
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  Post Office Savings Banks, Question, Mr. Wodehouse; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 26, 570
  Valuation of Annuities, Question, Mr. Kerans; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 3, 1220

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Considered *; read 3° *April* 30
l. Read 1ª* *May* 1 (No. 86)

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Footpaths and Roadside Wastes Bill
(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Hastings, Mr. Story-Maskelyne*)
c. Ordered ; read 1°* *May* 4 [Bill 238]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—Secretary of State (*see* SALISBURY, Marquess of)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—Under Secretary of State (*see* FERGUSSON, Right Hon. Sir J.)

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Military Operations in Africa—Compensation to British Subjects, Question, Sir George Baden-Powell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 24, 313

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Friendly Societies Consolidation Bill
(*Sir John Lubbock, Dr. Cameron, Dr. Commins, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Charles Wilson*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 20 [Bill 224]

Friendly Societies—Conversion into Companies
Question, Mr. Mowbray; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) *May* 4, 1362; Question, Mr. Mowbray; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 10, 1809

FRY, Mr. L., *Bristol, N.*
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FRY, Mr. T., *Darlington*
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 5, 781
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(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 7 [Bill 247]

Gas Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 7 [Bill 241]

Gas Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
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GEDGE, Mr. S., *Stockport*
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Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1518

GILL, Mr. T. P., *Louth, S.*
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(*Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Mr. Raikes, Mr. Stuart-Wortley*)
c. Order for 3R. (Queen's Consent and Prince of Wales' Consent, as Duke of Cornwall, signified)

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Glebe Lands Bill—cont.
- Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3°" *May* 7, 1543
- Amendt. to leave out "now read 3°," add "re-committed in respect of Three New Clauses" (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*): Question proposed, "That the words 'now read 3°;'" after short debate, Question put; A. 100, N. 57; M. 43 (D. L. 95)
- Main Question, "That the Bill be now read 3°," again proposed; after debate, Question put; A. 116, N. 74; M. 42 (D. L. 96); Bill read 3° [Bill 180]

l. Read 1ª * (*V. Cross*) *May* 8 (No. 100)

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- Government Control of Railways, Res. 1383, 1387
- Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1528
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  - War in—The Hospital Ship "Tenasserim"—War Medal and Gratuities, 883
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  - Clause 21—Building Societies, 1041
  - Sec. 12—American Railway Shares—Stamp on Certificates, 1823
  - Unstamped Bearer Securities, 1355
- Excise—Tobacco Growers in the United Kingdom, 1458
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Travelling Post Offices, Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *May* 8, 1607

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- Liquor Traffic (British Dependencies), Res. 397

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Land Boilers—Registry and Inspection—Report to the Board of Trade
Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 3, 1209

Land Charges Registration and Searches Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Hobhouse*)
l. Bill referred to the Select Committee on Land Transfer Bill *May* 8

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Amendment) Bill
(*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, Mr. Sinclair*)
c. Committee; Report *April* 26, 715 [Bill 207]
Considered; read 3° *May* 3, 1320
l. Read 1ª * (*L. Fitzgerald*) *May* 4 (No. 91)
Read 2ª *May* 8, 1599

Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill
(*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Colonel King-Harman*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 30, 960
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. T. W. Russell*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 228, N. 139; M. 89 (D. L. 86)
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 199]

Land Transfer Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
. Bill referred to a Select Committee, after short debate *April* 23, 139 (No. 21)
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Assizes and Courts of Quarter Session—Uncertainty of Sittings, Question, Mr. Addison; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 20, 12
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Middlesex Sessions—Case of Charles Moore, Questions, Mr. J. Rowlands; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 30, 903

Common Jurors, Questions, Mr. G. W. Elliot, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *May* 1, 1044
County Courts—Solicitors' Clerks—Right of Audience, Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *April* 23, 182;—*Suffolk County Court*, Question, Mr. Greene; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 8, 1616
Court of Bankruptcy—The Chief Official Receiver, Question, Mr. Elton; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 4, 1348
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Jury System in Civil Cases, Question, Mr. Coghill; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *May* 3, 1243
Lenient Sentences at Sheffield, Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) *April* 27, 755
Salvation Army at Torquay, Question, Mr. Mallock; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 24, 310;—*Torquay Harbour and District Act*, Question, Mr. James Stuart; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 10, 1814
"*Sterry* v. *Masters*," Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 4, 1369

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Sentence on Two Girls at Westminster Police Court, Questions, Mr. Cunninghame Graham, Mr. F. W. Maclean, Mr. Conybeare; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 7, 1472; Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 10, 1807

Lawrence, Sir J. J. Trevor, *Surrey, Reigate*
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Lawson, Sir W., *Cumberland, Cockermouth*
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Libel Law Amendment Bill
(*Sir Algernon Borthwick, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Jennings, Dr. Cameron, Mr. John Morley*)
c. Read 2° * *April* 30 [Bill 17]
Committee *—R.P. *May* 8

Licensing Laws
Brewers' Public-Houses, Question, Mr. Handel Cossham; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 10, 1824
Licensed Houses in England—The Return, Question, Mr. W. A. M'Arthur; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 26, 601

Lighthouses and Lightships
Telegraphic Communication with the Shore, Observations, The Earl of Morley; Reply, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (The Earl of Onslow); short debate thereon *April* 27, 725
Tory Island, Question, Sir Edward Watkin; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 3, 1233

Limited Liability Companies—Legislation
Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 30, 908

Limited Liability, Law of—Amendment
Question, Mr. Hoyle; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 10, 1827

Limited Owners (Scotland) Bill
(*Mr. Haldane, Mr. Asquith, Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Mark Stewart, Lord Elcho, Mr. Ferguson*)
c. Order for 2R. discharged; Bill withdrawn *April* 24, 437 [Bill 63]

Liquor Traffic (British Dependencies)
Moved, "That this House, having regard to the disastrous physical and moral effects of the liquor traffic among uncivilized races, as well as the injury it inflicts on legitimate commerce, is of opinion that Her Majesty's Government should take steps to suppress the traffic with Natives in all Native Territories under its influence or control, and that whenever self-governing powers are granted to Crown Colonies, stipulations should be made for the effectual protection of the Natives against the sale of strong drink" (*Mr. Alexander M'Arthur*) *April* 24, 391; after debate, Motion withdrawn
Moved, "That this House, having regard to the disastrous physical and moral effects of the liquor traffic among uncivilized races, as well as the injury it inflicts on legitimate commerce, will cordially support the Imperial and Colonial Governments in their endeavours to suppress the traffic in spirituous liquors with Natives in all Native Territories under their influence and control" (*Mr. Alexander M'Arthur*), 421; after debate, Question put, and agreed to

Literature, Science, and Art—Science and Art Department, South Kensington—Circulation of Works of Art
Observations, Mr. Bartley; Reply, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke); Observations, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck *May* 4, 1404

Liverpool Corporation Waterworks Act, 1880—The Aqueduct of Peny-Bont-Fawr
Question, Mr. Kenyon; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 30, 895

LLEWELLYN, Mr. E. H., *Somerset, N.*
Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. 1294; *cl.* 3, 1531
Post Office (England and Wales)—Delivery of Letters at Pill, North Somerset, 1029

Lloyd's Signal Stations Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Onslow*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *May* 1 (No. 84)

Local Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Ashbourne*)
l. Presented; read 1ª, after short debate *May* 4, 1332 (No. 93)

Local Government Board—Medical Officer of Health, St. Alban's
Question, Sir John Lubbock; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 27, 756

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—Secretary to (*see* LONG, Mr. W. H.)

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill

Borough Police, Question, Mr. Trotter; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 10, 1815

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Transfer of Metropolitan Main Roads and Bridges, Question, Mr. J. Rowlands; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 7, 1474

Clause 21 (4)—*Allowances in Respect of Indoor Paupers*, Question, Mr. Norris; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 10, 1818

Clause 66—*Borrowing Clause*, Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 4, 1366

Clerk of the Peace for Middlesex, Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 27, 750

County Police Establishments, Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 1, 1036

Grocers' Licences — Compensation, Question, Viscount Newark; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 27, 750

Maps of York, and other County Districts, Question, Mr. H. Gardner; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 1, 1029

Metropolitan Board of Works — Contracts, Question, Mr. Cremer; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton *April* 26, 599

Office and Style of Mayor, Question, Mr. Howorth; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 26, 605

Port Sanitary Authority for Dartmouth, Question, Mr. Mildmay; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 4, 1357

Subventions to Northumberland, Question, Sir Edward Grey; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 20, 8

The County Councils

Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 4, 1369

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill—The County Councils—cont.

Clause 8—*County Council for London—The Thames Conservancy Board*, Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 10, 1802; Question, Mr. Whitmore; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 10, 1803

County Councillors, Question, Mr. Jeffreys; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 20, 27

County Government, Question, Mr. Hoyle; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 20, 26

Electoral Divisions, &c. (Lancashire and Devonshire), Question, Mr. H. Gardner; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 3, 1240

The Licensing Clauses

Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 4, 1354

Compensation Clauses, Questions, Mr. T. Fry, Mr. Esslemont; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 30, 889; Questions, Mr. Channing, Mr. Conybeare; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 1, 1042; Question, Mr. M'Laren; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 1, 1043; Question, Mr. Bonsor; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 3, 1222

Compound Householders—Compensation, Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 1, 1035

Refusal of Renewals—Compensation, Question, Mr. Caleb Wright; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 4, 1367

Licensing Committees in the County of London, Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 10, 1801

Refusal of a Licence by the Cumberland Magistrates, Questions, Mr. Caine, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), The Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) *May* 1, 1038

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long*)

c. Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April], "That the Bill be now read 2°;" Question again proposed; Debate resumed [Sixth Night] *April* 20, 38; after long debate, Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 182]

Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill
(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 20, 126; after short debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*); Question put accordingly, and agreed to
Main Question, "That the Bill be now read 2°," put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 181]
Order for Committee read *May* 3, 1285
Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee, that they have power to insert provisions in the Bill with a view to assimilate the qualification of Electors of Guardians of the Poor, including the abolition of the plural vote, to the conditions prescribed in the Bill with regard to electors of county authorities" (*Mr. Stansfeld*); after debate, Question put; A. 128, N. 214; M. 86
Division List, Ayes and Noes, 1306
Moved, "That Mr. Deputy Speaker do now leave the Chair" (*Mr. Ritchie*); Question put, and agreed to; Committee—R.P.
Committee; Report *May* 7, 1488
As amended, considered *May* 10, 1828
Bill re-committed in respect of an Amendment to Clause 8; Committee; Report; Considered; read 3° [Bill 253]

Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill
Agricultural Labourers in Wales, Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 24, 328
The Franchise, Question, Mr. Joicey; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *May* 8, 1625

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Ballymoney, &c.) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Privy Seal*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *May* 7 (No. 97)

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Bangor and Warrenpoint) Bill [H.L.]
c. Read 1° * *April* 20 [Bill 225]
Read 2° * *April* 25

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Coleraine, &c.) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord President*, for *The Lord Privy Seal*)
l. Read 2ª * *May* 4 (No. 63)

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Dublin Markets) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Privy Seal*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *May* 1 (No. 85)

Local Government Provisional Orders Bill (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
ead 2° * *May* 1 [Bill 213]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 1 [Bill 214]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 7 [Bill 249]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 7 [Bill 250]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 7 [Bill 252]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 1 [Bill 215]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Read 2° * *April* 30 [Bill 216]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 3) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 1 [Bill 217]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Read 2° * *April* 30 [Bill 218]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 1 [Bill 219

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 7 [Bill 251]

LOCKWOOD, Mr. F., *York*
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Lord Lieutenant of Ireland — Chief Secretary to the (*see* Balfour, Right Hon. A. J.)

Lord President of the Council (*see* Cranbrook, Viscount)

Lord Privy Seal (*see* Cadogan, Earl)

Lothian, Marquess of (Secretary for Scotland)
- Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, Amendment, 2R. 878
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- *The Church Conservative Club*, Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh ; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 23, 186 ; *April* 26, 590 ; *May* 3, 1209
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- Question, The Earl of Milltown ; Answer, The Lord Chancellor (Lord Halsbury) *May* 8, 1601

Lunatic Asylums—The Return
- Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 1, 1024

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- *Custom House Delays*, Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 8, 1614

Merchant Seamen (Widows' and Orphans Pensions) Bill

(*Colonel Hill, Sir James Corry, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Royden, Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Donkin*)
- *c.* Ordered; read 1º* *May* 4 [Bill 237]
- Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Merchant Seamen (Widows' and Orphans' Pensions) Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills *May* 8

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- *Hospital Accommodation of Transatlantic Steamers*, Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 8, 1609
- *Merchant Shipping Act*, 1867—*Section* 4—*Supply of Lime Juice*, Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 27, 749
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- *Wrecks and Loss of Life at Sea—Wreck of the "Osborne,"* Question, Sir John Simon; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 10, 1803

Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances) Bill [H.L.] (*The Earl of Onslow*)
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Read 3° * *May* 8

Metropolitan Board of Works
Drainage—Outfall Sewage Works at Crossness, Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, Mr. Tatton Egerton *May* 8, 1612
Expenses of the Royal Commission, Question, Lord Henry Bruce; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 8, 1615
Improvements—Charing Cross Road, Question, Mr. Cremer; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton *April* 26, 600;—*Hyde Park Corner*, Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) *May* 3, 1210
Metropolitan Building Acts—The New Buildings at Albert Gate, Questions, Mr. Kelly; Answers, Mr. Tatton Egerton *April* 23, 178; *April* 26, 587; Questions, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket), 588
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals—London Cab Horses, Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton *May* 1, 1021

Metropolitan Board of Works Commission Bill (*Earl Brownlow*)
l. Read 2ª * *April* 20 (No. 62)
Committee *; Report *April* 23
Read 3ª * *April* 27
Royal Assent *April* 30 [51 *Vict.* c. 3]

Metropolitan Commons (Farnborough) Provisional Order Bill
(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr Secretary Matthews*)
c. Report * *May* 4 [Bill 192]
Read 3° * *May* 8

Metropolitan Police
Constable Davidson—Charge of Assault, Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews); Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham [no reply] *May* 10, 1810
Good Conduct Badges, Question, Mr. W. G. C. Bentinck; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 23, 151

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Metropolitan Police, The—cont.
Interference with Stallkeepers, &c. Questions, Mr. Sydney Buxton; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 3, 1239
Mr. Montagu Williams, Police Magistrate, Questions, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Firth; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 30, 903
North Paddington—The Regent's Canal—Supervision by the Police, Question, Mr. Aird; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 30, 885
Superannuation—Legislation, Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 24, 316
The Special Vote, Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 10, 1801

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill
(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Secretary Matthews*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 7 [Bill 212]

Mildmay, Mr. F. B., *Devon, Totnes*
Local Government (England and Wales)—Port Sanitary Authority for Dartmouth, 1357

Milltown, Earl of
Copyhold Acts Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 4, Amendt. 734
Crime and Outrage (Ireland)—Outrages on National School Teachers, 1345
Lunacy Law Amendment, 1601

Mines (Limitation of Hours) Bill
(*Mr. Cunninghame Graham, Mr. Abraham, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Cremer*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 4 [Bill 241]

Monk Bretton, Lord
Provisional Orders, &c., Motion for a Return, 309

Montagu, Mr. S., *Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel*
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 12, 789, 793
Early Closing, 2R. 1147
Ways and Means—Financial Resolutions—Stamp Duty on Securities to Bearer, 1355, 1607

Monteagle of Brandon, Lord
Irish Public Works—Report of the Royal Commission, 863, 877

Morgan, Right Hon. G. Osborne, *Denbighshire, E.*
Parliament—Business of the House, 608
War Office—Court Martial on Major Templer, 342

MORGAN, Mr. O. V., *Battersea*
- Consular Charges in England—Invoices for the United States, 896
- Parks (Metropolis)—Battersea Estate and Westminster Bridge, 319
- Post Office (Telegraph Department)—Senior Telegraphists, 1604
- Workmen (Woolwich), Res. 435

MORLEY, Earl of
- Lighthouses and Lightships — Telegraphic Communication with the Shore, 725

MORLEY, Right Hon. J., *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
- County Government (Ireland), 2R. 477, 513
- Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 5, 710, 713
- Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887 (Increase of Sentences on Appeal)—Mr. Blane, M.P. 1248
- Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission), 999
- Parliament—Business of the House, 1627;—Whitsuntide Recess, 1486
- Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 2R. 911, 912; Amendt. 915
- Technical Education, Res. 818, 820, 827, 838

MOUNT-TEMPLE, Lord
- Westminster Abbey, 3R. 1346

MOWBRAY, Right Hon. Sir J. R., *Oxford University*
- Committee of Selection (Standing Committees)—Special Report, 1594

MOWBRAY, Mr. R. G. C., *Lancashire, Prestwich*
- Friendly Societies — Conversion into Companies, 1362, 1809
- Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Consid. *cl.* 3, Amendt. 1829

MUNDELLA, Right Hon. A. J., *Sheffield, Brightside*
- Admiralty—H.M.SS. "Anson," "Collingwood," "Camperdown," and "Howe"—Armament, 575
- Board of Trade (Working of Railways), Res. 1688
- Corrupt Literature, Res. 1721, 1722
- Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act—Advances for Emigration, 1033
- Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 3, 651, 653, 654, 655, 656, 659, 662, 674, 676; *cl.* 5, 711
- Elementary Education (Scotland) Code of 1888, Res. 1013
- Financial Resolutions—Van and Wheel Tax, 602
- Liquor Traffic (British Dependencies), Res. 417
- Parliament—Business of the House, 1827
- Post Office (England and Wales)—School and Penny Savings Banks—Pass Books, 748
- Railway and Canal Traffic, 2R. 1840, 1853, 1855, 1856
- Technical Education, Res. 827, 846, 851, 852

Municipal Franchise Extension (Ireland) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Denman*)

l. Presented; read 1ª* *April* 27 (No. 80)

Municipal Franchise — Occupation and Service Franchise
- Question, Mr. Hobhouse; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *May* 7, 1485

National Defence Bill
(*Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Mr. Brodrick*)

c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. Secretary Stanhope*) *May* 3, 1249; Motion agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1°* [Bill 235]
- Memorandum *May* 3, 1249
- Read 2°* *May* 10

NAVY (*Questions*)
- *Guns*, Question, Mr. E. Hardcastle; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) *May* 4, 1362;—*The Return*, Question, Lord Charles Beresford; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) *May* 4, 1351
- *H.M.SS. "Anson," "Collingwood," "Camperdown," and "Howe"—Armament*, Questions, Sir William Crossman, Sir Charles Palmer, Admiral Mayne, Mr. Mundella; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) *April* 26, 574
- *H.M.S. "Inflexible,"* Question, Sir William Plowden; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *May* 7, 1456
- *Medical Service—The "Sick Berth Staff,"* Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *May* 10, 1800
- *Naval and Military Defences—The Royal Commission*, Question, Admiral Field; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 8, 1625
- *Navies (England and other Countries)*, Question, Captain Colomb; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *April* 30, 895
- *No. 35 First Class Torpedo Boat*, Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *May* 3, 1214
- *Senior Lieutenants—Increased Pay*, Question, Commander Bethell; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *May* 8, 1623
- *Ships—Special Tests of Speed*, Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *May* 3, 1215
- *The Smack "Vesta"—Compensation*, Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *May* 1, 1034
- *Supersession of Captain Lestrange*, Question, Mr. Provand; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *May* 1, 1041

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Navy—*cont.*
The Victualling Department—A New Office, Question, Mr. Jennings; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *May* 7, 1459

The Dockyards
Devonport Dockyard—Fire Duty Men, Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *May* 1, 1024;—*Residences of Officials,* Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *May* 7, 1479
Haulbowline—Discharge of Workmen, Questions, Mr. Flynn; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *April* 23, 179

Navy—Dock Accommodation in the Colonies and Naval Stations
Moved, That there be laid before the House, "Returns of dock accommodation in the Colonies and naval stations immediately available for the use of Her Majesty's iron-clad ships and other vessels of war; and to inquire whether it is the intention of the Government to acquire any naval station in lieu of and with the same object as Port Hamilton, which was recently occupied and has since been abandoned" (*The Viscount Sidmouth*) *April* 23, 135; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Newark, Viscount, *Nottingham, Newark*
Local Government (England and Wales)—Grocers' Licences—Compensation, 750
Ways and Means—The Financial Resolutions Carriage Tax, 750

Nolan, Colonel J. P., *Galway, N.*
Ireland—Prisons—Prisoners in Galway Gaol, 315
Workmen (Woolwich), Res. 435

Nolan, Mr. J., *Louth, N.*
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Armagh Militia, 1218
Ireland—Questions
Commissioners of Irish Lights—Appointments to Clerkships, &c. 1463
Land Law Act, 1887—Section 7—Notices of Eviction by Registered Letter, 1219
Local Government Board—Belfast Town Council—Accounts of 1885-6—The Royal Visit, 1462, 1809

Norris, Mr. E. S., *Tower Hamlets, Limehouse*
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 3, 678
Local Government (England and Wales)—Clause 21 (4)—Allowances in respect of Indoor Paupers, 1818
Railway and Canal Traffic, 2R. 1874
Ways and Means—The Financial Resolutions—Dog Tax, 171

Northbrook, Earl of
Irish Public Works—Report of the Royal Commission, 870

Norton, Lord
Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances), Comm. *cl.* 1, Amendt. 1427; Schedule 1, 1432
Westminster Abbey, 3R. Amendt. 1345

Norton, Mr. R., *Kent, Tunbridge*
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 5, 780
Railway and Canal Traffic, 2R. 1888

O'Brien, Mr. P. J., *Tipperary, N.*
Ireland—Franchise Act—Remuneration of Clerks of Unions, 1621
Inquest on John Madden, an Inmate of Cranna Orphanage, near Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, 905, 1469, 1470

O'Connor, Mr. A., *Donegal, E.*
Civil Service Establishments—Royal Commission—Protection of Witnesses, 1232, 1233
Coal Mines—Explosion at St. Helen's, 33
Ireland—Magistracy—The Sheriff of Donegal—Appointment of —— Wason, 1227
Lunacy Acts Amendment, 2R. 714
Magistracy (England and Wales)—Sheriffs—Fees on Appointment of Returning Officers, 184, 185, 900
Metropolitan Buildings Acts—New Buildings at Albert Gate, 589, 590
Ways and Means, Report, 189, 190

O'Connor, Mr. J., *Tipperary, S.*
Army — Bedfordshire Regiment — Fermoy Barracks, 894
Derbyshire Regiment—Disorders at Limerick, 22, 23, 1476, 1477
County Government (Ireland), 2R. 453, 455, 478
Ireland—Questions
Arms Act—Gun Licences—Maurice Doyle, 742
Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Sentences on Father M'Fadden and Mr. Blane, 28; — Sentences on Patrick Ferriter, a Newsagent at Dingle, 329
Riots and Disturbances—Conflict with the Military at Clarecastle, Co. Clare, 172; —Macroom—Sergeant O'Shea, 898
Parliament—Business of the House, 764
Public Houses (Ireland) (Saturday Closing), 2R. Amendt. 1739, 1740, 1742, 1743, 1745, 1748, 1750, 1767, 1768, 1771, 1774, 1789, 1790, 1793, 1797

O'Connor, Mr. T. P., *Liverpool, Scotland*
New Writ—The St. Stephen's Green Division of the City of Dublin, 1081
Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 2R. 923, 925, 929, 938
Science and Art Department, South Kensington—Circulation of Works of Art, 1419

O'Doherty, Mr. J. E., *Donegal, N.*
Customs and Inland Revenue, 2R. 241

Office under the Crown (Vacating of Seats) Bill
(*Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Francis Stevenson, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Seager Hunt*)
c. 2R., after short debate, Debate adjourned *May* 8, 1729 [Bill 98]

Official Secrets Bill
(*Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Lord George Hamilton*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 10 [Bill 256]

Official or Public Trustee
Question, Mr. Warmington; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 1, 1045; Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 7, 1486

O'Hanlon, Mr. T., *Cavan, E.*
Ireland—Irish National School Teachers—Government Grants, 1364, 1365
Riots, &c.—Disturbance at Letterkenny, 579, 580

O'Keeffe, Mr. F. A., *Limerick City*
Ireland—Jurors—Grand Jury of Co. Clare, 1807
Limerick Lunatic Asylum—Appointment of Governors, 1449, 1450

O'Kelly, Mr. J., *Roscommon, N.*
Ireland—Law and Justice—Mr. Devers, Postmaster at Carndonagh, 1360

Onslow, Earl of (Secretary to the Board of Trade)
Copyright (Musical Compositions), 2R. 296; Comm. *cl.* 1, 1328, 1332
Lighthouses and Lightships — Telegraphic Communication with the Shore, 727
Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances), Comm. 296; *cl.* 1, 1428; *cl.* 3, 1429; *cl.* 4, Amendt. 1430; *cl.* 5, Amendt. *ib.*; Schedule 1, 1432; Schedule 2, Amendt. 1433, 1437
Railways—Employés' Hours of Duty, 721

Paget, Sir R. H., *Somerset, Wells*
Customs and Inland Revenue, 2R. 229
Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1501

Palmer, Sir C. M., *Durham, Jarrow*
Admiralty — H.M.SS. "Anson," "Collingwood," "Camperdown," and "Howe"—Armament, 575
Channel Tunnel (Experimental Works), 1350

Parker, Mr. C. S., *Perth*
Elementary Education (Scotland) Code of 1888, Res. 1011

Parliament
LORDS—
The Earl of Carnarvon and Mr. Parnell, Personal Explanation, The Earl of Carnarvon *May* 3, 1175

Parliament—Private Bill Legislation
The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be printed for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to the Members of the Committee, until further order (No. 81) *May* 1

Parliament—Provisional Orders, &c.
Motion for a Return, The Lord Monk Bretton *April* 24, 308; Motion agreed to

COMMONS—
Indisposition of Mr. Speaker
Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker *May* 3, *May* 4, *May* 9, *May* 10

Private Bills
The Police and Sanitary Regulations Committee, Question, Mr. Henry H. Fowler; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 4, 1363

Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure
Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure, have leave to print and circulate with the Votes, the Minutes of their Proceedings from day to day (*Mr. Osborne Morgan*)
Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure, have leave to print and circulate with the Votes any amended Clauses of Bills committed to them from time to time (*Mr. Osborne Morgan*) *April* 23

Committee of Selection (*Standing Committees*) (*Special Report*)
Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report *April* 27, 737
Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table
Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report; names added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure in respect of the Bail (Scotland) Bill and the Mortmain and Charitable Uses Bill *May* 7, 1593; Report to lie upon the Table

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS
Sheriffs—Fees on Appointment of Returning Officers, Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 23, 184; Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Secretary of State for the

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PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*Parliamentary Elections* —cont.
Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 30, 900
The Writ for the St. Stephen's Green Division of the City of Dublin, Question, Colonel Waring; Answer, Mr. Biggar *April* 24, 342; Notice, Colonel Saunderson; Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Akers-Douglas) *May* 1, 1080

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE
Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Jackson*) *April* 24, 438; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS
Questions, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. W. E. Gladstone; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 26, 608; Questions, Mr. Lea, Mr. Childers, Mr. J. O'Connor; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 27, 764; Questions, Mr. Burt, Mr. Heneage; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 1, 1046; Questions, Mr. A. E. Pease, Mr. Causton, Mr. W. E. Gladstone; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 3, 1244; Questions, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Childers; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 4, 1373; Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. John Morley; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 8, 1627; Questions, Mr. Childers, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 10, 1827;—*The Whitsuntide Recess*, Questions, Mr. John Morley, Mr. T. M. Healy, Sir Charles Russell, Mr. Causton; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 7, 1486

Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day
Supply, Moved, "That Standing Order No. 11, appointing the Committee of Supply to be the first Order of the Day on Friday, be read and suspended, and that the Orders of the Day for the Second Reading of the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill and the Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill have precedence of the Committee of Supply" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *April* 20, 34; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

House of Commons—Admission of Strangers, Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 4, 1373; Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 7, 1487

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PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*cont.*
Ministerial Pensions, Questions, Mr. Howorth, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Jennings; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 26, 606

Parliament—Debates and Proceedings in Parliament
The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be printed for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to the Members of the Committee, until further order (No. 71) *April* 20

Parliament — New Rules of Procedure (1882)
Rule 2 (*Adjournment of the House*)
Matter, Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887—*Increase of Sentences on Appeal*
Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Justin M'Carthy*) *April* 24, 343; after debate, Question put; A. 165, N. 219; M. 54
Division List, Ayes and Noes, 388
Matter, Scotland—The Highlands and Islands —Breakdown of the Crofters' Act
Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Dr. Clark*) *May* 1, 1048; after debate, Question put; A. 99, N. 205; M. 106 (D. L. 87)

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS
New Writ Issued
May 2 — *For* Dublin City (St. Stephen's Green Division), *v.* Edmond Dwyer Gray, esquire, deceased

New Members Sworn
April 25—Francis O'Keeffe, esquire, *Limerick City*
April 30—John Wynford Philipps, esquire, *County of Lanark* (*Mid Division*)

Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill
(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 30, 909
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. John Morley*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 226, N. 177; M. 49 (D. L. 84)
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 201]

PARNELL, Mr. C. S., *Cork*
County Government (Ireland), 2R. 514
Ireland — Irish Land Commission—Judicial Rents—Returns, 1208
Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission), 2R. 994, 995, 997, 999, 1000, 1002, 1003
Public Houses (Ireland) (Saturday Closing), 2R. 1784

Partnership Bill
(*Colonel Hill, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir George Elliot, Sir Charles Palmer, Mr. Whitley, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Seale-Hayne*)
c. Read 2° * *April* 24 [Bill 206]

Pease, Mr. A. E., *York*
Africa (West Coast)—King Ja-Ja, 1828
Ireland — Evictions — Return of Caretakers Evicted, 166
Parliament—Business of the House, 1244

Peel, Right Hon. A. W. (*see* Speaker, The)

Pembroke, Earl of
House of Lords (Constitution), 2R. 542

Peru—Imprisonment of English Sailors
Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 27, 749

Pickersgill, Mr. E. H., *Bethnal Green, S.W.*
Excise Duties (Local Purposes)—Government Contribution for Use of Roads, 1368
Financial Resolutions—Cart Tax, 1040
Wheel Tax—Hearses, 902
Limited Liability Companies, 908
Metropolitan Police—Mr. Montagu Williams, Police Magistrate, 903
Prisons (England and Wales)—Wright, a Convict in Portsmouth Prison, 1211

Picton, Mr. J. A., *Leicester*
Customs and Inland Revenue, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 293, 295; Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 609, 635, 636; *cl.* 5, 784
Glebe Lands, 3R. 1558
Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1318; *cl.* 4, Amendt. 1533, 1535
Public Health—Small Pox at Sheffield, 1034

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 1 [Bill 221]

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 7 [Bill 248]

Playfair, Right Hon. Sir Lyon, *Leeds, S.*
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 5, 714; Amendt. 764, 770, 771, 778, 786, 787

Plowden, Sir W. C., *Wolverhampton, W.*
Admiralty (Ships, &c.)—H.M.S. "Inflexible," 1456

Plunket, Right Hon. D. R. (First Commissioner of Works), *Dublin University*
Law Courts, The New—Defective Construction, 17
Metropolis—Roman Wall, 1228
Metropolitan Building Acts—New Buildings at Albert Gate, 589, 590
Metropolitan Improvements — Hyde Park Corner, 1210
Trade and Wages—Masons' Labourers at the Houses of Parliament, 1455

Pomfret, Mr. W. P., *Kent, Ashford*
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 14, Amendt. 794, 795, 796

Poor Law (England and Wales)—Alleged Misconduct of the Relieving Officer at Northampton
Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 20, 9

Portugal—The Treaty of 1884*—Articles IX. and X.—East Africa—Transit Duties*
Question, Sir George Baden-Powell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 30, 897

Post Office (England and Wales) (*Questions*)
Aberaman Post Office, Question, Mr. Richard; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *May* 4, 1352
Cowes Post Office—Party Advertisements, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 20, 9
Carriage of Letters by Railway Companies, Question, Mr. Joicey; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 26, 601; —*Special Stamp*, Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *May* 4, 1356
Contracts—Halfpenny Post Cards, Questions, Sir George Campbell; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 26, 573
Contravention of Rules, Question, Mr. Seager Hunt; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) *April* 23, 176
Delivery of Letters at Pill, North Somerset, Question, Mr. Llewellyn; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) *May* 1, 1029
Despatch of Mails, &c. from Scotland to the East, Question, Mr. M'Lagan; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 30, 892
Night Mails to Plymouth, Question, Viscount Lymington; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 30, 886
Friendly Societies — Printed Circulars — Postage, Questions, Mr. Caldwell, Sir Edward Birkbeck; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 30, 880
Increase of the Clerical Staff, Question, Mr. J. Rowlands; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) *April* 24, 321

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Post Office (*England and Wales*)—cont.
Money Order Department—Clerks, Question, Viscount Curzon; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 20, 30
Newspaper Act—Registration for Postage—"West London Advertiser," Questions, Mr. Firth; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 24, 340
"*Official Letters,*" Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 26, 594
Parcel Postmen, Questions, Mr. Lawson; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *May* 4, 1355
Postmastership at Haverfordwest, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *May* 10, 1802
Post Office Employés Mutual Guarantee Association (Limited), Question, Mr. Lawson; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *May* 3, 1220
Railway Companies—Use of Private Wires, Question, Mr. Fenwick; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *May* 4, 1352
School and Penny Savings Banks—The Pass Books, Question, Mr. Mundella; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) *April* 27, 748
Soldiers' Letters from the Sikkim Field Force, Question, Mr. Foljambe; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) *April* 27, 740

Telegraph Department
Foreign Telegraph Forms, Question, Mr. Burdett-Coutts; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *May* 8, 1607
Overtime of Boys, Question, Mr. J. Rowlands; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 20, 31
Refusal of Licence to the Writing Telegraph, Questions, Mr. M'Ewan; Answers, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) *April* 23, 161; *April* 27, 747; Question, Mr. M'Ewan; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *May* 4, 1348
Salaries, Question, Viscount Curzon; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) *April* 23, 170
Senior Telegraphists, Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *May* 8, 1604
The Estimate, Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *May* 8, 1606

Central Telegraph Office
Deduction of Pay for Sickness, Question, Mr. Carew; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 30, 901
Infectious Diseases, Question, Mr. Carew; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) *April* 23, 160
Promotion of Clerks, Question, Viscount Curzon; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 30, 899

Powell, Mr. F. S., *Wigan*
Corrupt Literature, Res. 1718, 1722
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 9, 789

[*cont.*

Powell, Mr. F. S.—*cont.*
Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment, Consid. Amendt. 132
Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1505
Parliament—Orders of the Day (Supply), Res. 38
Technical Education, Res. 820, 854

Power, Mr. R., *Waterford*
Financial Resolutions—Horse Tax (Ireland), 756

Preferential Payment of Wages Bill
(*Mr. Randell, Mr. Abraham, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. D. A. Thomas, Mr. Thomas Ellis*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 1 [Bill 231]

Price, Captain G. E., *Devonport*
Greenwich Hospital Funds—Conversion of Consols, 153; — Seamen Pensioners' Reserve, 1825
Imperial Defences—Royal Commission, 1371

Prime Minister (*see* Salisbury, Marquess of)

Prisons (England and Wales)
Dover Convict Prison, Question, Major Dickson; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 20, 8; Question, Major Dickson; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 20, 32
John Morris, a Lunatic in Dorchester Gaol, Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 7, 1470
Mat Making, Question, Mr. Craig Sellar; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) *April* 30, 891
Prison Surgeons and Chaplains—Salaries, Questions, Dr. Clark; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *April* 23, 183; Question, Mr. Craig Sellar; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) *May* 4, 1354
——*Wright, a Convict at Portsmouth Prison,* Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 3, 1211

Provand, Mr. A. D., *Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.*
Admiralty — Supersession of Captain Lestrange, 1041
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 2, 632; *cl.* 3, 668, 679, 680; Amendt. 682

Public Buildings—The New Law Courts—Defective Construction
Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) *April* 20, 17

Public Health
Outbreak of Small-Pox at Newcastle-on-Tyne, Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 20, 18
Small-Pox at Sheffield, Questions, Mr. Picton, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 1, 1034

Public Health Acts Amendment (Buildings in Streets) Bill
(*Captain Cotton, Mr. Seton-Karr, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Mowbray*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 8 [Bill 255]

Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order (Denny and Dunipace Water) Bill (*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 27 [Bill 229]

Public Houses (Ireland) (Saturday Closing) Bill
(*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Lea*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *May* 9, 1732
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. John O'Connor*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Mr. T. W. Russell*); Question put accordingly; A. 195, N. 97; M. 98 (D. L. 100); Question put, "That 'now,' &c." A. 178, N. 102; M. 76
Division List, Ayes and Noes, 1794
Moved, "That the Main Question be now put" (*Mr. T. W. Russell*); Main Question put accordingly, and agreed to; Bill read 2°
Moved, "That the Bill be committed to the Select Committee on the 'Sunday Closing Acts (Ireland)';" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to
Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to consider the subject matter of the said Bill, and report thereupon [Bill 3]

Public Libraries Act, 1855, Amendment Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Monkswell*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *May* 1 (No. 82)
Bill withdrawn * *May* 7

Public Libraries Act, 1885
Marylebone Free Library Election—Distribution of Voting Papers by the Police, Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 1, 1045; *May* 4, 1360; Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 10, 1811

Quarries Regulation Bill
Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Childers, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. William Abraham (Glamorgan), Mr. Rathbone)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 8 [Bill 254]

Quilter, Mr. W. C., *Suffolk, S.*
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 5, 779; *cl.* 16, 805, 806; Consid. *cl.* 9, 1283

Raikes, Right Hon. H. C. (Postmaster General), *Cambridge University*
Halifax and Bermuda—Telegraphic Communication, 25
Law and Justice (Ireland)—Mr. Devers, Postmaster at Carndonagh, 1361
Post Office (England and Wales)—Questions
Carriage of Letters by Railway Companies, 601
Conveyance of Letters by Railway—Special Stamp, 1356
Cowes Post Office—Party Advertisements, 9
Despatch of Mails, &c. from Scotland for the East, 892
Foreign Telegraph Forms, 1607
Money Order Department—Clerks, 30
Newspapers Act—Registration for Postage —"West London Advertiser," 340
Night Mails to Plymouth, 887
"Official Letters," 595
Parcel Postmen, 1355, 1356
Postmastership at Haverfordwest, 1802
Post Office at Aberaman, 1352
Post Office Contracts—Halfpenny Postcards, 573, 574
Post Office Employés' Mutual Guarantee Association (Limited), 1220
Printed Circulars of Friendly Societies—Postage, 881
Railway Companies—Use of Private Wires, 1353
Post Office (Ireland)—Questions
Ballinasloe, Accommodation at, 14
Carlow, Accommodation at, 30
Postmistress at Kinlough, Co. Leitrim, 1813, 1814
Sub-Post Office at Carndonagh, 582
Telegraph Department, Belfast — P. Cooper, 902
Telegraph Office at Carrigallen, 1812
Travelling Post Offices, 1607
Post Office (Telegraph Department)—Questions
Central Telegraph Office—Deduction of Pay for Sickness, 901;—Promotion of Clerks, 899
Licence to the Writing Telegraph, 1319
Overtime of Boys, 32
Senior Telegraphists, 1605
The Estimate, 1606
Savings Bank Act, 1887—The Regulations, 571

Railway and Canal Companies' Charges Bill
(*Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. A. H. Acland, Mr. Barran, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. Hunter, Mr. J. Maclean, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Winterbotham, Mr. Woodall*)
c. Read 2° *May* 10, 1932 [Bill 49]

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill
Question, Mr. Mundella; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith)
[*cont.*

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill—cont.
April 23, 186; Question, Sir Matthew White Ridley; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 3, 1248

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill [H.L.]
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*)
c. Read 2°, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade and Agriculture *May* 10 [Bill 190]

Railways
Accidents on Railways, 1887—*The General Report*, Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 3, 1241
Employés Hours of Duty, Question, Mr. F. W. Maclean; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 23, 153; Observations, Question, Earl De La Warr; Reply, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (The Earl of Onslow); Observations, Lord Stalbridge *April* 27, 720
Old Railway Stations—Improvement, Question, Mr. Aird; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 4, 1353

Railways—Government Control of Railways
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *May* 4, to leave out from "That," add "in the opinion of this House, the time has arrived when the Government should appoint a Committee or Royal Commission to take into consideration the question of acquiring the Railways of the United Kingdom, in accordance with the provisions contained in the General Railway Act of 1844" (*Mr. Watt*) *v.* 1374; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Railways—Working of Railways
Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 3, 1212
Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable to deal more effectually with preventible causes of accidents to Railway servants and the public, and to reduce the excessive hours of labour among several classes of Railway servants; and that it is expedient to further extend, by legislation, the powers of the Board of Trade to insist on the adoption by Railway Companies of more adequate arrangements to secure the safety of their servants and the public, and to obtain from Railway Companies periodical Returns of all cases in which their servants have been on duty for more than twelve hours at a time, or have been sent on duty without an interval of nine hours' rest" (*Mr. Channing*) *May* 8, 1667; after debate, Motion withdrawn

RANKIN, Mr. J., *Herefordshire, Leominster*
Industrial Schools Act (1861) Amendment Act, 1367
Local Government (England and Wales)—Clause 66—Borrowing Clause, 1366

RASCH, Major F. C., *Essex, S.E.*
Admiralty—The Smack "Vesta"—Compensation, 1034
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 2, 634
Fishing Grounds off the Essex Coast—Report of the Inquiry, 1034
Law and Justice (England and Wales)—"Sterry *v.* Masters," 1369
River Thames—Deposit of Rubbish in the Estuary, 316
Royal Commission on Warlike Stores—Report on the "Collingwood" Gun, 1444

RATHBONE, Mr. W., *Carnarvonshire, Arfon*
Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1502

RAVENSWORTH, Earl of
Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances), Comm. 295; *cl.* 3, Amendt. 1428, 1430; Schedule 1, Amendt. 1431, 1433; Schedule 2, *ib.*

REDMOND, Mr. W. H. K., *Fermanagh, N.*
Africa (West Coast)—King Ja Ja, of Opobo, 177

REED, Mr. H. B., *Bradford, E.*
Church of England in Wales, 909
Glebe Lands, 3R. 1556, 1558

Reformatory Schools Act (1866) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Dugdale, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Curzon, Mr. Dixon, Mr. Mark Stewart*)
c. 2R. deferred *April* 20, 131 [Bill 161]
Read 2° * *May* 10

Registration of Clubs Bill
(*Mr. Caine, Mr. Byron Reed, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Gent-Davis*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 30 [Bill 232]

REID, Mr. R. T., *Dumfries, &c.*
Criminal Evidence, Comm. *cl.* 1, Amendt. 1585
Solway Fishery Acts—Eden Fishery District, 1800

RICHARD, Mr. H., *Merthyr Tydvil*
Post Office (England and Wales)—Post Office at Aberaman, 1352

RICHMOND AND GORDON, Duke of
Universities (Scotland), 2R. 1196

RIDLEY, Sir M. W., *Lancashire, N., Blackpool*
Civil Service Establishments—Royal Commission—Attendants at the South Kensington Museum, 1227
Protection of Witnesses, 1232
Railway and Canal Traffic, 1248

RITCHIE, Right Hon. C. T. (President of the Local Government Board), *Tower Hamlets, St. George's*
  Customs and Inland Revenue, Consid. *cl.* 4, 1281
  Industrial Schools Acts (1861) Amendment Act, 1367
  Ireland—Market Rights and Tolls Commission, 11
  Licensed Houses in England—Return, 602
  Liverpool Corporation Waterworks Act, 1880—A queduct of Peny-Bont-Fawr, 895
  Local Government Board—Medical Officer of Health, St. Alban's, 756
  Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 57, 59, 73, 96, 98, 114
  Local Government (England and Wales)—Questions
    Borough Police, 1815
    Capitation Grants to Reformatory and Industrial Schools, 323
    Clause 21 (4)—Allowances in Respect of Indoor Paupers, 1818
    Clause 66—Borrowing Clause, 1367
    Clerk of the Peace for Middlesex, 751
    County Council of London, 1803;—Thames Conservancy Board, 1802
    County Councillors, 27
    County Councils, 1367
    County Government, 26
    County Police Establishments, 1036
    Elections — Agricultural Labourers in Wales, 328
    Electoral Divisions, &c. (Lancashire and Devonshire), 1240
    Licensing Clauses, 1355;—Compensation, 890, 1043, 1044, 1222, 1367;—Compound Householders, 1035;—Grocers' Licences, 750;—Refusal of a Licence by the Cumberland Magistrates, 1039
    Licensing Committee in County of London, 1802
    Maintenance and Repair of Main Roads, 339, 752
    Maps of York and other County Districts, 1029
    Office and Style of Mayor, 605
    Port Sanitary Authority for Dartmouth, 1357
    Subventions to Northumberland, 8
    Transfer of Metropolitan Main Roads and Bridges, 1474, 1475
  Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, 2R. 128, 129, 130; Comm. 1287, 1292, 1298, 1299, 1300; *cl.* 2, 1311, 1313, 1317, 1318, 1319, 1320, 1496, 1498, 1504, 1509, 1514, 1516, 1526; *cl.* 3, 1530, 1531; *cl.* 4, 1533, 1534, 1535; *add. cl.* 1542; Consid. *add. cl.* 1828; *cl.* 3, 1829; 3R. 1831
  Metropolitan Police—Special Vote, 1801
  Poor Law (England and Wales)—Alleged Misconduct of the Relieving Officer at Northampton, 9
  Public Health—Small-Pox at Newcastle-on-Tyne, 19;—Sheffield, 1034, 1035
  River Thames—New Hotel near Weybridge, 15
  Vaccination of Infants, 1037

River Conservators, Boards of—The Conference
  Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 26, 567

River Thames, The
  Deposit of Rubbish in the Estuary, Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 24, 316
  The New Hotel near Weybridge, Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *April* 20, 14

Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, Amendment Bill (No. 68)
(*The Earl of Camperdown*)
l. Read 2^a, after short debate *April* 30, 877
  Committee * *May* 3 (No. 88)
  Report * *May* 4
  Read 3^a * *May* 8
c. Lords' Amendts. considered, and agreed to *May* 10, 1933

ROBERTS, Mr. J. B., *Carnarvonshire, Eifion*
  Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 5, 784; *cl.* 13, Amendt. 794; *add. cl.* 811
  Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Sentences on Patrick Ferriter, a Newsagent at Dingle, 592

ROBINSON, Mr. T., *Gloucester*
  Local Government (England and Wales), 2R. 80
  Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1506

Rochester Bishopric Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Bishop of Rochester*)
l. Presented; read 1^a * *May* 8 (No. 98)

ROSCOE, Sir H. E., *Manchester, S.*
  Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 5, 772
  Factory Acts—Sweating System, 591
    "Sweating Dens" at Manchester, 755

ROSEBERY, Earl of
  Universities (Scotland), 2R. 1192

ROWLANDS, Mr. J., *Finsbury, E.*
  Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Middlesex Sessions—Case of Charles Moore, 903, 904
  Local Government (England and Wales)—Transfer of Metropolitan Main Roads and Bridges, 1474
  Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, 2R. 130; Comm. *cl.* 2, 1313
  Post Office (England and Wales)—Increase of the Clerical Staff, 321
  Post Office (Telegraph Department)—Overtime of Boys, 31
  Trade and Wages—Masons' Labourers at the Houses of Parliament, 1455

ROWNTREE, Mr. J., *Scarborough*
- Ireland—Questions
  - Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Increase of Sentences on Appeal, 763 ;—Ennis County Court, 904
  - Ejectments—Tralee Quarter Sessions, 605
  - Law and Justice—Mr. William Gould, of Mitchelstown, 1483

Royal College of Surgeons
- Question, Lord Sudeley; Answer, The Lord President of the Council (Viscount Cranbrook) *April* 23, 147

RUSSELL, Sir C., *Hackney, S.*
- Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887—Increase of Sentences on Appeal, 381, 897
- France—Case of James Williams, of Hackney, 1444

RUSSELL, Mr. T. W., *Tyrone, S.*
- Corrupt Literature, Res. 1717
- Ireland—Questions
  - Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Sentences on Father M'Fadden and Mr. Blane, 28
  - Irish Land Commission—Sub-Commission at Antrim, 598
  - Railways—Inspection of Carriages, 1482
- Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission), 2R. Amendt. 960, 988, 1000, 1001
- Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 1, Amendt. 716 ; *add. cl.* 717, 718, 719 ; Consid. 1321 ; *add. cl.* 1323 ; Amendt. 1324
- Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 2R. 931, 935, 937
- Public Houses (Ireland) (Saturday Closing), 2R. 1732, 1734, 1740, 1742, 1743, 1745, 1749, 1768, 1792, 1796

SALISBURY, Marquess of (Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs)
- Crime and Outrage (Ireland)—Outrages on National School Teachers, 1343
- Customs and Inland Revenue, 2R. 1600
- Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment (No. 1), Comm. *cl.* 2, 146
- House of Lords (Constitution) 2R. 555
- Land Transfer, Motion for a Select Committee, 144
- Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances), Comm. *cl.* 3, 1430
- Timber Acts (Ireland) Amendment, 2R. 1440, 1441
- Tithe Rentcharge Recovery and Variation, 2R. 306 ; Comm. *cl.* 2, 1595 ; *cl.* 10, Amendt. 1597
- Westminster Abbey, 3R. 1346

SALT, Mr. T., *Stafford*
- Criminal Law—Sentences of Capital Punishment, 562

Salt Trade, The—The River Weaver Navigation Bill
- Questions, Mr. Brunner ; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *April* 24, 323 ; *May* 1, 1019

SAMUELSON, Sir B., *Oxfordshire, Banbury*
- Government Control of Railways, Res. 1389
- Railway and Canal Companies' Charges, 2R. 1932
- Railway and Canal Traffic, 2R. 1861

SAUNDERSON, Colonel E. J., *Armagh, N.*
- Criminal Evidence, Comm. *cl.* 1, 1591
- Ireland—Meeting of the National League at Newtownards, 1027
- New Writ—St. Stephen's Green Division of the City of Dublin, 1080
- Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 2R. 929

Savings Bank Act, 1887—*The Regulations*
- Question, Mr. Howell ; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *April* 26, 571

School Boards (Scotland) Electors Bill
(*Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Preston Bruce, Mr. Donald Crawford*)
- *c.* Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 10 [Bill 257]

SCHWANN, Mr. C. E., *Manchester, N.*
- Customs and Inland Revenue, Consid. *cl.* 3, 1280
- Merchandize Marks Act—Adoption by Foreign Countries, 156
  - Custom House Delays, 1614
- Trade and Commerce—American Zollverein or Customs Union, 1614

SCOTLAND, Secretary for (*see* LOTHIAN, Marquess of)

SCOTLAND (*Questions*)
- *Civil Servants—Interference in Elections*, Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh ; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 23, 183
- *Court of Session—Principal Clerks*, Question, Mr. Buchanan ; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 27, 747
- *Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act—Schemes of the Commissioners*, Question, Mr. Hugh Elliot ; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 23, 161
- *Island of Lewis—The Raids on Deer Forests*, Question, Dr. Cameron ; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 27, 739
- *Small Holdings, &c. for Agricultural Labourers*, Question, Dr. Clark ; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 23, 167
- *Valuation Roll—Workmen Occupants*, Question, Mr. Preston Bruce ; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *May* 7, 1445

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1886
- *Advances for Emigration*, Questions, Mr. Kimber, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Hunter ; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald), The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 1, 1031 ;

SCOTLAND—*Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act*, 1886—cont.
Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *May* 7, 1461
Clause 1—*Section* 4—*Sub-Division and Sub-Letting*, Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *May* 7, 1443
Clause 6—*Section* 2—*Fair Rents*, Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *May* 7, 1442
Section 13—"*Available Land*," Questions, Mr. A. Sutherland, Dr. Clark; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *May* 1, 1031
Fishermen's Boats, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 27, 746

Crofter Commissioners—The Island of Skye, Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *May* 7, 1450

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)
Education Act, 1883—*Section* 8, Question, Mr. Thorburn; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 30, 896
Education Code—Grants for Cookery and Drawing, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 30, 907
Mr. Milne, Inspector of Schools, Aberdeen, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 20, 13

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)
Artificial Rearing of Sea Fish, Questions, Mr. Anderson; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *May* 3, 1227; *May* 7, 1468
Loss of Life from Scotch Fishing Boats, Question, Mr. A. Sutherland; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 8, 1610
Solway Fishery Acts—The Eden Fishery District, Question, Mr. R. T. Reid; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 10, 1800
The Moray Firth or Firth of Forth, Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 23, 150

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND)
District Fishery Boards, Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *May* 7, 1468
Inspector of Salmon Fisheries, Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 23, 168
Moneys Voted in Supply, Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 20, 33

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)
Riot at Clashmore—Case of Hugh Matheson, Cottar, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *May* 4, 1363

[*cont.*

SCOTLAND—*cont.*
LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)
Death of John Mackay, of South Harris, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *April* 30, 890

Scotland—Elementary Education (Scotland) Code of 1888
Question, Mr. Sinclair; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *April* 27, 812
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to withhold Her Assent from the alteration in Article 6 (d) of the Code of the Scotch Education Department proposed for this year, which (contrary to the provisions of Section 67 of 'The Education (Scotland) Act, 1872,') will have the effect of lowering the standard of education that now exists in the public schools of Scotland" (*Mr. Sinclair*) *April* 30, 1007; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Sea Fisheries Bill—Legislation
Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 10, 1825

SELBORNE, Earl of
Copyright (Musical Compositions), 2R. 299; Comm. *cl.* 1, 1330
Crime and Outrage (Ireland)—Outrages on National School Teachers, 1342
Land Transfer, Motion for a Select Committee, 141
Lunacy Law Amendment, 1601
Tithe Rentcharge Recovery and Variation, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1596
Universities (Scotland), 2R. 1198

SELLAR, Mr. A. C., *Lanarkshire, Partick*
Elementary Education (Scotland) Code of 1888, Res. 1008
Prisons (England and Wales)—Chaplains' Salaries, 1354
Mat Making, 891

SETON-KARR, Mr. H., *St. Helen's*
Waste and Vacant Lands, Res. Amendt. 1090, 1093

Siam—The Consular Court at Bangkok—British Subjects
Question, Mr. F. W. Maclean; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *April* 23, 152

SIDMOUTH, Viscount
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(*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *May* 1 (No. 83)
Read 2ª *May* 8, 1598

Suffragans' Nomination Bill
(*Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. John Talbot, Baron Dimsdale, Mr. Francis Powell, Admiral Field, Mr. Penrose-Fitzgerald, Mr. Dixon-Hartland*)
2R. Debate adjourned *May* 9, 1798 [Bill 35]

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Timber Acts (Ireland) Amendment Bill
(*The Lord Privy Seal*)
l. Read 2^a, after short debate *May* 7, 1437 (No. 69)

Tithe Rentcharge Bill [H.L.]
(*The Marquess of Salisbury*)
l. Read 2^a* *April* 24 (No. 53)
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l. Read 2^a, after short debate *April* 24, 300
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TOMLINSON, Mr. W. E. M., *Preston*
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TOWNSEND, Mr. F., *Warwickshire, Stratford-on-Avon*
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Trade and Commerce—An American Zollverein or Customs Union
Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *May* 8, 1614

Trade and Wages—The Masons' Labourers at the Houses of Parliament
Questions, Mr. S. Smith, Mr. J. Rowlands; Answers, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) *May* 7, 1455

Trade Marks and Designs Act, 1883—*Amendment*
Question, Mr. F. Hardcastle; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 10, 1818

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Ordered; read 1^o* *April* 20 [Bill 222]
Read 2^o* *May* 1

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Ordered; read 1^o* *May* 7 [Bill 242]

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Ordered; read 1^o* *May* 7 [Bill 243]

TREASURY—First Lord (*see* SMITH, Right Hon. W. H.)

TREASURY, A Lord of (*see* MAXWELL, Sir H. E.)

TREASURY—Secretary to (*see* JACKSON, Mr. W. L.)

Treaty of Berlin—Article LXI.—Armenia
Questions, Mr. Bryce; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *May* 3, 1225

TREVELYAN, Right Hon. Sir G. O., *Glasgow, Bridgeton*
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- *Belfast—Messrs. Marcus Ward and Company*, Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 30, 885
- *Breaches of the Act in Bristol*, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 1, 1022

Trustee Savings Banks
- *The Sevenoaks Trustee Savings Bank*, Questions, Mr. Howell; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 10, 1816
- *The Act of* 1863, Questions, Mr. Howell; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 26, 571

TUITE, Mr. J., *Westmeath, N.*
- Civil Service Estimates, Class II.—Compulsory Retirement of Writers, 1448
- Civil Service Writers—Retirement, 882;—Saturday Half Holiday, 1470
- Ireland—Questions
  - Irish Land Commission—Fair Rents—Co. Westmeath, 882
  - Law and Justice—Alleged Insurance Frauds at Belfast, 752
  - National Board of Education—Salaries of Teachers, 1460
  - Post Office—Allowances to Surveyors, 1020;—Travelling Post Offices, 1607
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- *Asiatic Provinces—Armenia—The British Consulate at Van*, Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *May* 10, 1817
- *European Provinces—Macedonia*, Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *May* 8, 1608

TYLER, Sir H. W., *Great Yarmouth*
- Admiralty—No. 35 First Class Torpedo Boat, 1214
  - Ships—Special Tests of Speed, 1215

Universities (Scotland) Bill
(*The Marquess of Lothian*)
l. Read 2ª, after debate *May* 3, 1180 (No. 47)

Vaccination of Infants
- Question, Mr. M'Laren; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 1, 1037

Venezuela—Appointment of a new President
- Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *May* 1, 1028

Victoria University Bill
(*Mr. Bryce, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Jacob Bright, Sir Henry Roscoe, Mr. Whitley, Sir Lyon Playfair, Mr. Francis Powell*)
c. Read 2º* *May* 2 [Bill 198]
Committee *—R.P. *May* 10

VINCENT, Mr. C. E. H., *Sheffield, Central*
- Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 2, 617; *cl.* 3, 658; Consid. *add. cl.* 1258, 1259
- Depression of Trade—Gun Trade at Birmingham, 1485
- Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Lenient Sentences at Sheffield, 755
- Local Government (England and Wales)—Licensing Clauses, 1354
- Metropolitan Board of Works—Prevention of Cruelty to Animals—London Cab Horses, 1021
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- Criminal Evidence, Comm. *cl.* 1, 1590
- Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. *cl.* 3, 707
- Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment, Comm. *add. cl.* 718
- Liquor Traffic (British Dependencies), Res. 405
- Local Government (England and Wales) Electors, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1508

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- *Church of England in Wales*, Question, Mr. Byron Reed; Answer, Mr. Dillwyn *April* 30, 909
- *Crown Land Revenue—Return*, Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *May* 7, 1465
- *Gold Discoveries*, Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) *May* 1, 1042; Questions, Mr. T. E. Ellis, Mr. Howell; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 3, 1241
- *South Wales—Turnpikes on Main Roads—Exemption from the Wheel Tax*, Question, Admiral Mayne; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 10, 1804
- *The Tithe Agitation—Military Assistance in Anglesey*, Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *April* 20, 17

WAR DEPARTMENT—Secretary of State (*see* STANHOPE, Right Hon. E.)

WAR DEPARTMENT—Under Secretary of State (*see* HARRIS, Lord)

WAR DEPARTMENT—Financial Secretary (*see* BRODRICK, Hon. W. St. J. F.)

Waring, Colonel T., *Down, N.*
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Warmington, Mr. C. M., *Monmouth, W.*
Customs and Inland Revenue, Consid. *add. cl.* 1263 ; *cl.* 16, 1285
Official or Public Trustee, 1045

Waste and Vacant Lands
Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, ownership of land in the United Kingdom should carry with it the duty of cultivation or utilization, and that in all cases where land capable of cultivation or utilization with profit, and not devoted to some purpose of public utility or enjoyment, is held in a vacant, waste, or uncultivated state, the local authorities ought to have the power to compulsorily acquire such land by payment to the owner of a sum representing the capital agricultural value of such lands, in order that such local authorities may, in their discretion, let the said lands to tenant cultivators, with such conditions as to term of tenancy, rent, reclamation, drainage, utilization, and cultivation respectively as shall afford reasonable encouragement, opportunities, facilities, and security for the due utilization, cultivation, and development of the said lands" (*Mr. Bradlaugh*) *May* 1, 1081
Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "whilst recognizing the fact that considerable portions of the lands of the United Kingdom, including those in a so-called vacant, waste, or uncultivated state, cannot be profitably cultivated owing to Agricultural and Industrial Depression, and are, therefore, unable to support their increasing populations, this House is of opinion that conferring powers of compulsory purchase on Local Authorities is not an effectual or desirable remedy for this state of things" (*Mr. Seton - Karr*) ; Question proposed, "That the words, &c. ;" [House counted out]
Observations, Mr. Brookfield, Mr. Deputy Speaker *May* 7, 1488

Waterford, Marquess of
Timber Acts (Ireland) Amendment, 2R. 1437

Water Provisional Orders Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *April* 23 [Bill 227]
Read 2° * *May* 4

Water Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 7 [Bill 246]

Watkin, Sir E. W., *Hythe*
Lighthouses and Lightships—Telegraphic Communication—Tory Island, 1233

Watson, Lord
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Watt, Mr. H., *Glasgow, Camlachie*
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A Stamping Office in Glasgow, Question, Mr. Hozier ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 3, 1226
Gun Licences—Revolvers, Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 23, 154
Inland Revenue Department — Promotion, Question, Mr. D. Sullivan ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 26, 578
Licensed Victuallers—Payment of Succession or Legacy Duty, Question, Mr. Caine ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 1, 1039
Public-House Licences — Succession Duty, Questions, Mr. Caine ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 30, 906
Payments to Collectors, Question, Mr. Handel Cossham ; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *April* 20, 12

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Exemption of Charitable Educational Institutions, Question, Mr. Lockwood ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 3, 1216
Profits arising from Abroad, Question, Sir George Baden-Powell ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 7, 1453
Schedule (C)—Return, Question, Sir George Baden-Powell ; Answer, Sir Herbert Maxwell (A Lord of the Treasury) *April* 24, 312

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Mr. J. Hegarty, J.P., Millstreet, Co. Cork, Questions, Dr. Tanner ; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *April* 23, 169
Tobacco Growers in the United Kingdom, Question, Sir Edward Birkbeck ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 7, 1458

The Financial Resolutions
A Dog Tax, Question, Mr. Norris ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *April* 23, 171
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  Seventh Resolution [9th April],—(Excise Duties),—Carriages, Trade Carts, Horses, &c., and Horsedealers, read
  Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, That they have power to make provision therein pursuant to so much of the said Resolution as relates to Excise Duties on Carriages and Hackney Carriages

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